

Peace Corps Announces Top Volunteer-Producing Colleges

Washington State is first state ever to sweep small, medium and large school categories

WASHINGTON, D.C., February 5, 2013 – For the first time ever, schools in a single state hold the No. 1 spot in the small, medium and large undergraduate school categories for the 2013 Top Colleges rankings for producing Peace Corps volunteers. Washington State now holds this noteworthy distinction, with University of Washington leading large schools with 107 alumni currently serving as Peace Corps volunteers, while Western Washington University and Gonzaga University lead in the medium and small categories with 73 and 24 currently serving graduates, respectively.

Also for the first time, two universities are tied for first place in the large schools category, with University of Florida matching University of Washington's 107 undergraduate alumni currently serving as Peace Corps volunteers. University of Florida made the largest leap of the undergraduate schools ranked No. 1 this year, up from No. 4 in 2012.

“Every year, graduates of colleges and universities across the United States are making a difference in communities overseas through Peace Corps service,” said Peace Corps Acting Director Carrie Hessler-Radelet. “As a result of the fine education they receive, college graduates are well prepared for the challenge of international service. They become leaders in their host communities and carry the spirit of service and leadership back with them when they return home.”

University of Wisconsin-Madison rounds out the top three large schools with 103 undergraduate alumni currently serving. In the medium schools category, American University and The George Washington University place second and third with 55 and 53 undergraduate alumni in service, respectively. St. Olaf College holds the No. 2 spot in the small schools category with 22 currently serving alumni, and University of Mary Washington comes in at No. 3 with 21 graduates in service.

This is the first time that University of Florida, Western Washington University and Gonzaga University have topped their respective categories since the Peace Corps began ranking schools based on the small, medium and large enrollment numbers in 2003. University of Washington held the No.1 large schools spot from 2007 to 2010.

For the second consecutive year, University of Florida holds the top spot in the graduate school category with 26 currently serving volunteers, followed by University of Denver and University of Washington, each with 20 graduate students in service. Historically, University of California, Berkeley maintains the number one all-time rank, with 3,544 total Peace Corps volunteer alumni.

After 27 months abroad working in education, health community economic development, environment, youth in development or agriculture, Peace Corps volunteers with four-year degrees are uniquely qualified to return to the United States and enter the global job market.

“Peace Corps service is making a difference in the lives of volunteers by preparing them with 21st-century job skills like language and technical training, so when they come home they are ready to launch a career and give back to their communities,” said Hessler-Radelet.

Following are the top five colleges and universities in each undergraduate category, as well as the top graduate schools and all-time highest volunteer-producing schools.

<u>LARGE COLLEGES:</u>	<u>VOLUNTEER NUMBER:</u>
1. University of Washington	107
1. University of Florida	107
3. University of Wisconsin-Madison	103
4. University of Colorado Boulder	93
4. University of Michigan	93

<u>MEDIUM COLLEGES:</u>	<u>VOLUNTEER NUMBER:</u>
1. Western Washington University	73
2. American University	55
3. The George Washington University	53
4. Cornell University	40
5. The University of Vermont	37

<u>SMALL COLLEGES:</u>	<u>VOLUNTEER NUMBER:</u>
1. Gonzaga University	24
2. St. Olaf College	22
3. University of Mary Washington	21
4. Oberlin College & Conservatory	20
5. Seattle University	19

<u>GRADUATE SCHOOLS:</u>	<u>VOLUNTEER NUMBER:</u>
1. University of Florida	26
2. University of Denver	20
2. University of Washington	20
4. Tulane University	16
5. Colorado State University	15

<u>HISTORICALLY (SINCE 1961):</u>	<u>VOLUNTEER NUMBER:</u>
1. University of California, Berkeley	3,544

2. University of Wisconsin-Madison	3,070
3. University of Washington	2,797
4. University of Michigan	2,515
5. University of Colorado Boulder	2,353

The Peace Corps ranks Top Colleges annually according to the size of the student body. Small schools have fewer than 5,000 undergraduates, medium-sized schools have between 5,000 and 15,000 undergraduates, and large schools have more than 15,000 undergraduates. Rankings are calculated based on fiscal year 2012 data as of September 30, 2012 as self-reported by Peace Corps volunteers. Ninety percent of volunteer positions require a bachelor's degree. Americans with backgrounds in agriculture, environment, teaching English as a second language, and other technical or language skills related to Peace Corps assignment areas are encouraged to apply for service one year in advance of their target departure date.

A list of the entire top 25 rankings for each undergraduate category, as well as all-time and graduate school rankings, can be found [here](#). To view the 2012 top college and university rankings, click [here](#).

About the Peace Corps: *Since President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps by executive order on March 1, 1961, more than 210,000 Americans have served in 139 host countries. Today, 8,073 volunteers are working with local communities in 76 host countries in agriculture, community economic development, education, environment, health and youth in development. Peace Corps volunteers must be U.S. citizens and at least 18 years of age. Peace Corps service is a 27-month commitment and the agency's mission is to promote world peace and friendship and a better understanding between Americans and people of other countries. Visit www.peacecorps.gov for more information.*