

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL PEACE CORPS ASSOCIATION

# WORLDVIEW

Volume 23 Number 2 • Spring 2011 • www.peacecorpsworldview.org

Vol. 23, No. 2



## AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

## HAITI, HAITI, HAITI

*What is to be done?*

by Kevin F. F. Quigley

**H**aiti's devastating earthquake on January 12th compounded endemic suffering in one of the world's poorest countries, a place plagued by weak physical infrastructure and ineffective government even before this massive quake.

Given Haiti's plight, the world and the American people responded with remarkable generosity. Within a month, nearly a billion dollars were donated and half of all Americans made contributions to the relief effort.

Probing questions quickly followed this generous response: Can Haiti effectively absorb these massive sums? Had the international community learned enough from recent disasters so that the response would be more effective this time? Would the world make the needed long-term and financial commitments to assist through recovery, relief to reconstruction in ways that created the "new Haiti" being widely discussed?

And closer to home, how should the Peace Corps community respond? The Peace Corps is not currently in the Haiti. It has been in and out of Haiti three times over the past half century, last leaving in 2005 due to growing political instability. Overall, 507 volunteers served there. Among those is a NPCA colleague, Matt Marek (Haiti 00-02), who worked as NPCA's Operations Manager after his volunteer service before returning to Haiti in 2005. Matt is now the head of programs for the American Red Cross there.

As we think about how best to help Haiti, there are important lessons to be learned from the international response to the Asian Tsunami in 2004. Not surprisingly, many of these lessons relate to Peace Corps best practices and include: rely on local capacity rather than the international community for

reconstruction effort whenever possible; seek to mobilize private financial flows to help rebuild infrastructure and develop businesses; encourage settlements in more physically secure areas; and seek ways to expand the already generous response provided by the Haitian diaspora.

All of these lessons certainly can and should be applied to Haiti. Although Haiti has enormous challenges, Matt and others have taught us that the Haitian people are remarkably resilient and have developed ingenious strength in overcoming never-ending adversity. That resilience and strength is going to be sorely tested in the weeks and months to come.

Since Peace Corps is not currently in Haiti, it is more difficult to launch Peace Corps (formerly called Crisis Corps) Response. However, that did not dampen our community's interest in helping out. After creating a landing page on our website that discussed a possible Peace Corps Response program, the Peace Corps was inundated with applications from Haiti RPCVs and others who wanted to assist.

While awaiting the Peace Corps Response effort, community members suggested that Peace Corps deploy volunteers from the Dominican Republic, a country that shares an island with Haiti—but the agency does not have the authority to do that.

At NPCA, we are facilitating a lively discussion among our groups and community members about how best to assist the reconstruction efforts. Sparking this discussion are a number of Haiti RPCVs: Patrick Bryson, who created a Facebook page because he couldn't be on the ground to help; Lenny Teh, President of Friends of Haiti, who organized fundraisers and is encouraging people to donate to

smaller organizations operating in Haiti where many RPCVs still have personal connections; and Bryan Schaaf who along with Matthew Marek and other recent Haiti RPCVs created Haiti Innovation, an organization to assist Haiti's long-term development.,

We are moved that many of our member groups have made generous donations to the relief and reconstruction efforts. Some of these groups include: RPCVs of Washington, D.C., the Connecticut RPCVs, the New Mexico Peace Corps Association, and Rhode Island RPCVs.

Here at NPCA we are in discussions about a possible long-term reconstruction project in Haiti that might become a 50th Anniversary project that the entire Peace Corps community could embrace. We are doing this because we know that the international community's attention and resources will move on long before Haiti's needs are addressed. Such a community-wide reconstruction project reflects who we are, our ongoing relationship with where we served, and our understanding of the need for long-term commitment to assist in the critical and uncertain task of human development everywhere but especially in Haiti.

We welcome your thoughts and suggestions on how best we can respond to Haiti and its tragic circumstances at [www.peacecorpsconnect.org](http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org).

In service,

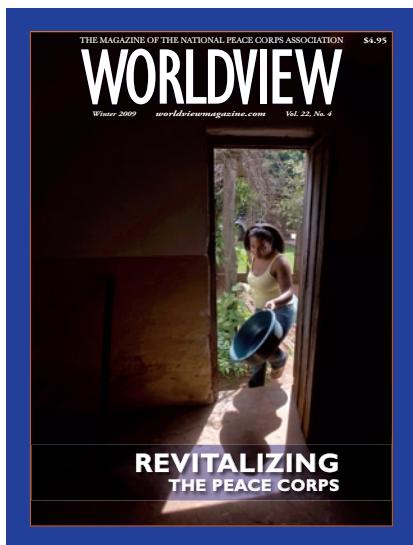
Kevin F. F. Quigley

---

*Kevin F. F. Quigley is President of the National Peace Corps Association. He served in Thailand, 1976 to 1979. Please send your comments to [president@peacecorpconnect.org](mailto:president@peacecorpconnect.org).*

## READERS WRITE US

*Letters to the Editor*



The cover of the Winter 2009 *Worldview* has an interesting photo of a PCV leaving her Paraguayan house to get water, but I was disappointed in reading the explanation inside. It said that she does her own laundry by hand, and in fact all of her domestic work such as cooking and cleaning, and that it took up more of her time compared to life in the U.S.

While it's commendable to live simply and to attempt to approximate the living habits of our coworkers and local people, I suspect that in most Peace Corps locations outside of large towns PCVs who are doing all of

their own domestic work are, due to a lack of time and energy, not doing their jobs as well as they could. Host countries want, and the Peace Corps attempts to provide, people with skills or knowledge who will put extra effort into their work and into interacting with locals, not foreigners who will spend hours a day acquiring food and water, cooking, doing laundry by hand, and so on.

Volunteers in my Peace Corps group in India were given a bicycle allowance, which we needed and used, and also a modest monthly cook allowance. As math/science teachers or nurses, most of us (outside of a few in large cities) simply didn't have the time for the various tasks related to getting and preparing food, that are so efficiently done in the U.S., with its supermarkets, refrigerators, running water, microwave ovens, and the like. In fact, the vast majority of the teachers at the two high schools I taught at did not do their own cooking or laundry, and the biology teacher at one school who was single hired a man to cook for him, just as I did.

This letter is not meant to be critical of the Paraguayan volunteer, especially as there can be mitigating circumstances in individual cases. But I do propose that PCVs look at the big picture in choosing what to do, and what not to do.

Sincerely,  
Peter Ross (India 63-65)



**The MBA for Worldchangers**  
Global Social and Sustainable Enterprise  
[www.csugsse.org](http://www.csugsse.org)

**Colorado State University**  
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

---

*Have something to say to the  
Peace Corps community?  
Your letters and submissions to  
WorldView are welcome at  
[news@peacecorpsconnect.org](mailto:news@peacecorpsconnect.org).*

## RESPONDING TO HAITI

*Once more, NPCA moves to connect, inform and engage our community*

by Erica Burman

In response to the Jan. 12 earthquake in Haiti, many members of the Peace Corps community are finding ways to contribute to relief efforts. Whether they are giving monetary donations, organizing charitable events, or working as staff or volunteers on the ground—the Peace Corps community has shown great resolve to take part in Haiti's recovery.

For its part, the National Peace Corps Association quickly reached out to Haiti Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, who in turn were mobilizing their networks. NPCA used the full extent of its online tools—blog, Facebook fan page,



Doug Trapp

Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Washington, DC collect for Haiti relief at their monthly happy hour.

## Plant knowledge. Grow justice.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN  
SUSTAINABLE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- MA in Sustainable International Development
- MS in International Health Policy and Management
- Dual MA in Sustainable Development & Coexistence

Brandeis University  
Boston  
The Heller School  
for Social Policy and Management



<http://heller.brandeis.edu>

Twitter, website—to connect and inform the Peace Corps community about the developing situation. On the social networking part of our website, <http://community.peacecorpsconnect.org>, we created a Haiti Disaster Response Discussion forum to share ideas and information. We also created a central “landing page” for Haiti information at <http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/haiti>, including the latest on Peace Corps Response, links to news stories about Haiti RPCVs, advocacy, advice on donating and more.



Doug Trapp

On Jan. 26, as part of our ongoing Member Group Capacity Building

Webinar Series, NPCA held a webinar for our member group leaders on “Supporting Haiti: Going Beyond Fundraisers.” Three Haiti RPCVs took part in a discussion about ways—both short and long term—that the Peace Corps community can mobilize to support relief and rebuilding efforts in Haiti. At the time of this writing, a follow up webinar is scheduled.

*Erica Burman (The Gambia 87-89) is Director of Communications for the National Peace Corps Association.*

## Around the NPCA

# GROUP NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

*A look at what NPCA member groups are up to*

by Erica Burman

## **FRIENDS OF GHANA**

**Friends of Ghana** (FOG) is arranging for a get-together at Ghanafest, the largest Ghanaian celebration in the Diaspora, which will be held in Chicago on July 31, 2010. FOG has arranged for convenient, reasonably priced housing 15 minutes from Ghanafest. For more information contact Debby Prigal (Ghana '81 to '83) at [dpriga@aol.com](mailto:dpriga@aol.com).

## **RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS OF SOUTH FLORIDA**

For the past 12 years, the **Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of South Florida** has sponsored an Everglades Outing for its members and invited low-income public school students taught by former Peace Corps volunteers, as well as children from homeless shelters and supportive housing programs. The most

recent trip took place on Jan. 20. Participation has tripled in the last five years and the environmental education component of the trip has also grown dramatically. “For many of the homeless children who have never been outside Miami’s urban areas, seeing the variety of wildlife up close—and it’s very close this time of year in the Everglades—is something they will remember forever,” said Emily Eisenhauer, president of the Peace Corps group in South Florida.

## **RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS OF BUFFALO and FRIENDS OF AFGHANISTAN**

**Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Buffalo, Friends of Afghanistan** and several other local organizations teamed up during Peace Corps Week (Feb. 27-Mar. 6) to highlight two critically important countries in South Central Asia: Afghanistan

and Iran. Events offered to residents of Western New York and Southern Ontario, Canada included a fashion show to raise money for girls’ schools in Afghanistan, a screening of the “The Kite Runner,” a live video conference with Afghan girls, and more.

## **FRIENDS OF NIGERIA**

Peace Corps had a relatively brief presence in Nigeria: from 1961-1971 and 1992-1995. Nonetheless the ties of **Friends of Nigeria** (FON)—to each other and to their country of service—remain strong. Since 2004 the group has “adopted” nine VSO volunteers working in Nigeria, receiving regular reports from these volunteers about their activities there.

*For a listing of NPCA member groups, visit [www.peacecorpsconnect.org/member-groups](http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/member-groups).*

# NOW YOU SEE IT, THEN YOU DIDN'T

*A personal story of the disappearance and reappearance of agriculture in international development*

by Arlene Mitchell

## THEN YOU SAW IT

**S**ome parts of growing up on a farm in Michigan in the 1950s were pretty cool. I brought seeds and tools to school and huddled with the "city girls" who exclaimed over the mysteries of animals and plants. Farmer and rural youth group activities were popular, county and state fairs were big events, agriculture supply stores were ubiquitous.

Meanwhile, on the international front, a sea change was afoot. Kicked off by Norman Borlaug's work in agricultural research in Mexico in the early 1940s, the subsequent Green Revolution in Latin America and much of Asia doubled the amount of food produced and saved hundreds of millions of lives from famine. Agriculture moved to the front and center of development thinking.

Successful new grain varieties were developed, large agricultural education and extension campaigns were undertaken, fertilizer and pesticide production and use were expanded dramatically, and massive irrigation schemes were built. Credit programs (and debt) were introduced to rural cultures, as was mechanization.

Governments and commercial enterprises invested to expand production. Organizations that focused entirely or in part on international agriculture—including the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Peace Corps, and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research—were established. In the U.S., fewer and fewer American farmers grew more and more food on increasingly large farms.

It was against this backdrop that I graduated from Michigan

State University, a school rooted in agriculture and with a strong

international focus—and stepped into the 1970 recession.



SCHOOL of PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY ★ WASHINGTON, D.C.

75 Years  
1934-2009

★ Top-ranked in the Nation  
— *U.S. News & World Report*

★ Consistently among top three  
producers of Presidential  
Management Fellows  
(2007, 2008, 2009)

★ Internationally renowned faculty

## *Ideas into action, action into service.*

American University has a long tradition of supporting Peace Corp volunteers. Visit our website or contact an admissions representative today to learn more about our graduate programs.

### Graduate degrees offered:

- Public Policy
- Public Administration
- Political Science
- Applied Politics
- Justice, Law & Society

Application fee waived for  
Peace Corps volunteers.

Admission deadline for  
Fall 2010, June 1.



202-885-6230 • [spagrad@american.edu](mailto:spagrad@american.edu) • [www.spa.american.edu](http://www.spa.american.edu)

## THEN YOU DIDN'T

While American agricultural production and farm sizes continued to grow throughout the 1970s, the number of farmers continued to shrink. Interest in international agriculture was also shrinking.

Lured by the promise of international adventure and desperate for a decent job, I applied to both the Marine Corps and to the Peace Corps. Intermittently called by the Marine Corps to see if I'd lost the 15 pounds needed to pass the physical (I hadn't), I did factory jobs (pickles, anyone?), took care of an invalid, and was just settling into being a customer service representative, when the Peace Corps asked if I was willing to teach English in West Africa. It was 1974. I said yes.

Our group served—on the heels of a terrible drought—as “Health and Nutrition Educators” working in maternal-child health clinics in Niger. One of our jobs was to dispense donated food aid. I witnessed its life-saving nature, but also saw the corruption and spoilage, how foreign the food was to the local palate, the dependency creation, and the chaos of poorly planned distributions.

The children in my community fared much better than those where my fellow volunteers were assigned. Why? I learned that the key differences were that local agriculture and food preservation practices were strong, and the women of the main ethnic group in my area had a great deal more independence than their counterparts throughout the country. Those lessons have stuck with me, along with an appreciation of the enormous value of education, a precious opportunity closed to most girls in the country.

After Niger, I worked for Peace Corps in various guises until 1984, when I accepted a position in the Office of International Cooperation and Development in the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The recession of the early 1980s, droughts, concern over the health impacts of farm chemical use, reduced farm supports, increased requirements for conservation measures, and increased foreign competition, took



Arlene Mitchell (left) readies for the approach of a devastating sandstorm in Boutilimit, Mauritania in 1977.

a toll on agriculture. Farmers who had gone into debt to purchase land when land prices were high lost as land prices dropped, and the U.S. agricultural sector was restructured. Willie Nelson sang for Farm Aid.

International agricultural investments (by the World Bank, USAID and others) tapered off. The Chicago Council on Global Affairs reported in 2009 that “America’s official development assistance to agriculture in Africa declined approximately 85 percent from the mid-1980s to 2006. The United States is now spending twenty times as much on food aid in Africa as it is spending to help African farmers to grow more of their own food.” The Peace Corps was not exempt. As reported by the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, “[beginning in 1983], Reagan attempted to diversify the Peace Corps program by branching it out from its traditional concern with education and agriculture to more current concerns like computer literacy and business-related education....”

Patrick Dumont

In 1997, I accepted a position in the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). Two years later, in 1999, Bill and Melinda Gates and established their foundation. Little did I know then that my farm and food experience would lead me to work in this amazing organization.

## GETTING OUR GROOVE BACK AND WHY AGRICULTURE MATTERS

Over a billion people live in chronic hunger; more than a billion (many of them the same people) live on less in extreme poverty. The majority of poor and hungry rely on agriculture for food and income. Agriculture is key to helping people lift themselves out of poverty

and hunger—almost no country has managed a rapid rise from poverty without increasing its agricultural productivity.

Increased droughts, water scarcity, and climate change will make it harder and harder for small farmers to prosper. Demand for food is growing as the earth’s population swells, and economic development brings more demand for diverse foods.

The good news is we are seeing another sea change—the world is beginning to focus once again on agriculture. African leaders pledged to increase their investments in agriculture and food security via the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP). Commitments from the 2009 L’Aquila G-8 and the Pittsburgh G-20 summits total \$22 billion.

Science and technology are making major progress possible. Advances such as drought- and disease-resistant crop varieties, micro-irrigation and mobile phones are allowing farmers to grow

food more efficiently and to receive better prices at market. Biofortification is making it possible to deliver vital micronutrients to reduce the suffering of people whose diets would otherwise be deficient.

Small farmers are smart, hard working, and capable partners. With the right tools and opportunities, they are active participants in the solution.

We must seize this moment and translate interest into action and results. I joined the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation two years ago, and—in my own small way—am working to do just that.

### **WHAT CAN FORMER, CURRENT AND FUTURE PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS DO?**

The Peace Corps is also looking at agriculture and food security again. I was lucky enough to attend a recent food security conference involving Peace Corps staff from 28 countries, and am excited by the potential for agricultural programs to regain prominence on the Peace Corps agenda.

The skills and attention of former, current and future volunteers are needed more than ever to increase opportunities for small farmers and to help rural communities succeed. For example:



**Arlene Mitchell today.**

The focus on smallholder farmers and their families calls for local language skills, cross-cultural understanding, and technologies that meet their needs. Investment across the agricultural value chain calls for a comprehensive set of technical interventions, including: developing farm management and business skills, improving seeds and soils, understanding markets and measuring and reporting results, strengthening farmer groups, and using new communication tools. Capacity building is needed throughout, from the individual and small group level to the national level.

Women must be at the center of the work. In developing countries, women do up to 80 percent of farm work. Programs must address gender to be effective, but how they address gender will determine whether the results are lasting, and without backlash or unintended consequences for the women or their families. Peace Corps volunteers and former volunteers understand these dynamics better than most.

Finally, success will not be possible without partnership and the input of a diverse range of voices.

From my current position at the Foundation, pulling all these threads of my previous lives together and seeing a proud profession (farming) become “sexy” again, I am thrilled and ready to roll. I hope you are, too.

*One thing that you can do, wherever you are, is to check out our project with the National Peace Corps Association and give us your ideas. Go to: [www.AfricaRuralConnect.org](http://www.AfricaRuralConnect.org)*

*Arlene Mitchell (Niger 74-76, Peace Corps staff Mauritania, U.S., Ukraine) is Senior Program Officer for Agricultural Development at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.*



**NATIONAL PEACE CORPS ASSOCIATION**  
...fostering peace through service, education and advocacy

**Connect.      Inform.      Engage.**

**The strength of the NPCA lies in its commitment to Peace Corps' values.**

As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Peace Corps  
become a member of NPCA at [www.peacecorpsconnect.org](http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org)

# AFRICA RURAL CONNECT: BRINGING IDEAS FOR AFRICA

*NPCA's innovative project successfully generates connections, support*

by Lissan Anfume

Last year's global food crises, and the recent United Nations announcement that a record high of one billion people in the world are hungry, refocused international attention on the long neglected themes of food security, agriculture, and rural communities in the developing world. In the predominantly agricultural sub-Saharan African countries, one in every three people is chronically hungry. Development agencies, African governments, and international bodies all returned to the debate of how to best develop the agricultural sector and rural African economies. It was during this critical period of shifting attention and resources that the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA) launched Africa Rural Connect (ARC), an online collaborative space where individuals and organizations around the world can come together to discuss best practices in agriculture and rural economies. ARC is not only a discussion forum; it is also a significant tool for those looking to put their insights to work.

In a time when many former or current Peace Corps host countries are among those suffering the most, returned and currently serving Peace Corps Volunteers possess unique insight from their 27 months on the ground, working and living in rural communities. ARC links these members of the extended Peace Corps community with development professionals, NGOs, academics, members of the African Diaspora, and farmers who want to share their ideas and experiences towards the betterment of Africa. Members of the ARC community then offer comments, technical support, suggestions, and resources in order to build each other's ideas into fully implementable and sustainable plans. In order to help

turn some of the most promising ideas into action, ARC held a four-month

competition in 2009, awarding \$3,000, \$2,000, and \$1,000 each month. Then,

On this tour you'll see big changes...

And the biggest may be the one you see in yourself.



Heifer Study Tours immerse you in the countries, cultures and lives of Heifer project participants. For one to two weeks you'll not only witness the root causes of hunger, but you'll see the solutions in action. As you are inspired by farmers working to better their lives, you will realize that simply being with them has already improved your own.

**Heifer Study Tours. Travel to a better world.**

Visit [www.heifer.org/heiferstudytours](http://www.heifer.org/heiferstudytours) for information about the program and trip specifics.



in December, NPCA announced a Grand Prize Winner who received \$20,000 to implement his/her project.

Behind ARC is a diverse team of individuals who have proven the value of collaboration by bringing the site to fruition in a matter of months. Led by ARC manager, Molly Mattessich of NPCA (Mali 02-04), the lineup includes technology experts, scholars, members of the Diaspora, business and development professionals, Web developers, marketing consultants, designers, moderators, evaluators, judges, and a host of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) in a variety of fields. With their hard-work and assistance, NPCA was able to create a dynamic space for worldwide cooperation.

At the close of our first competition in December, just six months after our July launch date, ARC had over 10,000 users from over 130 countries and more than 600 ideas. These ideas covered a wide spectrum of themes, from irrigation and water purification systems, to farmer's cooperatives and micro-financing ventures, to increased access to mobile and Internet tools, to income-generating business strategies, to basic infrastructural improvements. The community of users was similarly diverse—of our 12 prize winning ideas, five were posted by people living in Africa, two were by RPCVs, and one by a team of students from Berkley's Haas Business School.

From the very first round, it was evident that the prize money was only one of the benefits that active users could receive from the site. Paul Munroe posted an idea on behalf of Energy For Opportunity, an NGO dedicated to initiating an "Energy Revolution Across West Africa" through the implementation of a series of small-scale solar projects in Benin, Sierra Leone, and Mali. Weeks after he posted his idea and won second place in the first round, Munroe informed NPCA that, "The Africa Rural Connect website has been an excellent resource for Energy For Opportunity (EFO)... with the website acting as an excellent portal for sharing ideas and putting EFO in contact with the wider



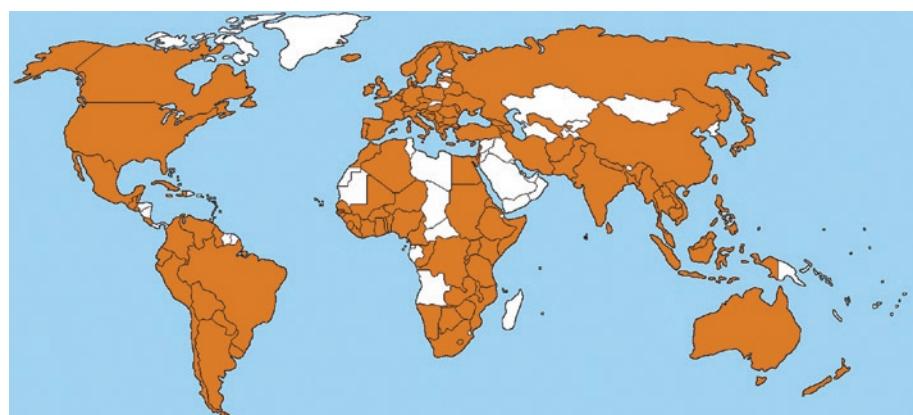
ARC Grand prize winner Jacky Foo.

African development populace." The organization was contacted by several other NGOs and individuals and Paul noted "the diversity of these contacts, from small African organizations and businesses from all parts of the continent to larger international development organizations; from students interested in development opportunities to development professionals wanting to hear more about our work. Africa Rural Connect has helped to transform Energy For Opportunity, which was initially just an idea, into an organization that now has connections around the world."

Several others who competed in

the competition, including the third round winner, Macheru Karuku, whose idea was to incorporate basic irrigation systems and Internet agriculture learning into semi-arid land schools in rural Kenya, echoed this last sentiment. "[W]inning has completely transformed my organization from a hitherto little and unknown Nanyuki-based charitable organization to a now recognizable name in Africa, America and Europe, simply because of the E-Agriculture idea." In fact, the posting of his idea on ARC led to a partnership offer with an American-based organization that subsequently donated 100 computers to his project. Voice of America and The Daily Nation, the most widely read newspaper in East Africa, also interviewed him.

At the close of the fourth round of competitions, our four judges were left with the task of selecting the Grand Prize Winning Idea. Among them was Carol Bellamy, president and CEO of World Learning and former Peace Corps and UNICEF Director. "I was impressed with the range of ideas that made it to the final round," remarked Bellamy. "All of the plans showed a lot of creativity and a deep commitment to engage locally to make a difference globally." The other judges were Wilber James, managing general partner, Rockport Capital; Angelique Kidjo, West African singer, songwriter, UNICEF goodwill ambassador, and founder of the Batonga Foundation; and Bruce McNamer, president and CEO, TechnoServe. The panel announced its decision in December,



ARC had over 10,000 users from over 130 countries.



naming “The Ndekero Challenge: A Systems Approach for Rabbit Keeping by a Rural Community in Partnership with a Commercial Rabbit Farm,” an idea submitted by Jacky Foo of Sweden, the \$20,000 Grand Prize Winner.

Shortly after the close of the 2009 competition, Mattessich traveled to Kenya, the country outside of the United States most represented on ARC. In Nairobi she met with ARC participants and presented the Grand Prize to Foo at a NPCA-hosted press conference attended by 25 local journalists.

Mattessich also visited Nanyuki, the site of the E-Agriculture project that won the third round. “It was a joy to shake hands with the people in communities doing fantastic agricultural projects that we would not have met were it not for Africa Rural Connect,” she said. “I am looking forward to expanding and improving this network so that we can hear the ideas from those most impacted by agricultural challenges in Africa and understand their solutions.” A highlight of the trip was the ceremony and commemoration of the agricultural project at Gakawa Secondary School in Nanyuki. Because of the project, schoolchildren now have vegetables year-round, even during the dry season.

A new round of conversations and collaboration on Africa Rural Connect begins in March 2010, as NPCA launches a second contest. This year’s contest will be even more interactive, now giving all readers the opportunity to state how they will invest in a project as well as offering additional awards for collaboration efforts. We believe that such collaboration brings about the strongest ideas.

*Lissan Anfune is the Africa Rural Connect project assistant at the National Peace Corps Association.*

# New York is **CONNECTED** **THE NEW SCHOOL** is New York

## EARN A MASTER'S IN TESOL ON CAMPUS OR ONLINE

Discover a groundbreaking graduate program in teaching English to speakers of other languages developed by leading ELT professionals. Our global perspective prepares students to take a leadership role in this evolving field.



- Faculty of renowned international experts includes **Scott Thornbury, Jeremy Harmer, and John Fanselow**
- Flexibility to study online and on our New York City campus
- Specialized training in Teaching and Curriculum Development
- Fully accredited university

Founded in 1919, The New School is a legendary university in New York City offering some of the nation's most respected degree, certificate, and continuing education programs in art and design, liberal arts, management and policy, and the performing arts.

Online and on-campus information sessions are held throughout the year. For more about these events and the MATESOL, call 212.229.5630 or visit us online.

[www.newschool.edu/matesol34](http://www.newschool.edu/matesol34)

## THE NEW SCHOOL

The New School is a leading university in New York City offering some of the nation's most distinguished degree, certificate, and continuing education programs in art and design, liberal arts, management and policy, and the performing arts.

An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

## "LOST" CROPS

*Little known crops may hold the key to agricultural sustainability in Andean South America*

by Kristina Owens

**W**hile widely used, the term "lost crops" is truly a misnomer. In rural communities throughout the tropics, people raise, manage, and harvest crops that are not recognized globally. Because at times these crops are cultivated and used in just some areas of a country, they are "lost" to agriculture development workers and scientific researchers, never developing to their full potential. However in a time when food security is of great concern, given fluctuations in climate, food prices, and global policy, it is an opportune moment to work with local communities and "find" the crops that these people never lost.

Communities often know what should be improved in a crop and working in tandem with volunteers and scientists these improvements are possible without damaging the genetic base of local crops. My own two years of service as a Peace Corps Volunteer (PCV) in Las Carreras, Bolivia was an experience that is probably common to many PCVs. I worked with local people on local agricultural systems with crops they had grown for generations. However, as a Master's International student I was able to use the knowledge and support of my professors and the Lindbergh Foundation to examine how commercialization might change the sustainability of cherimoya, a valuable local fruit.

Arriving in Bolivia, I was inspired by the variety of produce available in the Bolivian markets. In addition to the potatoes, a diversity of fruits and vegetables was available which I never knew had existed. Even "Googling" these fruits or vegetables gave me limited information. A few of the fruits piqued my interests for developing a master's project. Through



The cherimoya.

my early research and access to great resources such as my professors at Michigan Technological University and the Peace Corps/Bolivia staff, I encountered the National Research Council's publication "Lost Crops of the Incas: Little-Known Plants of the Andes with promise for Worldwide Cultivation," the International Center for Underutilized Crops website and various other publications. These publications identified these plants, and suggested further development of many different crops found locally in the Andes. As a Spanish major, I studied how the European conquest of the Andes had devastated local populations and cultures, but was unaware of the agricultural impact—the conversion of many agricultural systems from diverse and productive farmlands linked by intricate markets to near monocultures that focused on carrots, wheat, barley and potatoes. I wondered how I could apply this knowledge to my Peace

Corps and master's work. Genetic research or crop improvement takes years to implement. How do we work with these unknown crops at the level of rural smallholder farmer in the Andes Mountains, Amazon Basin or the coastal areas? Finding these 'lost' crops in our communities not only on the farm level, but perhaps on the cultural level.

### WHY SHOULD WE SEARCH FOR THESE CROPS?

As RPCVs and PCVs we know intimately how our communities struggle to survive and provide a better life for their children. As PCVs we work with them to make small but constant sustainable changes. Many of the farmers work with cash crops, which do not always guarantee a stable income. My southern Bolivian community mainly grew carrots, onions, and potatoes as their cash crops. Introducing a new cash crop is a risk in itself. However, as PCVs and RPCVs in the development field we get to know the communities and can identify a unique or "lost" crop. Focusing on developing these local crops can increase the income of the smallholder farmer and many of these crops have additional advantages. Fruit trees provide nutritious snacks for children, some provide erosion control on the farms, and others improve soil quality. Diversifying the farm helps buffer the rural smallholder farmer from extreme fluctuations of crop prices, diseases and climate. Development of these crops would take little money or horticultural input. We do not need to introduce new crops but rather focus on crops that are being used for home consumption and develop them into an alternative cash crop, or secondary products such as

jams and jellies. We can further identify how the local community is using these local small crops. Are they preserving, roasting, or eating them raw? Do they use the plant fiber for fuel? How do they function within a farm system? Do they provide shade, erosion control or act as a windbreak? It is also interesting to find out the history of these “little-known” crops. Are they native or were they brought into the area and assimilated into the farming culture?

## CHERIMOYA AND OTHER UNIQUE CROPS

I went looking for these “lost” crops. I was curious about the genetic diversity of rural Bolivian farmer’s crops. When I arrived in Bolivia I explored local farms and markets and found the cherimoya (*Annona cherimola mill.*) The cherimoya invokes nostalgia for many Bolivians and also Peruvians. It is often referenced as part of the pre-Incan and Andean cultures. Today Bolivians cultivate this fruit tree almost exclusively for home consumption or local distribution. However, the fruit is gaining popularity throughout the world and the region. Recently, I found the fruit in an Annapolis, Md. supermarket selling for \$7.99 each. In Bolivia, three of those same fruit sell for about 60 cents, which is still a substantial economic advantage for small rural Bolivian farmer.

Though my research focused on southern Bolivia, the fruit is grown throughout Bolivia and the Andes. I felt my own community had the potential to grow this fruit tree but trying to convince them to grow the fruit as a semi-commercial crop proved to be difficult. Though they were not interested in growing the tree, people in neighboring communities were—quite successfully. I focused on identifying and preserving genetic diversity of the tree, while allowing for sustainable management by smallholder farming families. An important component included interviewing farmers, discussing the history of the fruit tree, and



Cherimoya fruits in an open air market in Lima, Peru.

David Hood

identifying what each farmer does with their fruit. The human component added substantially to my scientific research. The investigation process was not necessarily one sided—as a natural resource Volunteer I was able to provide simple tips to better manage their trees. Often these “lost” crops grow with little or no horticultural management so a simple tip, such as when to add manure, increases the yield.

The cherimoya was not the only “lost” crop in the area. I chose to research the cherimoya because although it had been listed in several publications, it was apparent that little research had been done. However there was another tree which is truly a “lost” crop, as it is rarely mentioned anywhere and it is only known in southern Bolivia. My community referred it as “palqui” (*Acacia feddeano*). It is a common tree in this semi-arid area of Bolivia. Community members would traditionally roast the seeds and grind them for use as a coffee-like drink. During my time as a Volunteer, community members were working with a local NGO to better market this product. This activity encouraged the community to conserve this slow growing, nitrogen fixing and erosion-preventing tree.

## WHAT NOW?

South American countries are in a position to buffer against fluctuating food prices and climate change while increasing diversity. Researchers, extension workers, as well as PCVs should encourage farmers to improve the management and marketing of these products. However, in doing so, emphasizing the importance of genetic diversity and innovative sustainable agriculture practices is a must. As Peace Corps Volunteers we can initiate sustainable development by working with our communities to increase awareness of these “little-known” plants among local governments, NGOs and government agencies. Returned Peace Corps Volunteers fulfill the Peace Corps’ Third Goal by raising awareness in our professional and personal networks about the benefits of increasing diversity in these Andean countries. As an RPCV and a plant biologist, I look for opportunities to talk about these little known crops, whether it’s asking my local supermarket to stock the cherimoya and other crops, discussing my overall Peace Corps experience or discussing the potential of these crops with my colleagues in the field of agriculture.

Kristina J. Owens (Bolivia 00-02) is a plant biologist with the USDA.

## FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

*A push for self-determination*

by Kyle Freund

**I**t happens to almost every Peace Corps volunteer: the daunting experience of entering a supermarket in the United States after two years living abroad.

The startling number of choices—20 types of bread, piles of frozen meat glistening under cool fluorescent lights, fruits and vegetables from all corners of the globe—can overwhelm even the most cool-headed customer.

The sheer amount of food in modern grocery stores bewilders. But where does it all come from and how does it end up on those shelves?

As people begin to question the origin of their food, we see a movement building in the United States toward locally-grown foods and away from long supply chains. Community-supported agriculture (CSA) and local farmers' markets are increasingly popular.

In the coffee farming highlands of Veracruz, Mexico, families also have taken a critical look at their food system and created an innovative food sovereignty project that ensures food security with a focus on local production. The project was created by Self-Managed Development (AUGE), an organization based in Teocelo, Veracruz, and is supported by Coffee Kids, a US-based nonprofit dedicated to helping coffee-farming families improve their quality of life.

### FOOD SCARCITY IN VERACRUZ

In the municipalities of Coatepec and Huatusco in the state of Veracruz, Mexico, families depend on coffee as their primary source of income. The uncertainty of coffee prices, coupled with insufficient income from the annual harvest, create widespread poverty. For generations, coffee farmers supplemented income from the coffee harvest with subsistence farming to feed their families.

But things have changed.

"In the past, families would go down to their nearest market once a week to

buy the things they couldn't produce themselves," said Norma Alcántara,

## THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION



The University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration, a premier program for graduate social work education, combines innovative initiatives in aging, community organizing, family support, and community schools with outstanding programs in clinical social work, social policy, and social service administration. Full- and part-time programs are available.

#### APPLICATION DEADLINES:

*Master's program:* December 1, 2010; January 15 and April 1, 2011

*Doctoral program:* December 15, 2010

*Accelerated program:* October 15, 2010

ONLINE APPLICATION FOR ALL PROGRAMS FOR 2011  
(except Accelerated program) opens September 1, 2010 at:  
<https://grad-application.uchicago.edu/index.cfm>

APPLICATION FOR Accelerated program beginning Spring 2011 opens June 1, 2010 and closes October 15, 2010.

For further information, please contact an Admissions representative at [admissions@ssa.uchicago.edu](mailto:admissions@ssa.uchicago.edu)

Over 90% of master's students receive scholarships.  
100% of doctoral students receive full funding.

INTERESTED IN

# SOCIAL JUSTICE

[www.ssa.uchicago.edu](http://www.ssa.uchicago.edu) 866.213.6794



**At Left:** Alejandra Espinoza (left) shows her garden to José Luis Zárate, international program director at Coffee Kids; **Center:** Espinoza with Casilda Rámirez, a traditional doctor; and **Right:** Families in the food sovereignty project supported by Coffee Kids.

general director of AUGE.

"It gave them the chance to socialize and make their purchases. But over time they were exposed to a broader type of purchasing and found food that's cheaper than what they produced. And then you hear about things [cheap processed foods] on the radio and on television...."

"We are trying to copy a way of life that offers modern comfort and status, and people accept that this is the best way to live and cannot escape it," added Alcántara.

Immigration and international trade agreements also have had a dramatic impact on food habits. Community members who return from abroad often become accustomed to shopping at supermarkets. Attitudes change and they begin to look down on working the land. International trade agreements have reduced protections to local producers and heavily subsidized food from the exterior has flooded the markets.

## LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO A GLOBAL PROBLEM

Along with the changing foodscape, a worldwide food crisis makes the situation more pressing. According to the World Bank, global food prices rose 83 percent in the period between 2005 and 2008. Witnessing the effect of high prices on families in the region, Norma Alcántara and staff at AUGE looked at ways to address the problem.

Since 1995, AUGE has managed an extremely successful microcredit and savings program with the help of Coffee Kids. The program includes over 3,900 women, men and children organized into 140 groups who have saved over \$700,000. AUGE is leveraging the

influence of these groups to implement their Food Sovereignty Project.

The term, "food sovereignty," was coined in 1996 by the organization "La Via Campesina," the International Peasant Movement. Food sovereignty expands upon the nature of food security to prioritize local production to feed families, increase access to land, fight against genetically-modified organisms and safeguard access to water sources.

To promote a change in local practices, AUGE began a series of workshops in seven communities on the meaning of food security and food sovereignty; identifying genetically modified corn; family garden construction; elaboration of organic fertilizers; healthy eating habits; and the preparation of herbal medicines.

By promoting a return to subsistence farming practices and providing support to families wishing to start family gardens, community favor is turning toward local production and healthier eating.

"Many families are used to eating junk food," said Rafael Elot Aquino, a program facilitator. "But we have seen the effects of cheap food on our health. There was one woman who told us that thanks to the courses, she stopped buying cookies to feed her children and used that to buy vegetables and fruit."

The project has attracted over 2,800 participants and reaches thousands more through a radio program that promotes smallscale agriculture. Facilitators take the project to schools where students learn organic gardening techniques.

AUGE's food sovereignty project also promotes the use of traditional medicines instead of expensive pharmaceuticals. Alejandra Espinoza, a mother of two

from Cosautlán, Veracruz, is learning about traditional medicine through the project and has two large parcels at her family's home. One parcel is dedicated to food for her family and the other is dedicated to medicinal plants she uses to treat her patients.

"I learned about plants and medicine preparation through Casilda Rámirez [a traditional doctor managing AUGE's traditional medicine program]. Thanks to this project, the families I help save an average of \$40 when they visit me by using traditional medicines," said Espinoza.

## CREATING A SECURE FUTURE WITH FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Looking at crowded supermarket aisles from a food sovereignty perspective, we realize that though there are many options to buy, we don't necessarily get to choose where our food comes from.

"We can learn a lot from AUGE's efforts. Families in Veracruz are looking hard at where their food comes from and how it affects their local economy and personal well-being," said Carolyn Fairman, executive director at Coffee Kids. "Greater food security can be found through an increase in sovereignty."

By helping communities—like those working with AUGE—take control of their food systems, people will determine their own priorities and create affordable options that work for all.

*Kyle Freund (Guatemala 03-05) is Communications Manager for Coffee Kids, based in Santa Fe, N.M. To learn more about AUGE and Coffee Kids' work with other organizations, please visit [www.coffeekids.org/aboutus/programs](http://www.coffeekids.org/aboutus/programs).*

## COMING FULL CIRCLE

*CNFA farmer-to-farmer volunteers provide targeted help, allow RPCVS to serve again*

by Jerad Tietz

**V**olunteering had not been a big part of my life until the summer of 2004. That all changed when I accepted a Peace Corps assignment in a little country in Eastern Europe called Moldova. I was immediately immersed into the world of volunteering, and I spent the next two years working in agribusiness development in a small town two hours north of the country's capital city. It was during this time that I had my first experience with professional volunteers.

As a Peace Corps Volunteer (PCV) in Moldova I was exposed to CNFA Farmer-to-Farmer (FTF) volunteers and their technical work with local host organizations. All of the people I met were experts in their fields and would come and work with various agricultural entities throughout the country for two or three weeks, providing technical assistance on everything from vegetable production to microfinance, food product marketing, veterinary services for beef cattle, and greenhouse construction. Eventually I met the people at CNFA in Moldova who were responsible for FTF and I became very interested in the program. My assignment came to an end in 2006 and I have maintained a strong connection to the people I met in Moldova, none more so than my Moldovan wife and her family.



Roger Holck and Qurino Dawa (far left, left) consulting with a potato grower in Malawi.

When I returned to the US full-time in 2008 I knew that I wanted to continue

working with international agricultural development. The experiences I had in

**GW's GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

# CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY

GW invites returning Peace Corps Volunteers to earn an advanced degree in:

- Education Policy
- International Education
- Counseling
- Elementary Education
- Secondary Education
- Special Education

**Ranked among the Top 35 graduate schools of education nationwide by U.S. News & World Report.**

**Learn more at**  
[gsehd.gwu.edu/Prospective+Students](http://gsehd.gwu.edu/Prospective+Students)

**Or call**  
866-653-5035

**Now accepting applications for Fall 2010**

*Tuition support options available.*

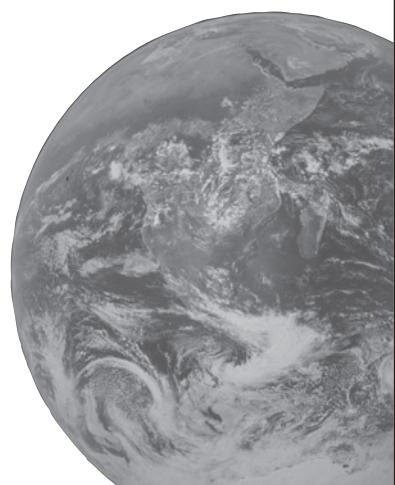
THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON DC

BRING US YOUR  
AMBITION.

[www.gwu.edu/gradinfo](http://www.gwu.edu/gradinfo)

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION INSTITUTION.

G31856



Moldova left a lasting impression on me, and I now work for CNFA's Farmer-to-Farmer Program in Washington, DC. I always knew that my experience as a PCV would be a valuable asset in my career but I don't think that I ever imagined that I would continue to have direct contact with Peace Corps, not to mention so many RPCVs—though you can hardly walk down the street in Washington without running into one.

Four of my colleagues at CNFA are RPCVs, and we all work on the FTF Program. We have all found working with volunteers—especially RPCVs—to be a very rewarding experience. In just the last year my colleagues and I have sent 23 RPCVs on FTF assignments, and there are at least three additional RPCVs who will complete assignments with CNFA this year. One of our volunteers will even become a PCV in the Ukraine this spring. Many of these volunteers tell us that their experiences as PCVs have had a profound effect on the way they view the world. Most of them enjoyed their volunteer assignments so much that they want to relive the experience while imparting technical agricultural and business knowledge to those that have requested volunteer assistance through FTF.

CNFA FTF volunteer assignments are typically two to three weeks in duration and focus on a wide variety of technical expertise. In each country our volunteer assignments are designed to benefit entire value chains rather than one or two individual or seemingly unrelated links in that chain. As such, our volunteers can focus on very technical issues at any point within the value chain. One recent example of a CNFA FTF volunteer assignment was the construction of two fruit dryers in Mozambique. Two volunteers, who happened to be brothers, spent 18 days there working with a farmer's association. One brother conducted a training seminar on how to physically construct the fruit dryer using all locally procured materials. The other brother trained the farmer's association members on how to dry the fruit using the newly constructed dryer and then how to package the dried fruit for sale. Many of our RPCV volunteers have also made great contributions to the FTF Program.



Bruce Williams

Bruce Williams (right) consulting with a vendor at a market in Angola.

In May of 2009 an RPCV was sent to Malawi as a CNFA FTF volunteer to work with a farmer who had realized that rural education, particularly agricultural youth education, was not being offered to children in his community. With the help of the volunteer, the structure for a youth organization was put in place and an agricultural education curriculum established. This same RPCV and CNFA FTF volunteer has since gone on to become the Country Director for our FTF field office in Angola. PCVs also frequently help to supplement trainings and projects that are conducted through FTF volunteers. There are many other similar stories documenting the contributions of RPCVs to hundreds of host organizations and thousands of beneficiaries through the CNFA FTF Program.

In the field, almost all 12 of the FTF offices that CNFA manages have been in direct contact with current PCVs. Since they are so integrated into their communities, PCVs often help CNFA identify organizations in need of technical assistance. One such instance occurred with a PCV friend of mine while I was serving in Moldova. His town was in an isolated area near the point of Moldova that is bordered by Romania and the Ukraine, a true Moldovan village. In this village was a small dairy cattle operation that had an interest in increasing milk production from its cows, though they lacked the necessary expertise and equipment. After researching various options for how to provide the needed technical assistance to the small dairy operation my PCV colleague came across the CNFA FTF Program. Fortunately, the needs of the dairy operation could be met through FTF volunteer assistance

and, after a few subsequent visits from additional FTF volunteers, the dairy operation grew to become one of the largest and most profitable in the region.

My plunge into the world of volunteerism showed me that there are hardly more fulfilling paths than working with people in developing and underserved countries. I have been fortunate enough to have experienced volunteering from several different perspectives and I'm proud to say that my work with volunteers and volunteering is far from over. I hope that you continue to volunteer your time and expertise to help those in need whenever and wherever you can.

*CNFA is a non-profit company and implementer of the USAID-funded John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Volunteer Program. CNFA began implementing FTF in the early 1990s in the former Soviet countries of Moldova, Belarus and Ukraine. Since then 1,450 volunteers have completed assignments through CNFA and an additional 1,500 volunteers will complete assignments in 12 countries through 2013.*

*CNFA operates its FTF Program in three regions: Eastern Europe/Caucasus and Central Asia, East Africa and Southern Africa. The specific countries to which my colleagues and I send volunteers include: Angola, Belarus, Georgia, Kenya, Malawi, Moldova, Mozambique, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Uganda, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.*

*For more information on how to volunteer through CNFA's Farmer-to-Farmer Program please visit <http://www.cnfa.org/farmertofarmer/volunteer-opportunities>.*

*Jerad Tietz (Moldova) is CNFA's Regional Coordinator for Southern Africa.*

# IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO RAISE A GARDEN

*Resettled refugees plus agriculture create a powerful synergy in Idaho*

by JoAnna Haugen

**T**ake a few acres of donated land. Add a handful of community volunteers. Provide seeds and equipment. Top off with training.

The result? In Boise, Idaho, it's a fully functioning gardening program designed for refugees who are resettled in the region, which in turn offers fresh and organic produce to community members.

"We resettle around 100 individuals per year and most of them are coming from situations of conflict around the world," says Katie Painter (Paraguay 00-02), the refugee agriculture coordinator for the Idaho Office for Refugees. In recent years, the city has helped integrate people who have been persecuted from Iraq, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Myanmar and Burundi by offering job training and placement. A three-year federal grant has allowed the office to establish Global Gardens, which offers gardening space and equipment to these people, many of whom have grown up in cultures steeped in farming and agriculture.

Setting up community gardens takes, well, a community. Global Gardens currently encompasses five gardens and two larger sites (considered farms), which are two to three acres in size. Each plot of land is sponsored by a local organization such as a church or neighborhood association. They oversee the day-to-day operations of the gardens. Community members have also been generous with their donations, offering seedlings and equipment.

But the people who plant the seeds, weed the gardens and harvest the crops are the local refugees. Each garden is unique to the people who work in it. The Avahath Beth Israel Synagogue Garden, for example, is maintained



Global Gardens

Dadiri Nuro and Mualiko Mberwa, both from Somalia at the Edwards Greenhouse Market in Boise.



## German Chancellor Fellowship International Opportunity for Young Professionals

Germany's Alexander von Humboldt Foundation awards ten German Chancellor Fellowships annually to young professionals in the private, public, not-for-profit, cultural and academic sectors who are citizens of the United States. The program, which also includes fellowships for citizens of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China, sponsors individuals who demonstrate the potential to strengthen ties between Germany and their own country through their profession or studies. The fellowship provides for a stay of one year in Germany for professional development, study, or research. Prior knowledge of German is not a prerequisite.

The program begins September 1 and lasts twelve months. It is preceded by three months of intensive language classes in Germany. Must be a U.S., Russian or Chinese citizen. A bachelor's degree is required. Candidates must have received their degree after September 1, 1999. Application deadline for U.S. applicants: October 31, 2010. Applications and information available at:

**[www.humboldt-foundation.de](http://www.humboldt-foundation.de)**

info@americanfriends-of-avh.org – (202) 783-1907

**Economics • Environmental Affairs • Finance • Government  
Journalism • Law • Management • Public Policy**

by a large number of Somali Bantu who enjoy growing corn. The Silver Sage Girl Scouts Garden is gardened primarily by Bosnians and Meskhetian Turks from Russia who like to grow ethnic crops such as gypsy peppers, root crops (such as turnips and potatoes), tomatoes, a variety of yellow peppers and cucumbers.

Growing crops is only part of the story at Global Gardens. Once harvesting is complete, the produce has to go somewhere. To bring the program full circle, Painter teaches a technical course to the gardeners and farmers that includes information on planning planting calendars, water and irrigation, managing pests, soil and, of course, marketing. Local Boise farmers donate their time to help teach the classes by sharing their knowledge about the land. This past year, farmers at the Somali Bantu Community Farm in particular focused on their marketing skills by learning how to wash and prepare produce for sale, setting up a booth at the farmers' market, pricing products and managing transactions with customers. The refugees have also been successful in selling their produce to local restaurants.

In 2009, the Global Gardens program introduced community-



**Mwechiwa Migua at the Capitol City Public Market in Boise.**

supported agriculture (CSA) into the marketing mix, which has provided gardeners with another way to share and sell their produce. "It's basically like buying a subscription to the farm," Painter says, "and when we start harvesting vegetables, the people who have signed up receive a bag of whatever vegetables we have each week."

From June through September, members of the Global Gardens CSA

received large shopping bags heaped with leafy greens, several varieties of squash, tomatoes, peppers, beets, carrots and savory items, such as onions and garlic.

"The amount of stuff we got through the CSA was astounding for the price we paid," says Matthew Miller, a Boise resident and CSA member who served in the Peace Corps with his wife, Juana Nolasco (Russia 00-02). Miller says the couple ate more healthily in Russia and wanted to integrate similar eating habits into their lifestyle stateside. They were actively looking for a CSA program to join when they found out about Global Gardens. After speaking with Painter about the program, Miller and Nolasco signed up for the season. They are planning on enrolling in 2010 as well.

"It's a fabulous deal," Miller says. "We're a family of four and we could barely keep up." But it's not just the food that keeps them coming back. Knowing that they're supporting the local community is important and being able to interact with the refugees working in the gardens at the farmers' market was a valuable experience, especially for their kids. Global Gardens offered members of the CSA an opportunity to tour the gardens, and at the end of the season, members were treated to a meal created with



**Yussuf Sundi, a refugee from Somalia, at the Somali Bantu Community Farm.**

foods from the gardens and farms. "It was a great way to celebrate the end of the season," Miller says. "I've never seen that with other CSA programs."

Having traveled so far from their home countries to settle in Boise, the refugees have struggled with language differences and lack of educational and job training, but Global Gardens has given many of them an opportunity to learn and master new skills that have led some down professional career paths. This past summer the organization was able to hire some refugees through the Idaho Department of Labor. Painter offered a job to a young Somali Bantu who was unemployed at the time, and though he wasn't particularly interested in farming, he accepted the position. "He really ran with it and became independent," Painter says. "He became a leader in his community. He's a really ambitious guy anyway, but I think he discovered an area of interest that he didn't know about."

The federal grant that has helped make the community gardens a reality will run out in September 2010, but Painter has worked to make the project self-sustainable. Some of the gardening groups have applied for and received individual grants for additional funding. Other farmers and gardeners have mentioned breaking away from the community gardens and starting their own gardens and businesses. And there's already talk of enrolling up to 20 members in the 2010 CSA program.

"I talk with my clients and make sure they're aware that they need to be self-sufficient. I explain that our funding might run out," Painter says. "People have asked them about what they will do if that happens and they've said that the community farms will always continue in some form."

*Learn more about the Idaho Refugee Garden Program at [www.idahorefugees.org/Home/Global\\_Gardens](http://www.idahorefugees.org/Home/Global_Gardens).*

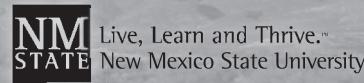
*JoAnna Haugen (Kenya 04-05) is the community news editor for the National Peace Corps Association.*

## You volunteered. Turn your life-changing experiences into a career!

### Peace Corps Fellows/USA programs

- Agricultural Economics & Agricultural Business
- Agricultural & Extension Education
- Animal & Range Sciences
- Economic Development
- Entomology, Plant Pathology & Weed Science
- Family & Consumer Sciences
- Fish, Wildlife & Conservation Ecology
- Plant & Environmental Sciences
- Hotel, Restaurant & Tourism Management

For more information, go to [aces.nmsu.edu](http://aces.nmsu.edu)



### College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

## T School of Medicine TEMPLE UNIVERSITY®

## Prepare for Your Future...



### Our new Post Baccalaureate Pre-Medical Program

Provides the opportunity to fulfill your goal of becoming a physician. We offer two courses of study.

**Basic Core in Medical Science Track (BCMS):** 12-month full-time program for students who need to complete the pre-medical requirements.

**Advanced Core in Medical Science Track (ACMS):** 10-month full-time program for students who have completed the pre-medical requirements and wish to enhance their credentials.

Students have the unique opportunity to matriculate into our School of Medicine immediately after successful completion of the program.

The online application and additional information is available at [www.temple.edu/medicine/postbac](http://www.temple.edu/medicine/postbac).  
Questions: email [postbac@temple.edu](mailto:postbac@temple.edu) or call 215-707-3342

Temple University School of Medicine  
Post Baccalaureate Pre-Medical Program  
3500 North Broad Street, Suite 124  
Philadelphia, PA 19140  
215-707-3342  
[www.temple.edu/medicine/postbac](http://www.temple.edu/medicine/postbac)

## WANTED: AGRICULTURE SKILLS

*Peace Corps is renewing its focus on agriculture—but Volunteers are scarce*

by Frank Higdon

### FOOD SECURITY AS A GLOBAL PROBLEM

All too often, we see news reports of famine and widespread hunger in many parts of the world. While many considered the problem to be market-based in the past, policy makers now often look at the problem as a “food security” issue. Food security relates to the availability of food in a community and the ability for all people in the community to have adequate access to it. If segments of the population do not have access to adequate supplies of

nutritious food, then that community has a food security problem. While the food security issue is complex, poverty and families’ inability to purchase food in their local marketplace often play large roles in communities with food security issues.

### PEACE CORPS’ RESPONSE

Peace Corps has been a longtime and active player in America’s response to the global food crisis. Since 1961, Peace Corps has represented an American legacy of global service and Peace Corps Volunteers have worked on locally-based projects that increase

crop yields, expand the diversity of crops that farmers grow and improve farmers’ processing and marketing techniques. Peace Corps agricultural sector projects that address food security issues have ranged from fish farming and the introduction of small-scale irrigation systems to improved food processing and marketing of food. Volunteers have also helped address food availability and nutrition through a variety of projects, including building school gardens, growing agricultural microenterprises and educating community members about good nutrition.



Small Business Volunteer Jeannine Hurrish shares a coconut with her counterpart, a vanilla farmer, as she works to develop better business practices for the farming community.

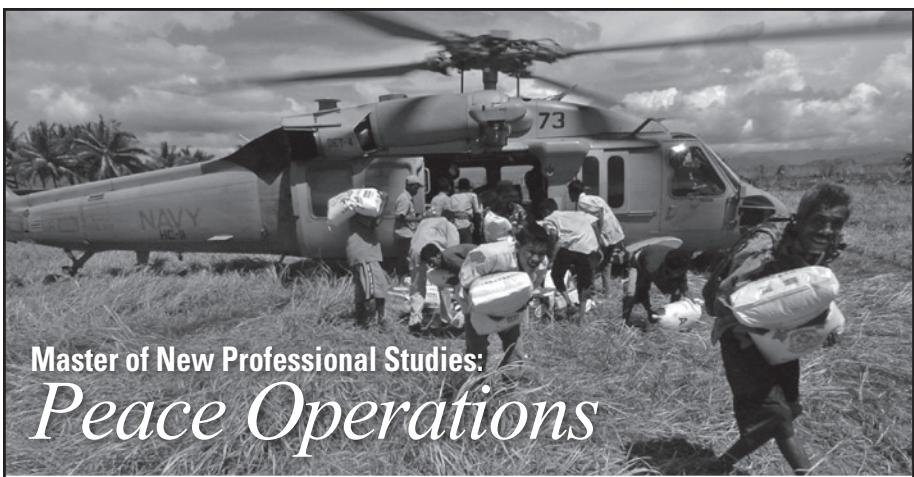
Peace Corps

In 2008, Peace Corps formed the Worldwide Food Security Task Force and developed a coherent plan to guide programming in communities that face food security problems. Several of the task force goals include consolidating food production information, improving training support to Volunteers in the field and expanding current Peace Corps agricultural projects. To help develop and expand local food security projects worldwide, Peace Corps is currently recruiting Volunteers with hands-on agricultural experience and educational backgrounds in agricultural and environmental sciences.

#### FINDING VOLUNTEERS WITH THE "RIGHT STUFF"

Peace Corps provides its host countries with sustainable solutions by sharing America's most precious resource—its people. Because Peace Corps Volunteers work at a local level, with local governments, communities, schools and entrepreneurs to address complex and challenging needs, Peace Corps aims to recruit Volunteers with relevant agricultural knowledge and skills.

There are currently only approximately two million full-time farmers in the U.S.; less than 1% of the total population. As a result, there are a limited number of active farmers and agricultural specialists with formal training who could serve abroad as a Peace Corps Volunteer. Peace Corps, however, is responding to the need to provide experienced agricultural sector Volunteers with new recruiting techniques that target "scarce skills" and an expansion of the Volunteer pool. Peace Corps recruiters are also looking beyond traditional sources of agricultural Volunteers such as retirees



**Master of New Professional Studies:  
Peace Operations**

Study the theory and practice of peace operations, international civilian police operations, nongovernmental organizations, elections, refugees/internally displaced persons, and governance with world-renowned scholars and practitioners at one of the nation's leading schools of public policy.

- Small classes taught by world-renowned faculty
- Conveniently located in the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area
- Full-time or part-time study
- Affordable cost

To find out more, please contact Graduate Admissions at the School of Public Policy at George Mason University at spp@gmu.edu or 703-993-8099.



**School of  
Public Policy**



## It's not too late to become a doctor

**The Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program at Bryn Mawr College**

*Realize your dream to become a physician at one of the nation's oldest, strongest, and most respected postbaccalaureate premedical programs.*

- For women and men changing career direction
- Intensive, full-time preparation for medical school in one year
- Highly respected by medical schools—many look for Bryn Mawr postbacs
- Over 98 percent acceptance rate into medical school
- Early acceptance programs at selected medical schools—more than any other postbac program
- Supportive, individual academic and premedical advising
- Ideal size—small enough for personal attention, yet large enough for diverse perspectives
- Wide range of medically related volunteer and job opportunities and programs

**BRYN MAWR COLLEGE**

POSTBACCALAUREATE PREMEDICAL PROGRAM  
Canwyll House | Bryn Mawr, PA 19010  
610-526-7350 | postbac@brynmawr.edu  
[www.brynmawr.edu/postbac/](http://www.brynmawr.edu/postbac/)



**Philippines Volunteer Tom Peng admires crops grown by a local farmer in his community.**

with agricultural experience, urban gardeners with formal training in intensive production techniques, and “permaculturalists” with knowledge and experience in designing edible landscapes and sustainable food production systems. Peace Corps is

also exploring innovative ways to work with private and public institutions with ties to agricultural development to encourage their current and retired staff to consider devoting two years of their life to helping solve the global food security crisis with Peace Corps.

In addition to becoming fluent in a foreign language and gaining international experience and cross-cultural understanding, Returned Peace Corps Volunteers’ agricultural experience is valued by numerous organizations such as the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, USDA Extension Service, the U.S. Food and Nutrition Service, the Food and Agriculture Organization, CARE International, United Nations Environment Program, and many private corporations and public organizations seeking individuals with unique skills.

## **OLD CHALLENGES, NEW SOLUTIONS**

Given Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams’ plans for agency growth and the continuing need to address the food security crisis, finding highly-skilled and motivated Volunteers for new and existing agricultural programs will continue to be a priority for the agency.

As the world strives to ensure food security for the global population,



**In Panama, Peace Corps Volunteer Eduardo Gonzales assists his students in planting a garden.**



**Peace Corps Volunteer Brian Rodrigues admires his community's new crops in the Philippines.**

Peace Corps will continue to do its part by finding new pools of potential applicants and communicating the need, the goals and the benefits of Peace Corps service.

The Peace Corps is committed to providing our host country partners with motivated Volunteers who are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to mitigate the adverse consequences of the current food security crisis, and offer hope to the communities they serve. In the effort to resolve the ongoing challenges related to food security worldwide, the Peace Corps is more relevant than ever.

*Frank Higdon (Philippines 83-85) is currently a Sector Recruitment Specialist for the U.S. Peace Corps focusing on agriculture and environment programs. He is an adjunct faculty member at Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. Over the past twenty years, Frank has participated in agricultural development projects in the United States, Belize, Ukraine and Guyana.*



**Peace Corps  
Fellows Program  
in Community  
Development**  
Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs



**YOUR WORLD.  
YOUR CHANCE  
TO MAKE IT BETTER.**

**OUR AWARD-WINNING FELLOWS/USA PROGRAM PROVIDES**

- An outstanding financial package,
- Hands-on internship experience,
- Rewarding career opportunities

**Like You, Our Program is:  
UNIQUE, Dynamic, COMMITTED**

**Take part in the Experience. JOIN US TODAY.**

---

www.peacecorpsfellows-wiu.org  
800.526.9943

**Now accepting applications**



WESTERN  
ILLINOIS  
UNIVERSITY

## THE MISSION CONTINUES

*The challenge to continue serving gives wounded military veterans renewed purpose*

by Lyndsey Hodges

**E**ric Greitens has spent his entire adult life in service to others. After graduating from college in the 1990s, he traveled to countries around the world to work as a humanitarian volunteer, documentary photographer, and researcher. Greitens then joined the United States Navy in 2000. In 2007, he returned home from service in Iraq to found The Mission Continues, a nonprofit that helps wounded veterans find service opportunities in their communities when they return home.

In 1993, Greitens began his international journey in China, continuing on to Croatia, Bosnia, Rwanda, Zaire, Bolivia, the Gaza Strip and West Bank, India, Mexico, Cambodia, and Albania. The services he provided were often simple, such as caring for children in an orphanage, feeding the dying in a home for the destitute, setting up a soccer team for refugee children, or helping with art projects in a home for street children. He also undertook research to determine how international humanitarian organizations could best provide assistance to war-affected children.

Greitens recalls standing in a refugee camp in Goma, Zaire, surrounded by unaccompanied children – or children who had lost their parents in the genocide in Rwanda.

"Each day a man would arrive in the camp—he himself a refugee. He had lost family members, friends, and many of his possessions, but every day he came to the camp to bring hope to the children. I remember taking an image of this man surrounded by all the children, a sense of joy on their faces. The man may not have thought he was giving service, but each day he served the children by bringing light to their lives."

While in Croatia, Greitens remembers that many of the families at the refugee camp were victims of an ethnic cleansing and had been forced to grab what they could and walk away from their homes. Most of these people had lost all their possessions, but Greitens remembers a woman who started a knitting circle for other refugees, whom she believed had even less than she did.

"Throughout my travels, I found individuals overcoming great difficulties," says Greitens, "but through all of their

small actions, communities came together to take care of each other."

Seeing survivors of genocide in refugee camps reinforced Greitens' personal belief in the need to protect the weak from suffering, so he made a choice that may seem unconventional to some: He became a Navy SEAL and subsequently deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, and Southeast Asia.

After a suicide truck bomb hit Greitens' unit in Iraq, he returned home to find many of his fellow veterans wounded but eager to continue serving their country. He visited with injured Marines recovering at Bethesda Naval Hospital, and was moved by the fact that each Marine expressed an unwavering desire to continue serving, even if no longer in uniform.

The words of one Marine struck a chord with Greitens: "I lost my legs. That's all. I did not lose my desire to serve, or my pride in being an American."

Greitens felt that although the young men and women had a long string of visitors coming to the hospital to tell them "thank you," they also needed to hear "we still need you."

"They needed to know that they were still an asset," Greitens says. "They needed to know that we were glad that they were home, because they would make us better by bringing their service and leadership back to our country and to our communities."

It is with the belief that military veterans still have much left to give that Greitens started the non-profit organization The Mission Continues. The organization is built on the principles of strength and challenge, and recognizes returning wounded and disabled veterans not only for the sacrifices they have made, but for everything they have left to give.

The organization offers competitive



Eric Greitens

A man in Goma, Zaire in 1995, entertaining children in the refugee camp.



The Mission Continues Fellow, Michael Paul (left) volunteering as a para-ski instructor.

fellowships to engage wounded and disabled veterans in volunteerism, allowing them an opportunity to transfer the leadership skills of the battlefield into positions benefiting communities in the U.S. During the Fellowship, the veteran receives a living stipend so he or she can serve full-time at a local charitable organization. This challenge to serve strengthens both the veterans and their communities.

The Mission Continues Fellowship is not a charity; it's a challenge. "By recognizing the strength of our veterans and challenging them to serve again in their communities, we empower them to both serve their communities and to challenge other citizens—veterans and

non-veterans alike—to do the same," says Greitens.

Since the organization started in August of 2007, The Mission Continues has awarded 40 Fellowships to wounded and disabled veterans all across the United States. These Fellows have served in a variety of positions within their communities, from coaching a football team for inner-city young men, to mentoring children from disadvantaged backgrounds, to teaching disabled veterans to downhill ski.

Transitioning from military to civilian life can be difficult, but The Mission Continues shows wounded and disabled veterans the importance of continued service. As one Fellow said, "After returning [from war] injured, I thought that I was no longer useful to society...I thought my service was over. I was wrong. I came across a group that would forever impact my life, and show me that I still had more to give."

From his humanitarian work, to his service in the military, to working with The Mission Continues Fellows and volunteers, Greitens developed a profound philosophy on giving back. "If we give in the spirit of loving-kindness practiced from one person to another," he says, "then we have tapped into an overwhelming power that can change our own lives just as we contribute service to others."

*Lyndsey Hedges is Community Outreach Manager for The Mission Continues. To learn more, visit [www.MissionContinues.org](http://www.MissionContinues.org).*



Chloe Crespi

Eric Greitens.

The Mission Continues

## *Life is calling.*



Rose Galer, MPA / MSES '10  
RPCV Paraguay  
Agroforestry Volunteer

## So is SPEA.

- Master of Public Affairs (MPA)
- Master of Science in Environmental Science (MSES)
- Joint MPA-MSES

Kindred spirits and a stellar education, enhanced by both Peace Corps Fellows and Master's International (MI) programs, await you at the School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) at Indiana University.

Fellows and MI candidates receive benefits that include credit hour waivers and financial aid.

Contact us for more information:

[www.spea.indiana.edu](http://www.spea.indiana.edu)  
[speainfo@indiana.edu](mailto:speainfo@indiana.edu)  
(812) 855-2840 • (800) 765-7755



SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS  
INDIANA UNIVERSITY

## GOING TO HEAVEN BACKWARDS

*Shaken but steadfast, Haiti Volunteers react to a disaster and vow to work towards recovery*

by Bryan Schaaf

**P**ace Corps/Haiti was never a very large program. However, Peace Corps Volunteers have long made a difference in Haiti both through the projects we participated in and the relationships we made. Likewise, Haiti made a difference in us, most especially in the way we view the world. The earthquake has affected all and all are taking action in some way.

Following are some glimpses into what Haiti Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) were thinking, feeling, and doing in the days after the disaster. In this way, we both bear witness and re-affirm our commitment to stay connected to Haiti.

**Josh Kunin-Goldsmith (01-03) writes:** I do know (pray) that somewhere there is still hope for Haiti. The power outages, logistical bottlenecks, and leadership gaps that hamper the rescue and recovery efforts have hampered the Haitian populace for years. Only now do they seem to be receiving the international attention they have always deserved. I am trying to count myself among those able to see an opportunity among this horrendous tragedy. The media focus on the made-for-television misfortune, not the underlying structural issues that exposed three million Haitians to the ravages of geology.

So while it is crucial to support the life-saving emergency response of the Red Cross Movement and others on the front lines, it is equally as important to focus on building a viable civil society, functional educational system and a reliable infrastructure. The idea of a “recovery” from this earthquake evokes an aim of returning to the status quo. For Haiti, the status quo is the problem; any recovery that does not change this will be a failure.



Bryan Schaaf (left) addresses attendees at the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Washington, DC fundraiser for Haiti, as Lenny Teh, president of Friends of Haiti, looks on.

**Tanya Santiago (97-99) writes:** 7.0 earthquake! An earthquake?! In Haiti?! Hurricanes, yes, but earthquakes?! I am in shock and disbelief—not accepting what I am hearing: a magnitude 7.0 earthquake hit Haiti—a country I once called home. I am at work sitting at my desk staring at the computer screen paralyzed with the sense of helplessness. All I want to do is run—run to the aid of Haiti—and then do what?...

It was not until I saw the images on television that it sunk in: the rubble, people crushed alive, crying,

wailing. That wailing; I remember it distinctly whenever someone died in the countryside: “Anmwe!” (“Help me!”) Their whole bodies would be screaming—arms flailing about in the air, bodies collapsing into someone else’s arms. And that is what I was screaming, “Anmwe!” For how could I just watch and not do anything?...

**Mike Wilson (90-91) writes:** I visited Leogane today. Twenty years ago this house was built and I moved in as the first occupant. I paid 50 Haitian Dollars per month. This is what it looks like now. I stood and

# Make a Career Choice that Matters . . .

## *Working to Build Healthy Communities*



### Master of Public Health

**Offering an MPH Degree  
on Campus or by Distance**

Accredited by the Council on Education  
for Public Health

*A learning environment that honors  
diversity, honesty, collaboration,  
engagement, respect, and ethical practice*

**San José State University**  
San José, California

[www.sjsu.edu/healthscience](http://www.sjsu.edu/healthscience)

*Long known for its practice-oriented and community-based training*



**COLLEGE of ARTS & SCIENCES**  
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY • WASHINGTON, D.C.



**Take  
Charge  
of Your  
Future**

### PhDs, Master's, and Graduate Certificates

Anthropology • Economics • Environmental Science and other Sciences • Ethics, Peace and Global Affairs • History • International Training and Education • Language and Foreign Studies • Psychology • Sociology • Teaching • TESOL • and other disciplines

✉ casgrad@american.edu ☎ +011-202-885-3620  
[www.american.edu/cas](http://www.american.edu/cas)

eo/aa

**Mason Robbins, (99-01) writes:**

...Life in Haiti was difficult—no electricity, plumbing, gasoline-powered transportation, etc. But through the trials and tribulations of dealing with a completely foreign environment and culture, I found that I laughed harder and smiled more than I did while living in the United States. I even fell madly in love with my wife Ernante, born and raised in Haiti, who is, as of 2009, a newly-minted United States citizen.

The recent disaster in Haiti is heartbreaking. I find that I don't have the ability to watch the news coverage of the disaster—it's too painful. Many of the buildings I came to know in Port-au-Prince were reduced to chalk-white piles of rubble. The sobering list came out two days following the earthquake: The National Palace – heavily damaged, The National Cathedral – gone, The Hotel Montana – gone, The Hotel Villa Creole – heavily damaged, etc. All buildings I knew well....

**Wendy Hirsch (98-00) writes:**

Haiti is a country of extremes, which demands a lot of you and rewards you immensely for the effort. I discovered this while a Peace Corps Volunteer from 1998 to 2000 working in and around Cabaret, Haiti.... I regret that most people are only exposed to the most negative of these extremes—dire poverty, environmental degradation, corruption, insecurity—and over the last week, the absolute horror that comes when you add a natural disaster to the mix. I don't deny any of these. But I'm not going to write about them here. I want to talk about the other extremes of Haiti—beauty, vibrancy, kindness, gratitude, humor and lots of hard-earned wisdom.

I don't possess the literary gifts necessary to describe the grace that is Sunday morning in Haiti—regardless of religion, whether you go to services or not—it's a quiet and comforting time. Nor can I adequately convey the gift that is Haitian drumming, or the life and energy that literally leap from the paintings. But I can share with you some Haitian wisdom, as conveyed through proverbs.

I used proverbs a lot when I lived in Haiti. They provided a bridge to understanding the culture, attitudes and thinking of Haitians—and usually got a laugh when delivered through the mouth of a small, blonde American woman. Tenacity, effort, acceptance, practicality, hope and humor are all showcased in the proverbs—aspects of the Haitian people that I treasure....

One proverb in particular came to mind as I learned of the earthquake last week: W'ap fèm monte nan sièl padò.

You are making me go to heaven backwards....

**Gerald Wayne Harrell (02-04) writes:**

I was at a tree nursery conference in Ft. Lauderdale when I got the news. I guess my first thought was to get to Miami and get on the next plane to Port-au-Prince but instead I left the conference the next morning and went home to San Antonio to be with Henriette and the kids....

I've applied to no fewer than twenty relief organizations and Peace Corps Response. My dad said he would come to San Antonio and take over The Garden Center if I get a call. Honestly, I'm really more of a builder and I think my skills would be better used when reconstruction begins. M'ap tann—I am waiting. Like you, the other RPCVs and folks around the world, my spirit just aches for Haiti. I want nothing more than to make it better. I especially feel for the kids. I want so bad to be there and let them know everything is going to be OK.

**Lenny Teh (97-00) writes:** I've been optimistic about Haiti since returning from a recent trip during Thanksgiving.... I was there on a medical mission as a translator and stayed a few days longer to visit my Peace Corps site in the Grand' Anse Department. I had left my site exactly ten years ago to the month (December) and I didn't know what to expect. I had heard that going back to your site is disappointing since you are now just a visitor, or "blan," simply passing through. This was not

my experience, as I was welcomed back openly. It was a homecoming and validation of an experience that had changed my life. I had been riding a high about Haiti since then—and then the earthquake happened.

I was busy at work when I received a text that read "Big quake in Haiti!" immediately followed by another text "Do u know peeps still there" and "R u going?" I thought nothing of it probably because Haitians are used to a lot of misery—i.e., the numerous political coups, deforestation, floods, mudslides, and the title of being "the poorest country in the western hemisphere." I then checked the news online and that is when the devastation of the 7.0 earthquake hit me: a third of the population impacted, hundreds of thousands expected dead, images of the collapsed Hotel Montana where I had lived and where the UN workers were trapped, and the feeling of not knowing the whereabouts of friends living there.

This was a different misery and I immediately called my host brother in New York (the only member of my host family in the U.S.) who was frantically trying to reach the family in Haiti. The communication network was down; there was no news and there would be none for the next few days. Although we eventually received word that all family members were alive, there were and still are many people from my village, which is one of the farthest points from Port-au-Prince, who are missing or confirmed dead. This earthquake has impacted the entire country.

I find comfort from the greater Peace Corps community and especially from my fellow Haiti RPCVs. This disaster has brought us together around Peace Corps' Third Goal in promoting an understanding of Haiti's resilient people and its rich culture. Instead of feeling helpless, we have assisted our beloved Haiti in its time of need through holding fundraisers, building awareness, or directly assisting the response efforts here in the U.S. or in Haiti. As we do this, I am reminded of the Haitian proverb "Men anpil,



Homes lay in ruins due to a 7.0 magnitude earthquake in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Friday, Jan. 15, 2010. The earthquake left thousands dead and displaced.

chay pa lou.” Many hands lighten the load. And, as in this case, the burden of recovery is shared among all of us with connections to Haiti.

**Bryan Schaaf (00-02) writes:** I had a Rotary Club Meeting at six o’clock the night of the earthquake. On the way there, Lenny sent me a text message about what had happened. I remember thinking to myself that at least we had not been hit by a major hurricane, with the inevitable flooding and mudslides it would have created. When I got home at about nine o’clock, I took a look at Twitter posts and pictures. It didn’t take long to realize that the damage, both in terms of lives and livelihoods, was unprecedented. Port au Prince, Haiti’s largest city, was shattered. The Haitian government and UN forces had taken heavy losses. The infrastructure required to get people and cargo in and out of the country was heavily damaged. People with the means to do so started heading back to the countryside in droves. Every family has been affected, many traumatized. Right now it is still an emergency, the transition to recovery is being discussed. But recovery is the wrong word. Life will continue, but one does not truly recover from something like this.

Over the past year there were no hurricanes, infrastructure was being built, investment was picking up, and the government, while imperfect, was getting better at governing. Things were changing, we had momentum... and then this happens. Haiti is now a very different country than the one I remember from my days as a Peace Corps Volunteer...but it is still Haiti, and so I and other RPCVs are still connected....

Crime is below pre-earthquake levels which is something the media has not done a good job of conveying—fundamental decency is probably not the best angle for increasing viewership. Haitians, ever generous, have been supporting each other, sharing what little they have, and taking in friends and loved ones. Haitians are survivors and they will make it through this together. They are strong in their faith. Many, if not most, will come out of this with a stronger belief in God. I can’t say the same. Here, as is often the case in emergencies, it is the women, the children, and the poorest who are suffering most.

That having been said, my faith in people is reinforced. Haitians are doing the best they can to take care of each other. Concerned individuals

and groups from around the world, even in this uncertain economy, have given generously of their time and money in order to save lives, reduce suffering, and to make possible a recovery of some sort. I have never seen such an outpouring of genuine concern for Haiti.

Development in Haiti has been set back many years. It will take a very large, long term international support, with a degree of coordination Haiti has not seen to date, in order to work. “Men anpil chay pa lou”—but only when working together in a sustained and coherent way. Haitians did not deserve what has happened to them. What they do deserve is the best efforts of individuals, groups, and the international community to respond to this disaster and to work with the Haitian government and people to ensure that this loss of lives and livelihoods does not happen again—whether from another earthquake, a hurricane, or something entirely unanticipated.

I also want to mention the work of Matthew Marek (00-02), who has lived in Port au Prince for several years, building the capacity of the Haitian Red Cross to prepare for and respond to disasters. Matt was in the Red Cross office when the earthquake happened. Part of the building collapsed, but he and his colleagues were able to escape. Since then, he and other Red Cross responders have been working non-stop to protect and assist survivors.

I would not be the same person without my time in Haiti. I would not be living where I am and working at what I do. I would also be more ignorant of the world around me. The earthquake not only affected Haiti, it also shook the Diaspora of which we are, in our own way, a part. We’re still connected, still committed, and we are not going to give up on Haiti.

*Bryan Schaaf (Haiti 00-02) is a co-founder of Haiti Innovation.*

# HERBAL REMEDIES

*Yerba Mate culture and consumption in Paraguay*

by Megan Louise Wood

**F**rom the first, tentative bitter sip through a communal straw, one realizes that drinking yerba maté will become an acquired taste. Six people sharing the same straw and cup? Is that a root floating in the water? Why would anyone drink this stuff everyday? But there is a reason Paraguayans carry their thermos of the drink with them like Americans carry their cell phones. In a land of jungle heat, iced yerba maté is an internal air conditioner. In a land of few comforts, yerba mate is a reason to sit and relax with family and friends. After a few initial yerba circles, one feels like an addicted pro, craving that tranquil stimulation and human connection that can only be obtained through consumption of an ice cold yerba maté.

Arriving from South America cloaked in legends of divine origin and pre-Columbian tradition, Yerba mate's true role in today's society is somewhat less romantic, but no less interesting than most have been led to believe. The yerba plant, a tree found only in the secondary canopy of the Atlantic Rainforest, in the Paraná river basin of Paraguay, Brazil, and Argentina is a member of the holly family and goes by the name of *ilex paraguayensis*, yerba maté, erva-maté, and ka'a depending on who is answering.

The yerba itself is plucked leaves and stems, cooked in two wood burning ovens, as it was 400 years ago and then sold by the kilo. It's then drunk like a tea infusion from a cured gourd with a filtered metal straw; it packs a heavy stimulating punch and a lot of antioxidants. The yerba is consumed hot as maté every morning and on cold

nights, and iced as tereré on all but the most frigid days. The drinking of yerba maté is a highly choreographed yet relaxed affair. The gourd always passes to the left, the youngest pours the water, and the brushing of hands carries a flirtatious connotation. As much as tradition is integral to yerba's consumption, medicinal herbs known as "yuyos," which are mashed and added to the water, are necessary for its preparation and to enhance flavor. Yuyo stands selling a variety of homegrown and foraged herbs are omnipresent in Paraguay, from the plazas of the cities to the desolate dirt roads of the countryside. The history of medicine is traditionally thought of in terms of Western empiricism and Eastern mysticism, but the indigenous Guaraní of Paraguay introduce us to Southern plantism.

One can find a yuyo remedy for the typical complaints of headaches, colds and stomachaches. Some also believe in a yuyo's ability to cure more serious ailments such as depression and cancer. The utilized plants range from the lowliest swamp weeds to majestic trees. The parts used can be roots, leaves, bark, fruits, vines, flowers, and seeds. Mbarakaja py'ape, "cat's claw," is the root of a vine, earning its name from the small hooks the plant grows to climb trees, and is popular because of its earthy flavor and anti-inflammatory properties. Mbokajagu'i is ground coconut, which brings a smooth sweetness to hot maté and possesses important essential oils. Agrial is a succulent that grows on the banks of rivers and shores of lakes and aids in digestion. Ka'a piky is a small weed that pokes through the soil in

late winter, tastes of cucumbers, and acts as a diuretic to help flush out the kidneys. This herbal pharmacopeia could warrant a book length exploration into their botany, cultivation, and use. But don't expect to find a Paraguayan writing it, as all of this information is taught orally to the next generation.

Most Paraguay Volunteers return home with at least a few kilos of yerba maté and yuyos stashed in their suitcases. More importantly they bring back a true knowledge of what yerba maté is: steeped in tradition as a healthy habit, a time for community, and maybe an alternative way to relieve those reacclimation headaches. The first bitter taste? A distant memory.

*Megan Louise Wood is a Youth Development Volunteer in Tavapy II, Paraguay, originally from Waupaca WI. She'll try any root once.*



**The author, in a hammock, drinking yerba out of a guampa next to her house in Tavapy Dos.**

# BOILED RICE NO LONGER CONGEALS

*Quarantined in Mongolia*

by Matthew Davis

**A**s the first week passed and the realization dawned on us that the quarantine might not be over soon, a tension grew in the town. As far as we knew, no new cases of plague had been reported, but the roads were still closed. The crowds still congregated at the 12-store, though instead of the card games and juice drinking, there was an agitation that simmered beneath the surface. At the slightest hint of a rumor that the quarantine had been lifted, people jumped into their vans and sped off down the streets. Yet they always returned moments later, slammed their doors shut, told the crowd the news of no news, and continued to wait.

One afternoon, I went to a bar with some students from the previous year. The bar was packed with men waiting out the quarantine at nicked wooden tables full of bottles of vodka and overflowing ashtrays. We sat at one of these tables, a thin curtain tinged brown from cigarette smoke dividing our table from those in front and behind us, the Russian word for "pussy" carved into the wood. Close by, a conversation rose to a confrontational pitch, and men began arguing and slamming their glasses on the table. I could understand some of the words, though not the context, and I asked my students to lean in closer to tell me what they were fighting about.

"They want to leave," Munkho said.

"But they can't right?"

"They are thinking of ways to escape."

The thought had also crossed my mind. I had ten days to make my plane, but only if I left Tsetserleg on the day before my flight.

"What are they thinking about doing?" I asked.

*"One of them wants to try and give the police money," Jack said.*

*"Would that work?"*

*"No, I don't think so. Not this time."*

*"Another is thinking about riding out on a horse," Munkho said.*

*"How about that?" I asked.*

*"Maybe, but it is dangerous."*

Any escape by horse would involve leaving at night, and since Tsetserleg was surrounded by mountains, the descent would be doable, but hazardous. The fourth side of town emptied into the flat river valley that would be easy to cross on a horse. But my students had heard the police were

patrolling this area at night to prevent people from doing just this.

*"If you go slow," one of my students explained, "then you may be spotted by the police. If you go fast, then they will hear the horse's feet."*

I had been reading Peter Hopkirk's historical tales of adventure on the Central Asian steppe, and breaking free from a plague quarantine, though not the same as spying on the Russians, held a certain appeal. I envisioned a midnight crossing under the stars: me, a horse, a small bag, and 35 kilometers to go until the nearest town. Just to see what my friends'

## Exclusive Savings. Without the firewall.

Get a free quote today.



NPCA members could get  
an additional discount  
on car insurance.

**GEICO**  
geico.com

Some discounts, coverages, payment plans and features are not available in all states or in all GEICO companies. Discount amount varies in some states. One group discount applicable per policy. Coverage is individual. In New York a premium reduction is available. See geico.com for more details. GEICO and Affiliates. Washington DC 20076. GEICO Gecko image © 1999-2010. © 2010 GEICO

reactions would be, I told them I was thinking about escaping.

"Why don't you just ask your government?" one of them said.

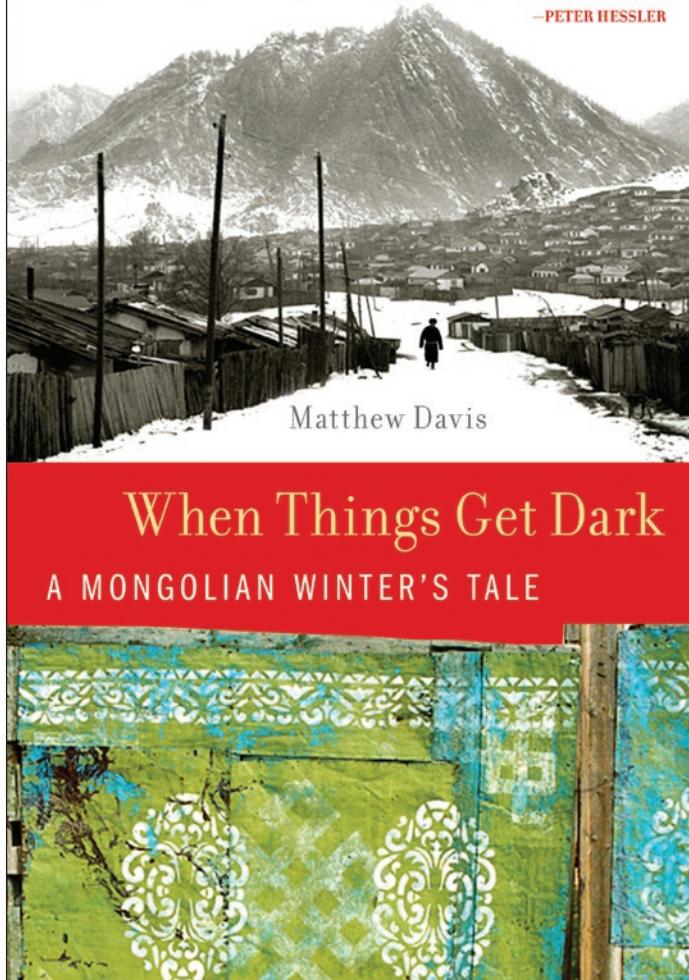
This had also crossed my mind, but I did not think there was anything that could be done. The Peace Corps knew about the quarantine, but so far there had been no indication that they were willing, or able, to help out. This past winter, a small town in northeastern Mongolia had been quarantined for hoof-and-mouth disease. A volunteer had been stuck there for over a month, and Peace Corps had been unable to arrange her departure. When the quarantine had lifted, she left town, and then the country. She had been the only American there, and it was easy to see how that loneliness might have been a burden too tough to bear. I had friends in Tsetserleg, both Mongolian and American, but, besides loneliness, there was the sense of futility and utter lack of control about the quarantine. Basic decisions were not in our hands. Then there were the practical concerns, and not just those related to health.

The price of food was beginning to rise as availability began to dwindle. The *delguurs* in town sold food, but that food was usually stocked by trips to Ulaanbaatar. Without those trips, rice and bread, canned goods and vegetables, tripled and quadrupled in price. The cost of food, more than plague, or the delay of the start of school limiting their winter vacation time, was what most concerned the students.

The four students who I sat with at the bar lived together in a small, Spartan house close to the northern border of town.

"Matthew Davis's portrait of Mongolia is riveting, insightful, and deeply honest."

—PETER HESSLER



## When Things Get Dark

A MONGOLIAN WINTER'S TALE

They had not yet purchased their bulk of winter meat, and with none now available, and rice climbing in price, they often ate at relatives' or friends' homes. Money and food were not a problem for me. I had supplies of meat stored in my freezer and plenty



Matthew Davis.

of rice in my cabinet. I could always have Peace Corps wire me more money if I had to remain here for an extended period of time. I had worked hard the past year to shrink the large gap between me, an American, and my Mongolian friends. Yet it was clear that if I didn't get sick, I would come out of this unharmed. I might miss a wedding, but I would have plenty to eat. For my friends, for my students, that wasn't necessarily the case.

We finished our beers, and as we left the bar, I slipped each of them some money. They protested against it, but I insisted. I felt as if I needed to do something. I walked by the 12-store on the way home. It was closing, but a large crowd milled about outside. Horses were still hitched to the larch trees, and the shells of pine nuts covered the ground like brown snowflakes. I passed a young woman whom I recognized as a juice seller and asked her how her business was.

"What business?" she said. "The juice is finished."

From "When Things Get Dark" by Matthew Davis. Copyright © 2010 by the author and reprinted by permission of St. Martin's Press, LLC.

An article by Matthew Davis (*Mongolia 00-02*) about the Mongolian Parliamentary elections appeared in the Fall 2004 issue of *WorldView* magazine. After Peace Corps he received a Master's in Fine Arts in creative writing from the University of Iowa. "When Things Get Dark: A Mongolian Winter's Tale" is his first book and excerpts of it have won awards from the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Best American Travel Writing Series*.

# FIRE TRUCKS AND WATER FILTERS

*A practical chat with ERSLA founder Rodney McDonald*

by Joshua Berman

**E**mergency Response Services for Latin America (ERSLA) was founded in 2009 as a project of the Bend Oregon Firefighter's Foundation. This is certainly an interesting time in history to start an NGO. Sure, we're in a global recession, which affects the nonprofit sector, but there has also never been a time with so much powerful networking potential to get the word out. That's one of the jobs of Rodney McDonald, one of ERSLA's founders who lives in Nicaragua to coordinate equipment donations, fire truck arrivals, trainings, video productions, and other tasks. I caught up with Rodney at a café in Granada and asked him about ERSLA and the lessons he's learned.

**JB:** How did you get the idea to connect firefighters in Oregon with firefighters in Nicaragua?

**RM:** During my time as a Peace Corps volunteer in Nicaragua in 2002–2004, I lived right alongside the Pan-American Highway in a small community called La Esperanza. I noticed that with many accidents that happened in our area, there was a very slow response time. Many times, the emergency personnel would arrive without proper equipment and the injured would be carried off in the back of a pickup truck. I also noticed that during the dry season, forest fires would burn out of control for days at a time due to the lack of fire education and equipment.

Originally the idea was to build a fire department in Jalapa, so I began to look for others that had had success in Nicaragua. I learned about the Bend Firefighter Foundation in Bend Oregon, which had started from scratch in their sister city of Condega

and built one of the best-equipped and trained organizations in the country. I contacted Mark Taylor, the director, and we began to talk about how we could duplicate their success. We realized as we began our research that one of the issues in the country overall was a lack of communication and networking amongst all the other donors in the country. We knew then that if we were to jump right into building another station without working on some of the issues of the national system would just add to the problems.

**JB:** What was ERSLA's first big success?

**RM:** We launched our pilot project last September to help firefighters in Condega reach out to their communities by assisting with distributions of simple water filter systems to families in need.

We began in a community called Ducuale Grande, whose citizens had had issues with parasites and other waterborne diseases such as cholera. We raised funds from individuals, church groups, and other organizations and were able to purchase 200 locally-made ceramic water filters. We then placed them in the hands of the firefighters to distribute and educate the community on their importance. While the firefighters were in the homes distributing the filters, they were able to perform fire inspections of each home. With the community not having access to electricians, nearly every home had serious dangers. The firefighters were able to have one-on-one conversations with the families to show them inexpensive ways to correct dangers that existed.



SIT Graduate Institute

a program of World Learning

## Put Your PASSION Into Practice

### Master's Degree Programs

- Sustainable Development
- Conflict Transformation
- International Education
- Intercultural Relations
- Nonprofit and NGO Management
- TESOL

"SIT provides the international environment that Peace Corps Volunteers seek."

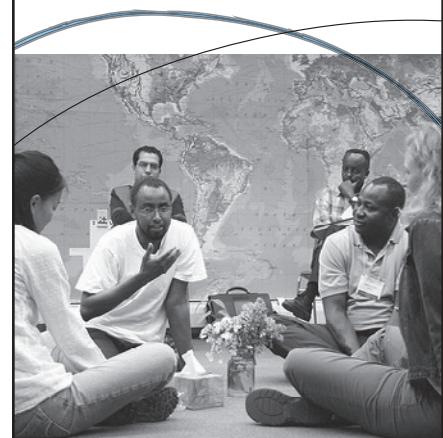
—Mary Strabala  
RPCV, Costa Rica 1991–1993  
SIT MA in Teaching alumna

### RPCV Scholarships Available

Learn more at

[www.sit.edu/graduate](http://www.sit.edu/graduate)

1-800-336-1616



Near the end of the project, the firefighters came to us and told us how much a project of this type meant to them. They understood that to provide prevention education saved them time, energy, and money from having to respond to accidents. Many firefighters mentioned that learning how to integrate with their own communities was more important than equipment donations because it empowered them to go into their own community and ask for funds to operate instead of having to wait for a handout from foreign organizations.

**JB: What advice would you give others looking to import big-ticket donations like fire engines and ambulances?**

**RM:** Make sure the infrastructure is in place to support the donation. Always think of worst case “What if we can’t continue to support the project” scenarios. If a structure is built but there is not a system from within the community to cover the electrical cost and maintenance, the building will not function for long. If a truck is donated without proper usage and maintenance training it will not last.



Rodney McDonald.



Unloading water filters for families in Nicaragua.

It is also important to do preliminary studies to make sure that the equipment being donated will actually function in the area it is intended. Many of the emergency vehicles in the United States are automatic transmissions or 8-cylinder gas engines, which are very expensive to maintain in Latin America. The transmissions will not last for long on the rough hilly terrain or in a community that may not have paved roads. I know of quite a few “good intentions” that have been donated and later to be parked and not be able to be utilized anywhere or even worse, where engines blew up in the trucks because no one took the time to show where to check the oil.

**JB: Why would an emergency services organization be involved with women's health care and water filters?**

**RM:** Prevention and education reduces emergency needs. It is that simple. Working in conjunction with the health organizations to maximize the talents of the emergency response services improves connections to the communities. If the firefighters, for example, can perform safety inspections along with health officials, the number of accidents will be reduced. If the numbers of accidents are reduced, then the resources available for major accidents are increased.

**JB: What is ERLA's biggest project at the moment?**

**RM:** ERLA is currently working on increasing our water filter project and beginning a smoke-free stove construction class with the firefighters. Our obstacles will be to help the donors understand the importance of both needs in an area of the world that many people can't locate on a map. We need people that are willing to roll up their sleeves and assist with awareness. Anyone that is experienced in media relations, or would like to offer any talents that can help bring awareness to donors will be well received.

**JB: All they'd have to do is link to your videos of the firefighters and people of Nicaragua. They're amazing. What else can people do?**

**RW:** We, of course, are like any non-profit. We need donations to operate. Or, if you can't help with money but have time to swing by your local fire department, let us know and we'll give you a kit to solicit retired equipment for the firefighters in Nicaragua. We have ready-to-go presentations that are self-explanatory. Contact us at [www.ersla.org](http://www.ersla.org).

*Joshua Berman (Nicaragua 98–00) is the coauthor of *Moon Nicaragua* and *Living Abroad in Nicaragua*. His website is [www.joshuaberman.net](http://www.joshuaberman.net).*

## THE PEACE CORPS COMMUNITY MAKING A DIFFERENCE

by JoAnna Haugen

### SUSTAINABLE CRAFTS FIGHT CHILD TRAFFICKING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

In 2005, Lia Valerio (Kingdom of Tonga 98-00) founded Malia Designs, a company that creates one-of-a-kind purses, wallets and bags from textiles found in Southeast Asia and made in Cambodia. The items are all created from recycled materials, such as fish feed bags, construction netting and silks, and the company increases economic opportunities for the women who create the crafts. A portion of Malia Designs' profits is given to organizations that fight child trafficking in Southeast Asia. Valerio and the Malia Designs goods can be found at craft fairs, in boutiques in Chicago and at many Whole Food locations. [www.maliadesigns.com](http://www.maliadesigns.com)

### EDUCATING MIDWIVES IN MALI

During her Peace Corps service, Nicole Warren (Mali 94-96) was introduced to midwifery. In 2002, she became a nurse-midwife herself, and though she struggled with some aspects of the job, she recognized that the auxiliary midwives (matrones) she'd met in Mali had significantly less training and support than she did. As a result, in 2006, Warren formed Mali Midwives, an organization that offers continuing education to matrones in Mali. The pilot project of the organization, which occurred in 2009, was a continuing education event for matrones in Koutiala, Mali.

[www.malimidwives.org](http://www.malimidwives.org)

### HELPING PEOPLE WALK IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Jay A. Nash (Congo 73-77) is the founder and chairman of StandProud, a non-profit organization that provides

corrective treatment, leg braces and rehabilitative services to families with children who have been disabled by polio in developing countries that promote full integration of disabled people into their societies. Nash worked with USAID in Congo in 1998; while there he helped establish a brace shop where disabled youths could get free orthopedic equipment. He founded StandProud in the United States to help provide funding for that organization. [www.standproud.org](http://www.standproud.org)

### PROVIDING LIFE SKILLS IN TOGO

Returned volunteers Megan Adcock (05-07), Jeff Finkelman (05-07), Connor Hannigan (06-08), Deborah Lithander (05-07) and Jeff Locke (05-07) created The UNITE Foundation, a nonprofit organization based out of Washington, D.C., in response to the difficulty of finding financial support for youth programs in Togo. The foundation supports Camp UNITE, an educational life skills camp that volunteers coordinate with local nonprofit organizations. The program, which has about 180 participants each year, brings Togolese students and apprentices from different ethnic groups together to build positive relationships through team building activities while providing training on important skills related to topics such as gender equity and HIV/AIDS education. The camps also train approximately 40 Togolese teachers and apprentice owners annually, who lead instructional classes at the camps and take the skills they learn back to their communities. The UNITE Foundation is currently coordinating a benefit run with Johns Hopkins University and partnering with Elikeh Afropop (a Washington, D.C.-based band that combines rhythms from Togo with 70s Afrofunk) for a charity concert this spring. [www.unitefoundation.org](http://www.unitefoundation.org)

# A career that crosses borders.

Graduates of Lesley University's Master's program in Intercultural Relations pursue careers as diverse as the worlds they've experienced.

- International Education
- Conflict Transformation
- Advocacy and Social Change
- Intercultural Training and Management
- Leadership of Diverse Human Resources

Learn more!

[lesley.edu/info/culture](http://lesley.edu/info/culture)



**LESLEY**  
**UNIVERSITY**  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

# RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR COMMUNITY

by JoAnna Haugen

## AFGHANISTAN

**Kevin McNamara** is helping to train National Guard teams in agribusiness development, including the proper use of fertilizers and pest management. The teams then provide training and resources to Afghan farmers in order to help them improve productivity by using fertilizer and water more effectively and manage post-harvest activity better. They have also helped start an agriculture school in Afghanistan. McNamara is an agriculture economist from Purdue University.

## BOLIVIA

**Elizabeth McGee Gore** (03-05) recently completed a seven-day climb up Mt. Kilimanjaro. She accompanied a handful of celebrities and activists who climbed to raise awareness about and money for water crisis related organizations, including Children's Safe Drinking Water, the U.N.'s refugee agency and PlayPumps International. Gore is the U.N. Foundation's executive director of global partnerships and the Nothing But Nets campaign. She served as an educator on the climb to help convey the importance of ready sources of clean water.

## ECUADOR

**Dianne Twete** has been gardening for the last 33 years. She was certified as a Master Gardener by the OSU/Lane County Extension Service in 2006 and was chosen as the Lane County Master Gardener of the Year in 2009. Twete recently applied to volunteer through CNFA, a non-profit organization committed to empowering people and enterprises in the developing world. Last year she spent 19 days in the Babati region of Central Tanzania training locals on harvesting, grading and storage techniques for the pigeon pea. She has plans to travel to Moldova in April of this year for a CNFA Farmer-to-Farmer program focused on strawberry production.

For the past nine years, **Daniel Suelo** has intentionally lived his life without using money. He has spiritual reasons for avoiding any form of currency, but he also does it as a statement against a system he believes is corrupt. Suelo lives in a cave, which holds the few things he owns. He finds everything else he needs, including food and clothing, in trash receptacles in Moab, Utah.

## ETHIOPIA

**Karen Blanchard** (66-68), **Randolph Marcus** (66-68), **Jennifer Joyce Solomon** and **Cathy Toner Tucker** (65-67) recently returned to Ethiopia to visit Chilalo Terera Secondary School in Asella, where they all taught as Peace Corps volunteers. Prior to visiting the area, the RPCVs initiated a project to raise \$9,000 to send books to the Chilalo Terera library as well as \$4,000 from the Oak Foundation for shipment. Corporate donations of a laptop, projector and soccer balls were presented to the schools and neighborhood children. The Volunteers also raised funds, which they presented as a cash donation to the school. While in Ethiopia, the RPCVs worked with local school and municipal officials to possibly expand the library project to other schools in Asella and potentially build an inventory of books for a public library in the town. Blanchard, Marcus, Solomon and Tucker also visited five other schools and a women's cooperative to see how they could help them in providing

books and other resources. The group of former volunteers was organized and led by Dr. Abebe Kebede, who was a young student at the time the students taught in Asella.

## GHANA

**Kevin Thompson** (96-98) has been named a First Mover Fellow through the Aspen Institute, which recognizes people who work inside business systems to achieve social change. Thompson is a senior program manager for Corporate Citizenship and Corporate Affairs at IBM. He founded and runs the company's Corporate Service Corps program, which synthesizes the 21st-century context for business—emerging markets, diverse cultures, global teaming, complex policy environments, cross-functional collaboration and increasing societal expectations—into a leadership development program involving projects in developing countries working on core societal challenges.

## IRAN

Ambassador **John W. Limbert** (64-66), Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iran, recently published his book "Negotiating with Iran: Wrestling the Ghosts of the Past." Limbert has a long history in Iran. In addition to his Peace Corps service, he worked as an English instructor at the Shiraz University from 1969-1972. He speaks fluent Farsi and Arabic, has written two other books on Iran and serves as the State Department's point person on Iran policy.

## JAMAICA, MALAWI

After serving in the Peace Corps, **Stacia** and **Kristof Nordin** (97-00, 00-04) decided to make Malawi their home, and they are using the opportunity to educate Malawians about the possibilities of growing indigenous vegetables and crops. Stacia works for



the Malawi Health Ministry, educating policymakers and citizens about the importance of indigenous vegetables and permaculture to ensure people receive proper nutrition. As a result, the Nordins have planted more than 200 varieties of indigenous vegetables around their home, which they hope will show their neighbors there is no single crop that is better than others.

## LESOTHO

**Mike Breeding** (87-91) and his wife, Selloane, are currently working on adopting four children from Lesotho, ages five through 12. The children are Selloane's extended family members who were left without anyone to care for them when their caregiver, Selloane's sister, died of AIDS. Breeding is a bus driver and his family currently lives in a two-bedroom house, but with help from the community, he hopes to remodel the basement and raise enough money to bring the kids to the United States and pay for all the adoption fees.

## MALAYSIA

**Paul E. Thompson** (70-73) recently attended the United Nations Climate Change Conference as a representative of Edina, Minnesota's, Energy and Environment Commission and a conference delegate for the ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability. A retired school teacher, Thompson has traveled to many developing nations, including India, Afghanistan, Myanmar and Nepal, which has helped him develop an awareness of how wasteful the United States is. In addition to serving on Edina's Energy and Environment Commission, he helps to organize events that focus on climate change and is a member of the Edina public schools "Go Green" committee. Thompson won the Sargent Shriver Award for Distinguished Humanitarian Service in 1989.

## MAURITANIA

**Ken Rutherford** (87-89) recently left this teaching post at Missouri State University to join the staff at James Madison University, where he will be the director of its Center for International Stabilization and Recovery, which helps post-conflict countries and

regions to rebuild. In his new position, Rutherford expects to work with the U.S. government and the United Nations to make post-conflict areas safe while rebuilding infrastructure.

## ROMANIA

Attorney general Eric Holder and assistant attorney general Tony West recently awarded **Jonathan Rolbin** (06-08) with a special commendation for his work with representing the Department of State in litigation. Rolbin worked in private law practice for 12 years before joining the Peace Corps. Upon returning from his service, he became a Department of Justice trial attorney in the Office of Immigration Litigation. Rolbin just recently joined the State Department, where he works as the director of legal affairs and law enforcement liaison in the Bureau of Consular Affairs/Passport Services.

## SIERRA LEONE

The U.S. State Department recently awarded **Thomas Hull** (68-70) with the Presidential Meritorious Service Award, which is given to past and present State Department officials for their leadership and advancement of U.S. foreign policy. Hull received the award for his work as a U.S. ambassador to Sierra Leone from 2004 to 2007. In this position, he helped ensure the presidential election was free and fair, and he helped to resume visa services at the embassy that had been terminated during the country's civil war. He also advocated for the return of the Peace Corps to the country. Hull retired from his diplomatic career in 2007. He is currently the Warburg Professor of International Relations at Simmons College in Boston.

## THAILAND

The National Adult Day Services Association recently awarded **Collin Tong** (68-69) the 2009 Katrina Gould Award for his consumer advocacy efforts in support for continued funding of adult day health centers in Washington state. Through his outreach, awareness building and rallying of media, business and personal contacts, Tong, a former NPCA board member, garnered enough media coverage and public support to restore

## ADVERTISER INDEX

- Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, 25
- American University, College of Art & Sciences, 35
- American University, School of Public Affairs, 9
- Brandeis University, Heller School, 7
- Bryn Mawr, 29
- Colorado State University, College of Business, 6
- Geico, 39
- George Mason University, School of Public Policy, 29
- George Washington University, 21
- Goucher College, Postbacc PreMed, 17
- Heifer International, 13
- Indiana University, SPEA, 33
- Johns Hopkins, School of Nursing, Cover 2/page 1
- Lesley University, 43
- Monterey Institute of Int'l Studies, 11
- New Mexico State University, 27
- The New School, TESOL, 15
- Peace Corps, 22/ 23
- Peace Corps Response, 11
- San José State University, 35
- Temple University, 27
- Tufts University, Fletcher School, 2
- University of Chicago, 19
- University of Denver, Korbel School, 17
- Western Illinois University, 31
- World Learning, SIT, 41

partial state funding for adult day health programs. His extensive advocacy work resulted in increased coverage on ADH issues in regional broadcast media as well as The Seattle Times. He also alerted representatives in the state legislature to the importance of social safety net programs serving senior and disabled citizens. The award was presented at NADSA's 2009 national conference last October in Seattle, Washington.