

# A Call to Peace

Perspectives of Volunteers on the Peace Corps at 50

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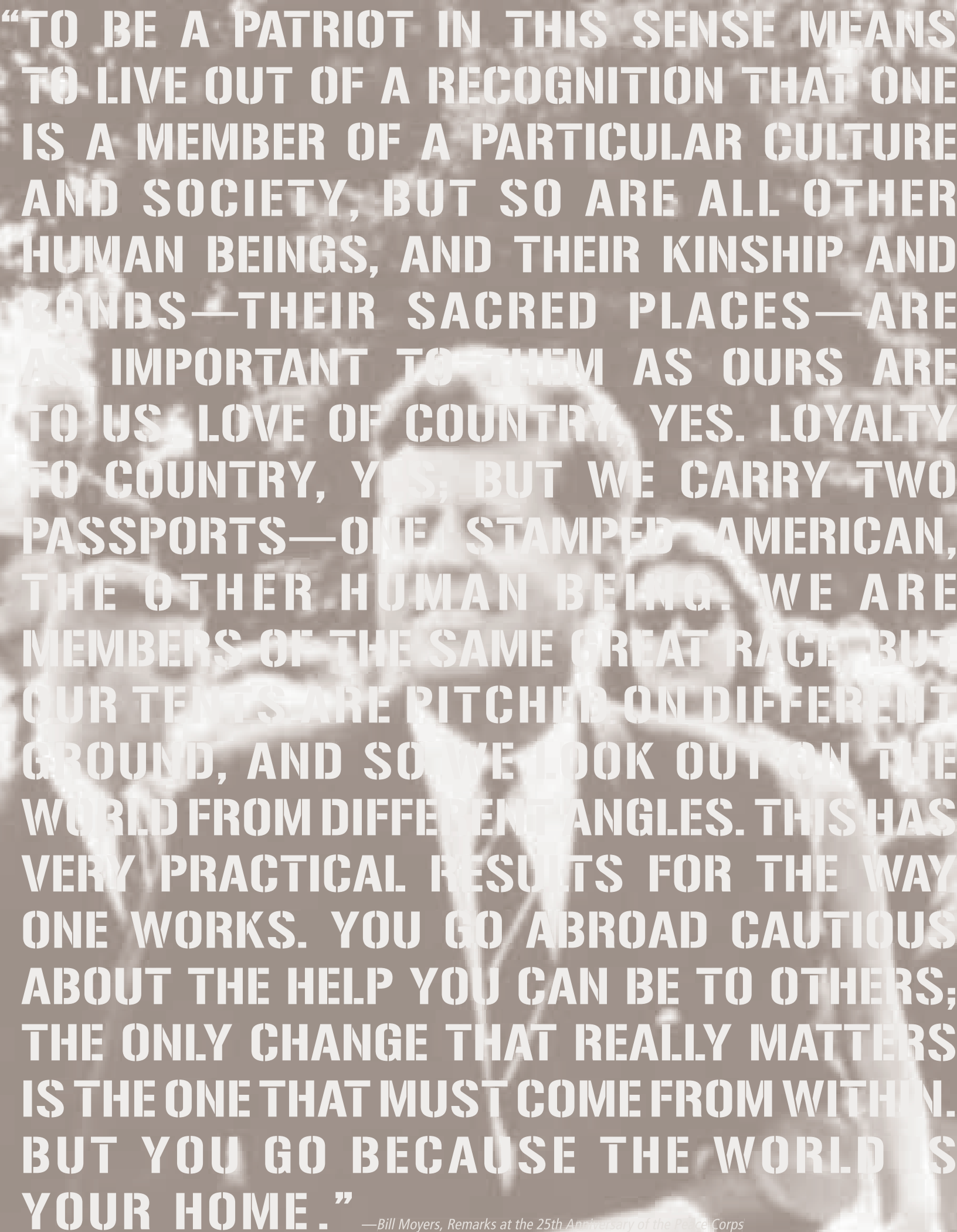
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On the 50th Anniversary of the Peace Corps



**A report by Civic Enterprises and the National Peace Corps Association  
in partnership with Peter D. Hart Research Associates**

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“TO BE A PATRIOT IN THIS SENSE MEANS TO LIVE OUT OF A RECOGNITION THAT ONE IS A MEMBER OF A PARTICULAR CULTURE AND SOCIETY, BUT SO ARE ALL OTHER HUMAN BEINGS, AND THEIR KINSHIP AND BONDS—THEIR SACRED PLACES—ARE AS IMPORTANT TO THEM AS OURS ARE TO US. LOVE OF COUNTRY, YES. LOYALTY TO COUNTRY, YES; BUT WE CARRY TWO PASSPORTS—ONE STAMPED AMERICAN, THE OTHER HUMAN BEING. WE ARE MEMBERS OF THE SAME GREAT RACE, BUT OUR TENTS ARE PITCHED ON DIFFERENT GROUND, AND SO WE LOOK OUT ON THE WORLD FROM DIFFERENT ANGLES. THIS HAS VERY PRACTICAL RESULTS FOR THE WAY ONE WORKS. YOU GO ABROAD CAUTIOUS ABOUT THE HELP YOU CAN BE TO OTHERS; THE ONLY CHANGE THAT REALLY MATTERS IS THE ONE THAT MUST COME FROM WITHIN. BUT YOU GO BECAUSE THE WORLD IS YOUR HOME.”

—Bill Moyers, Remarks at the 25th Anniversary of the Peace Corps

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# INTRODUCTION

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**THE PEACE CORPS IS A STORY OF CONTRASTS.** It emerged late in the 1960 presidential campaign, yet ignited one of the most instantaneous responses. It promoted a spirit of youthful idealism, while generating controversy among seasoned policymakers. It was a risky experiment, but held the promise of transforming how millions of people abroad viewed America and how hundreds of thousands of Americans engaged in the world. It is the most enduring legacy of a short-lived presidency.

Fifty years later, the story of the Peace Corps continues to be told and retold through many books and articles and even a YouTube channel. We believe, however, that the most important storytellers are the voices of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) themselves, speaking over the decades since its formation in 1961 to the present day. When we discovered that there had never been a large-scale, independent, nationally representative survey of the more than 200,000 volunteers who experienced the Peace Corps, we set out to listen to these individuals who helped shape and define the organization's first 50 years.

On the 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps, Civic Enterprises, the National Peace Corps Association and Peter D. Hart Research Associates collaborated to survey 11,138 RPCVs, as they prefer to be known. We wanted to gain insights into what inspired them to join; what their experiences were like; how well they believed they advanced the three Peace Corps goals; the influence their experiences had on their career choices, perspectives on America, and engagement with the world; and their ideas to make the Peace Corps and international volunteering even more relevant and effective in the next 50 years.

Together with this unique look into the experiences of RPCVs, we interviewed key leaders from before the Peace Corps' founding to the present day, including former directors, public officials, historians, supporters, critics, and the two students at the University of Michigan who heard John Kennedy's challenge and drafted the petition nearly a thousand students signed in response to his call to service. We also conducted a review of many documents, books, articles, and stories related to the Peace Corps.

As we look forward to the next 50 years, it is time to examine what we have learned from the Peace Corps in its first half-century and trust the voices of the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers themselves to be guides to the Peace Corps' future. In the pages that follow, we share their perspectives to better understand America's return on investment in this extraordinary experiment that continues to inspire thousands of Americans to respond to a call to service in an increasingly challenging world.

**“ TO BE A PATRIOT IN THIS SENSE MEANS TO LIVE OUT OF A RECOGNITION THAT ONE IS A MEMBER OF A PARTICULAR CULTURE AND SOCIETY, BUT SO ARE ALL OTHER HUMAN BEINGS, AND THEIR KINSHIP AND BONDS—THEIR SACRED PLACES— ARE AS IMPORTANT TO THEM AS OURS ARE TO US. LOVE OF COUNTRY, YES. LOYALTY TO COUNTRY, YES; BUT WE CARRY TWO PASSPORTS—ONE STAMPED AMERICAN, THE OTHER HUMAN BEING. WE ARE MEMBERS OF THE SAME GREAT RACE, BUT OUR TENTS ARE PITCHED ON DIFFERENT GROUND, AND SO WE LOOK OUT ON THE WORLD FROM DIFFERENT ANGLES. THIS HAS VERY PRACTICAL RESULTS FOR THE WAY ONE WORKS. YOU GO ABROAD CAUTIOUS ABOUT THE HELP YOU CAN BE TO OTHERS; THE ONLY CHANGE THAT REALLY MATTERS IS THE ONE THAT MUST COME FROM WITHIN. BUT YOU GO BECAUSE THE WORLD IS YOUR HOME.”**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**THE PEACE CORPS EXPERIENCE CHANGES MINDSETS AND LIVES.** What we discovered from our nationally representative survey of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers was both surprising and uplifting. The impact of the Peace Corps has been most deeply felt through the relationships and common understanding it has fostered among Americans and people from 139 countries the Peace Corps has served. Peace, more than development, has been its overriding purpose and those who have served in the Peace Corps believe they have been most effective in advancing the two goals related to promoting mutual understanding, while often less effective in meeting the need for trained men and women in host countries.

Service in the Peace Corps is also a transformative, life-changing experience for the vast majority of RPCVs. Many said it shaped their life's path and worldview, influencing their choice of career, where they lived later in life, and even their religious and political views. Their experiences were also overwhelmingly positive. Almost all RPCVs would recommend the experience to their children and grandchildren and the vast majority felt safe in the communities and countries in which they served.

The findings in this report are even more remarkable, given that only a fraction of the original vision for the Peace Corps was ever achieved. President Kennedy believed the Peace Corps would be truly serious when each year the United States was sending 100,000 of its best and brightest volunteers overseas to serve in communities with the greatest needs. Today, just over 8,600 volunteers are serving abroad, even though many more young Americans are eager to join the Peace Corps and demand for volunteers by host countries regularly outstrips supply.

Of the five channels for growth of the Peace Corps envisioned by its founders, only one – a government administered program – has been fully implemented. The original plan for four other channels for sending Peace Corps Volunteers overseas, especially the first two proposed – through existing non-government organizations engaged in international service and through programs of colleges and universities with overseas programs – remain for review and consideration as a possible additional framework for how to grow the Peace Corps and ensure it stays relevant in the next 50 years.

## PEACE AS THE OVERRIDING PURPOSE

The Peace Corps' success, in living up to the high word "Peace," can be measured by the three goals it set for its volunteers: 1) helping people from interested



A maternal health Peace Corps Volunteer and her community partner in Benin. © Peace Corps

countries meet their need for trained men and women; 2) helping promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of peoples served; and 3) helping promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans. According to RPCVs, the Peace Corps' impact has been most deeply felt through the second and third goals—through the relationships and common understanding it has fostered among Americans and people from countries around the world—more than through the first goal of meeting the need for trained men and women.

- **More than eight in ten (82 percent) RPCVs said their service was very or fairly effective in helping promote a better understanding of Americans in the communities where Volunteers served, with one-third reporting it was very effective.** These responses were consistently high across all five decades of service. The numbers also were consistently high (more than 80 percent) among those RPCVs who served in Eastern Europe, Asia, the Pacific Region, the Middle East and most of Africa, but slightly lower in North Africa (77 percent). More than 3 in 4 RPCVs

in predominantly Muslim countries believed their service positively promoted a better understanding of Americans on the part of peoples served, North Africa (77 percent) and the Middle East (81 percent).

- When RPCVs were asked how their service affected attitudes toward Americans in the communities in which they served, **91 percent reported positive attitudes after completing their service compared to 78 percent when they arrived.**
- **Ninety-three percent said that the Peace Corps has improved the perception of the United States globally**, 74 percent believed it has helped the U.S. adapt to globalization, 66 percent said it has improved U.S. foreign policy, and more than half (51 percent) believed it has had an effect on improving national security. Those who went on to serve in the government or the military felt more strongly about each of these impacts.
- **Nearly eight in ten RPCVs (79 percent) rated their service as very or fairly effective in helping promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans, with 34 percent saying it was very effective.** Again, these perceptions were relatively consistent in each of the five decades of service, with the highest response rates among RPCVs in the 1980s and 2000s (81 and 80 percent, respectively) and slightly fewer (78 percent) giving this response in the 1960s.
  - RPCVs reported a 20-percentage point improvement in their attitude toward the community in which they served, **with 73 percent having a positive (and only 38 percent having a very positive) attitude toward the community when they arrived and 93 percent having a positive (and 63 percent having a very positive) attitude toward the community when they left.**
  - **Africa has hosted the largest share of Peace Corps Volunteers across all five decades (reaching a high of 53 percent of all RPCVs in the 1980s and 43 percent in the 2000s).** Volunteers have increased in Eastern Europe from zero in the 1960s to 15 percent in the 2000s and declined in both Asia (from 26 percent in the 1960s to 12 percent in the 2000s) and South America (from 23 percent in the 1960s to 9 percent in the 2000s).
- After 9/11, deliberate efforts were undertaken to deploy more Peace Corps Volunteers to countries with significant Muslim populations to help promote cross-cultural understanding. **Today, nearly 22 percent of all Peace Corps Volunteers serve in 18 countries considered to be predominately Muslim (population at least 40 percent Muslim).**
- **The goal that ranked the lowest was helping people of interested communities meet their need for trained workers, with just 59 percent of RPCVs saying their service was very or fairly effective and only 20 percent reporting their service was very effective in meeting this goal.** Sixty-four percent of RPCVs from the 1970s said their service was at least fairly effective in meeting this goal, while just over half (54 percent) from the 2000s believed their service was at least fairly effective in this regard. RPCVs serving in Southern Africa were the most likely to report (66 percent) they were very or fairly effective at meeting this goal, while those serving in the Middle East were the least likely to believe (52 percent) that they were effective.
  - **Less than one-third (30 percent) were confident they had achieved their assignment goals**, perhaps in part because only 25 percent characterized their assignments as “well defined” and felt they were adequately prepared to carry them out. Many RPCVs felt needed and welcomed in their communities (48 percent) and believed the work they were given to do was meaningful (49 percent).
  - **Most RPCVs reported serving in education as the leading field of work across all five decades (from a high of 62 percent in the 1960s to a low of 46 percent in the 2000s).** The greatest gains in the percentage of Peace Corps Volunteers serving in particular fields were in environment/conservation (growing from 2 percent in the 1960s to 18 percent in the 2000s), health care (growing from 17 percent in the 1960s to 29 percent in the 2000s) and business information and communications (growing from 5 percent in the 1960s to 20 percent in the 2000s).

## A TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCE

The Peace Corps experience is big and transformational for volunteers—an experience that they would recommend to their families; often changed the rest of their lives; and made them better citizens back home.

- **Nearly all RPCVs (90 percent) rated their Peace Corps experience as excellent or very good and 98 percent would recommend the Peace Corps to their child, grandchild or other close family member.**
- **Just 4 percent of RPCVs reported feeling unsafe in their communities as a major problem during their Peace Corps service (2 percent of men and 5 percent of women).** As the demographics of Peace Corps Volunteers shifted from nearly two-thirds men in the 1960s to two thirds women by the 2000s, the percentage of women feeling unsafe also rose from 2 percent in the 1960s to 8 percent in the 2000s.
- **Ninety-two percent said the Peace Corps changed their lives.** Eighty-nine percent said it gave them a different perspective on the U.S.; 86 percent reported it made them more open to people of different races, ethnicities, and religions; and 80 percent said it caused them to believe U.S. foreign policies could be improved.
- **Sixty percent of RPCVs reported that their service influenced their choice of careers. More than half reported their service influenced their political views (53 percent) and nearly three-quarters (74 percent) said it influenced their views of U.S. foreign policy.** And more than one in four (26 percent) said their service influenced their religious or spiritual beliefs a great deal or a fair amount.
- **More than half of RPCVs said their service made them feel more optimistic about the future (52 percent) and two-thirds said it challenged their values (67 percent), including being more inspired to volunteer in community service when they returned home (59 percent).**
  - **More than half (55 percent) of all RPCVs reported that they regularly volunteer in their local communities, more than double the national rate for volunteering in the United States** (the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the volunteer rate for each of the last five years has been just over 26 percent), and 39 percent have raised money or other resources to help people abroad.
  - **RPCVs cited the appreciation they developed of other cultures (69 percent) and the friendships they formed both in the communities they served (43 percent) and with other Peace Corps Volunteers (43 percent) as the top things they most value from their experience.**
- **More men than women served in the Peace Corps in the 1960s (65 percent versus 35 percent), while women outpaced men in the 2000s (66 percent versus 34 percent).** RPCVs are well-educated, with 98 percent of RPCVs across all five decades having at least a 4-year college degree and more than 70 percent of RPCVs from each decade through the 1990s also having completed some post-graduate work or a degree.
- **As America has become increasingly diverse by race and ethnicity and more older Americans are living longer and wanting to give back through volunteering, the Peace Corps has also worked hard to increase the diversity of its volunteer ranks.** Over the past five decades, the share of minority RPCVs in our survey increased from 9 percent in the 1960s to 14 percent in the 2000s, and according to the latest data from Peace Corps 17 percent of currently serving Volunteers in September 2010 were of minority backgrounds.<sup>1</sup> And 11 percent of RPCVs in our survey identified themselves as 50 or older at the start of their service in the 1990s and 2000s (this information was not available for earlier cohorts due to smaller sample sizes).
- **More than 90 percent of RPCVs were motivated to join the Peace Corps in order to live in another culture, gain a better understanding of the world, and help people lead a better life.** Nearly half (47 percent said they were inspired by President Kennedy) and nearly one in five (19 percent) said they joined the Peace Corps to avoid the military draft prior to 1973.

<sup>1</sup> The Peace Corps. (2011). Peace Corps Congressional Budget Justification: Fiscal Year 2012.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

President Kennedy's statement that the Peace Corps would become truly serious when 100,000 Americans were serving abroad every year should be a challenge to all of us. Today, there are only 8,600 Peace Corps Volunteers serving at any one time. Sargent Shriver's report to the President in February 1961 laid a clear foundation for moving toward Kennedy's goal. The vision articulated by the founders of the Peace Corps, however, was lost over the subsequent years. We asked several questions to learn RPCVs' views of possible ways to strengthen or reform the Peace Corps and international volunteering to fulfill its potential in today's complex and challenging world. RPCVs believe the Peace Corps is more relevant today. They support ways to strengthen it, and support other means in addition to the enhancement and expansion of the Peace Corps to increase international volunteering.

- **Seventy-nine percent and 76 percent of RPCVs were motivated to join the Peace Corps to promote cross-cultural understanding and serve the U.S. in the cause of peace, respectively. Sixty-six percent of RPCVs believed it is more important now to promote a better understanding of other people on the part of Americans and 63 percent shared this view to promote such understanding of Americans among people in host countries.** Less than half (47 percent) believed it is more important now to help people meet their need for trained men and women.
- **A large majority of RPCVs supported measures to improve the Peace Corps and to strengthen international volunteering, while supporting the Peace Corps' basic structure and role.** When considering the percentage who support reforms versus those who oppose them, we find the following **net levels of support or opposition for the following measures:**
  - **Eighty-three percent favored recruiting more experienced volunteers to offer technical expertise and mentor young volunteers;** 83 percent wanted better training for greater impact; and 77 percent wanted projects defined more clearly for greater effectiveness and accountability;
  - **Sixty-eight percent supported doubling the Peace Corps to 15,000** and the same percentage supported reciprocal programs to bring talent from other countries to the United States;
  - **But 10 percent more opposed than favored flexible, short-term assignments within the Peace Corps** and 27 percent more opposed than favored private organizations administering Peace Corps projects overseas;



A Peace Corps Volunteer teaches his host brother about the maize that his family grows in Guatemala. ©Peace Corps

- Beyond the Peace Corps itself, **70 percent favored increasing other federally-funded positions for volunteers to work on issues such as HIV/AIDS and malaria control;** 25 percent more favored than opposed partnering with other private sector programs to send volunteers overseas; and 16 percent more favored than opposed more volunteers taking on shorter-term assignments through low-cost, federally-funded programs.
- **Most RPCVs (79 percent) believed the Peace Corps has delivered on its mission** and most (65 percent) reported it has adapted at least fairly well to the times; **however, less than half (46 percent) believed it has done a good job at documenting its effectiveness.**



## WAYS FORWARD

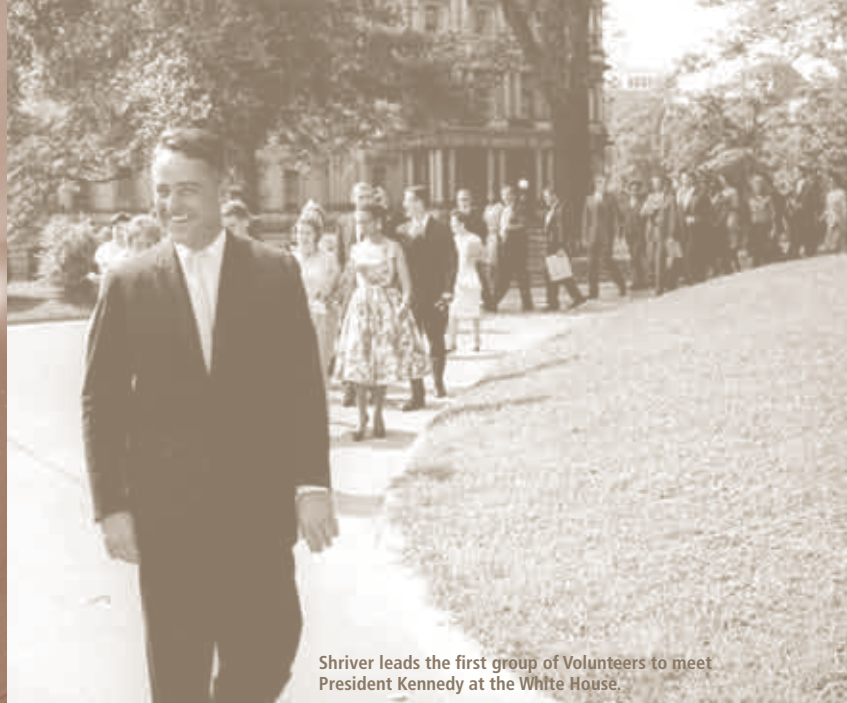
**In anticipation of the 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps, the ServiceWorld coalition was formed a few years ago from the Initiative on International Volunteering and Service at the Brookings Institution and its companion Building Bridges Coalition to better understand how the original vision of the Peace Corps could be fulfilled.** Today, the ServiceWorld coalition has more than 300 non-government organizations (NGOs), colleges and universities, corporations, and community and faith-based institutions, and thousands of RPCVs and other individuals working together to advance the original vision of President Kennedy, Sargent Shriver, many Democrat and Republican Presidents, and leaders of our society since the founding of the Peace Corps.

This coalition has proposed a plan of action that is consistent with Shriver's original vision for the Peace Corps and President Kennedy's goal of 100,000 Americans serving abroad every year:

- **The Peace Corps: The Peace Corps should double its ranks to 15,000 volunteers by 2015 and forge partnerships with other volunteer-sending and international development organizations to maximize impact and leverage funding.** In addition to funding these new slots, the Peace Corps should also strengthen current programs, lower the cost per volunteer, more carefully define projects, and document its effectiveness in meeting the three goals. It should work to form service partnerships with more countries of growing global importance, such as Brazil, India and Nigeria where there are currently no Peace Corps Volunteers. The Peace Corps must continue to be aggressive in increasing the safety and security of its Volunteers, including a timely and compassionate response. Bills pending in Congress would codify reforms the agency has put in place such as better staff training and protection for whistleblowers, and would require more detailed crime statistics and the Peace Corps and U.S. Department of State to formalize how U.S. Embassy officials respond to crimes against Peace Corps Volunteers.
- **Volunteers for Prosperity: Created by Executive Order in 2003 and authorized into law in 2009, Volunteers for Prosperity should expand from 43,000 to 75,000 skilled Americans each year recruited and deployed for flexible-term assignments through a network of U.S. nonprofits that work in the developing world on urgent problems, such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, education, clean water, and helping entrepreneurs start**
- **local businesses that create new jobs.** This increase should occur through the expansion of the Volunteers for Prosperity (VfP) Serve Program, which offers modest stipends to volunteers, more than matched by individual and private sector contributions.
- **Global Service Fellowships: Initiated by the private sector to create at least 100 Global Service Fellows each year, Global Service Fellowships should be authorized into law to mobilize 10,000 volunteer fellows each year for up to one-year assignments** to help build the capacity of non-profit organizations and faith-based institutions working in the developing world to innovate and solve significant global challenges. These new opportunities for international service directly through experienced and tested non-government organizations will enable Americans to serve who would have much to offer but are not able or ready to enlist for the two years that the Peace Corps requires. The Global Service Fellows should be selected in a competitive process. **Members of Congress should be able to nominate fellows from their districts and states, similar to the nominating process for the Military Academies.**
- **An International Social Innovation Fund: An International Social Innovation Fund should be created to fuel further innovation in how Americans can have a greater impact through international volunteer service and increase the capacity of local organizations to effectively utilize their time and talents.** To enhance the impact of Americans serving overseas each year through government and non-government organizations, we propose to build on the examples of the Volunteer Generation and Social Innovation Funds authorized in the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act.



After signing the law that creates the Peace Corps, President Kennedy hands the signing pen to Shriver, the first Director.



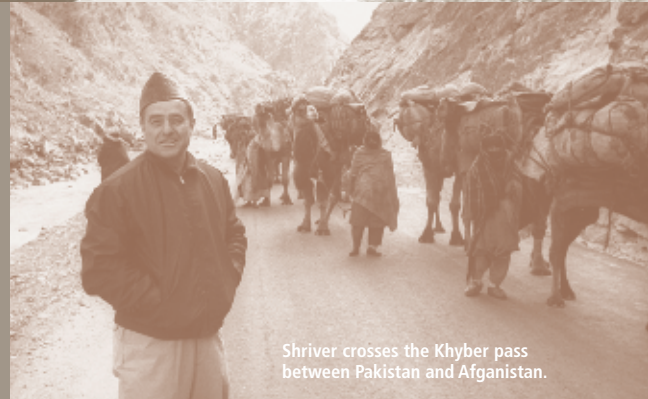
Shriver leads the first group of Volunteers to meet President Kennedy at the White House.

“ I HOPE YOU REMEMBER TO BELIEVE IN THINGS ‘TIL YOU DIE. I HOPE YOU REMEMBER TO BE GUIDED BY BELIEFS POWERFUL ENOUGH TO CHANGE THE WORLD. I HOPE YOU REMEMBER THE EXAMPLE OF THE PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER, THE HEAD START PARENT, THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETE. THEY EACH IN THEIR OWN WAY ARE WAGING PEACE. MAYBE YOU WILL EVEN REMEMBER ME AND MY FAMILY—MY CHILDREN, MY WIFE, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, JACKIE. REMEMBER THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY—OF GIVING AND RECEIVING—OF LOVE. ”

—Sargent Shriver, *Yale Class Day Speech: May 22, 1994*

Photos courtesy of the Sargent Shriver Peace Institute.

During a trip to Jerusalem, Shriver visits a refugee camp near Jericho.



Shriver crosses the Khyber pass between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Shriver washes his face at a water pump in Tehran, Iran.



Shriver lands in Nepal.



# A CALL TO PEACE

This report is not a narration of the key moments in the life of the Peace Corps over its 50 years. Many books and articles are devoted to this history and we want to focus our attention on the perspectives of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs). The beginning of the Peace Corps, however, is particularly significant in our view because it was powered at the grassroots level, and set forth a framework that informs recommendations for the future of the Peace Corps and international volunteering. We, therefore, take a moment to trace the roots of the Peace Corps here.

## The Beginning

The Peace Corps was not an original idea. Despite Theodore Sorenson calling it “the only new proposal” candidate John F. Kennedy introduced in the 1960 presidential campaign, it was not new. Both Representative Henry Reuss and Senator Hubert Humphrey proposed the idea in the late 1950s. A bill, written by Representative Reuss, a Democrat from Wisconsin, was introduced in Congress in 1960. The bill called for the study of a “Point Four Youth Corps,” point four being a reference to the fourth point in President Harry Truman’s 1949 inaugural address, offering technical assistance to developing nations. Congress approved \$10,000 for the study of such a corps. Senator Humphrey, who gave the Peace Corps its name, also introduced a bill in 1960 to establish an agency and campaigned for the idea during the presidential primaries. His bill never came up for a vote. It was candidate John F. Kennedy, in a rousing and impromptu speech delivered on October 14, 1960 at 2 a.m. on the steps of the University of Michigan to an estimated crowd of 10,000 students who had waited in a cold night for him to arrive after his televised debate with Richard Nixon, who inspired a generation of students to answer the call to service and gave life to a budding idea that would become his most enduring legacy.

The idea for a Peace Corps took off because of a student movement that emerged behind it. Two students in attendance that night, Alan and Judy Guskin, took Kennedy’s remarks to heart, leading them to draft a petition and collect about a thousand student pledges to volunteer overseas in response to Kennedy’s challenge: “How many of you, who are going to be doctors, are willing to spend your days in Ghana? Technicians or engineers, how many of you are willing to work in the Foreign Service and spend your lives traveling around the world?... on your willingness

to contribute part of your life to this country... will depend the answer whether a free society can compete.” Two weeks later, on November 2, 1960, in a speech at the Cow Palace in San Francisco, stirred by the student petition, Kennedy officially proposed a peace corps of talented men and women who would dedicate themselves to the progress and peace of developing countries.

Sergeant Shriver said the Peace Corps “might still be just an idea but for the affirmative response of those Michigan students.” He called it a case of “spontaneous combustion” and says the Peace Corps thereafter tried to keep “the momentum and unbureaucratic spontaneity” of that campaign night.<sup>3</sup>



Candidate Kennedy on the steps of the University of Michigan, October 14, 1960. Photo courtesy of the University of Michigan.

<sup>2</sup> Meisler, S. (2011). *When the World Calls: The Inside Story of the Peace Corps and Its First Fifty Years*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

<sup>3</sup> Shriver, S. (1964). *The Point of the Lance*. Harper & Row.

## THE STORY OF ALAN AND JUDY GUSKIN

According to Alan and Judy Guskin, the Peace Corps began with a question. Alan recalls President Kennedy's visit to the University of Michigan campus and his challenge to American youth: "he was sort of saying, 'what are you going to do? What contribution are you going to make to this world?'" Inspired to propose an answer, Guskin and his former wife Judy mobilized their friends and drafted a letter in a local restaurant that appeared in the University's Michigan Daily on October 21, 1960. This letter, written on what Judy refers to as "a very historic" napkin, led to a student petition with some thousand signatures in support of forming a global service initiative that would inspire creation of the Peace Corps.

News of the petition soon reached Millie Jeffrey, a University of Michigan parent, Democratic National Committee member, and member of the Civil Rights Section of the Kennedy campaign. She organized a meeting between Kennedy and the students. "The Senator would like to see you," Judy heard as she picked up the phone in late October 1960. The Guskins promptly organized their key colleagues and drove to the Toledo airport tarmac to meet Kennedy. With no press around, Kennedy greeted the students and asked to see the petition. Alan recalls asking Kennedy how serious he was about the Peace Corps and Kennedy responded, "until Tuesday we worry about the election and after that the world."

The Guskins and their supporters also had to worry about the election. Ken Boulding, a professor of economics at the University of Michigan and an active supporter of peace issues, did not want their idea to die if Kennedy lost the election. He advised Alan and Judy to share their proposal with the Nixon campaign, and Judy recalls Nixon's rejection of the idea -- that this "kiddie corps" demonstrated how unprepared Kennedy was to be President. .

Following the election, the Guskins expanded their mission in an effort to keep Kennedy on task. They organized and funded conferences at the University of Michigan and American University to help determine who would serve in the Peace Corps, what kind of work they would do and where they would go. They attended a meeting for the Society of International Development in Washington, D.C. where Alan remembers other attendees expressing doubt over the level of youth interest. Alan asserted that "the students are committed and they will serve."

Alan and Judy credit much of the success of the Peace Corps to the youth energy evident in the Civil Rights Movement and the increasing desire for change. At first "there was nervousness, for sure," Judy notes. She believed that the time for global citizen engagement had arrived. True to his promise on the Toledo tarmac, Kennedy signed an Executive Order creating the Peace Corps on March 1, 1961.

Following the "chaotic" first summer of working at the newly formed Peace Corps, filled with piles of letters and applications, the Guskins were selected to be Peace Corps Volunteers in Thailand. Originally offered a staff position, Judy refused because she wanted to volunteer, be "in the pool," and experience more intimately what it means to be a global citizen. "The world is a family," she explained. "To be a global citizen is to give your heart, open your heart to people, and that makes you a different person." Judy's goal as a teacher in Thailand was to provide a "global education" to her students. Alan says "the question is not whose culture is better," but rather how can we "bridge the differences?"



Candidate Kennedy with Alan (far left) and Judy Guskin (center). Photo courtesy of the University of Michigan.

## KEY MOMENTS: PEACE CORPS FOUNDING

### OCTOBER 14, 1960

Senator Kennedy delivers impromptu speech to an estimated 10,000 students at the University of Michigan at 2:00 a.m. asking them to serve their country by volunteering abroad

### NOVEMBER 2, 1960

Senator Kennedy delivers Cow Palace speech in San Francisco, CA

### NOVEMBER 6, 1960

The Guskins and other graduate students greet Kennedy on the Toledo Airport tarmac and present their petition

### NOVEMBER 8, 1960

Kennedy wins the 1960 Presidential election

### FEBRUARY 24, 1961

Sargent Shriver delivers Summary Report to President Kennedy for the creation of the Peace Corps

### MARCH 1, 1961

Kennedy signs Executive Order 10924 to establish a pilot version of the Peace Corps

### JUNE 1961

Training begins at U.S. colleges and universities for the first round of Peace Corps Volunteers

### JULY 1961

Assignments are planned for Chile, Colombia, Ghana, the Philippines, St. Lucia, and Tanzania

### 28 AUGUST 1961

Kennedy celebrates the first group of Peace Corps Volunteers leaving for Ghana and Tanzania at a ceremony in the White House Rose Garden

### 30 AUGUST 1961

The first group of Peace Corps Volunteers touches down in Accra, Ghana (they will serve as teachers)

### 22 SEPTEMBER 1961

Congress established the Peace Corps and appropriates \$40 million to the agency

Immediately following his inauguration in January 1961, President Kennedy asked his brother-in law, Sargent Shriver, to lead a task force on establishing a Peace Corps. Out of a suite at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, DC, Shriver (along with his campaign aide, soon to be the President's special assistant for civil rights, and co-author of this report, Harris Wofford), assembled the task force and day and night they all worked together to prepare the report that would become the foundation for the Peace Corps.



Harris Wofford with President Kennedy.

In one month the report was done, defining the Corps' mission, goals and structure. Shriver believed speed was of the essence in order to continue the momentum and be able to enlist outstanding volunteers who would be graduating in the spring. "If you decide to go ahead," he wrote in his memo to the President accompanying the report, "we can be in business Monday morning."<sup>4</sup>

The report was sent to President Kennedy on Friday, February 24, 1961 and on Wednesday, March 1, acting on Shriver's advice, Kennedy signed Executive Order 10924 creating a temporary agency called the Peace Corps. Although Congress would not pass legislation until September 22, 1961, authorizing a permanent agency, the Peace Corps was open for business and Shriver immediately began the dual mission of recruiting Peace Corps Volunteers and visiting foreign heads of state who would invite them to serve in their countries.

*Read "Voice of the First Returned Peace Corps Volunteers" in the Appendix.*

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

## The Three Goals

The mission of the new Peace Corps would be bold and different from anything seen before. Peace Corps Volunteers would not work for the Foreign Service or an aid agency; they would go abroad in a new capacity—to teach or build or work in the communities to which they were sent, serving local institutions and living with the people they were helping.

Later Harris Wofford wrote, “Some members of the task force insisted that Shriver and the President choose a single purpose or at least settle for a main one. Shriver found the tension between competing purposes creative, and thought it should continue. ‘Peace’ was the overriding purpose, and the process of promoting it was necessarily complex, he said, so the Peace Corps should learn to live with the complexity. Finally we agreed on three propositions about the program.”<sup>5</sup>

The three goals of the Peace Corps would be to help the people of interested countries meet their need for trained workers; to help promote a better understanding of Americans in the communities where volunteers served; and to help promote a better understanding among Americans of other cultures and peoples. This third goal is sometimes referred to as “bringing the Peace Corps back home.”

The founders of the Peace Corps thought the path to peace and security was through the interaction of these three goals—a bold vision first expressed at the height of the Cold War, and one that is relevant today in the fight against terrorism around the world. The creation of the Peace Corps was a commitment by the United States to a unique new policy, to send our sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, and even grandmothers and grandfathers to leave the comfort of their homes and serve abroad for two years in often harsh conditions and in the service of the host communities and countries.

## PEACE AS THE OVERRIDING PURPOSE

While Shriver embraced the complexity of promoting peace, the Peace Corps itself has sometimes struggled to give equal consideration to all three goals. To counteract the criticism that promoting a better understanding of Americans around the world was just a public relations venture or, worse, propaganda, the Shriver report emphasized the reciprocal learning that would occur from sending Americans abroad. The

knowledge they would bring home of other cultures and America’s role in the world would help to build a citizenry with international perspectives and interests. President Kennedy hoped it would lead to a more informed U.S. foreign policy, and hoped many Returned Peace Corps Volunteers would enter the Foreign Service and other forms of public service where their influence would have direct impact on policy.

**“ THE PEACE CORPS IS NOT AN INSTRUMENT OF FOREIGN POLICY, BECAUSE TO MAKE IT SO WOULD ROB IT OF ITS CONTRIBUTION TO FOREIGN POLICY”**

—Dean Rusk, U.S. Secretary of State, 1961-1969

As our survey results show, Kennedy’s hope has become a reality, but on a much smaller scale than he intended. The Peace Corps has been most successful at promoting peace through mutual understanding and a greater appreciation of both American values and foreign cultures. But the founders of the Peace Corps also recognized that for Peace Corps Volunteers to be welcome in foreign countries, they must provide what Kennedy promised: “help foreign lands meet their urgent needs for trained workers.”<sup>6</sup> This challenge has been met less successfully as the skills of workers in developing countries have grown over the decades while the Peace Corps model of sending largely recent college graduates abroad has remained unchanged.

The majority of RPCVs rated their service as very or fairly effective in meeting the three goals (figure 1). Eighty-two percent said their service was very or fairly effective at helping promote a better understanding of Americans in the communities where RPCVs served (33 percent very effective). In the five decades of the Peace Corps existence, this view has been mostly consistent. RPCVs who served in Eastern Europe (86 percent), Asia and the Pacific Region (85 percent), along with the Middle East and most of Africa (81 percent), reported consistently high percentages. Those who served in North Africa were the least likely to feel this way (77 percent).

Seventy-nine percent rate their service as very or fairly effective at helping promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans (34 percent very effective). This view has remained relatively consistent, with 81 and 80 percent of respondents from the 1980s and 2000s, respectively, reporting effectiveness. The percentage of respondents reporting effectiveness was slightly smaller in the 1960s, with 78 percent.

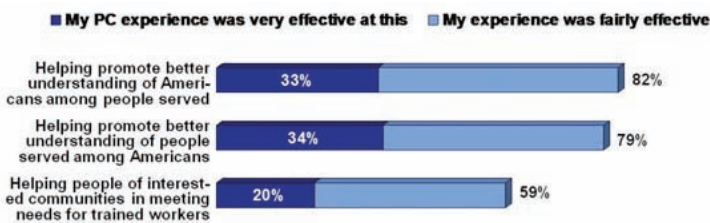
<sup>5</sup> Wofford, H. (1980). *Of Kennedys & Kings*, Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

Those serving in predominantly Muslim countries in North Africa and the Middle East were also successful in this endeavor, with 79 percent and 76 percent, respectively, reporting that their efforts had been effective.

The goal that rated the lowest among RPCVs was helping people of interested communities meet their need for trained workers; just 59 percent of RPCVs felt their service was very or fairly effective in meeting this goal (20 percent very effective). And while the effectiveness of their service in achieving the two cultural goals was consistent across decades, RPCVs in the 2000s were the least likely (54 percent) to report their experience as very or fairly effective in meeting this goal. The level of effectiveness also varied greatly across different regions. Those RPCVs from Southern Africa were the most likely to report (67 percent) that this goal was met fairly effectively. Those returning from the Middle East reported the lowest level of success (52 percent).

Figure 1: Achieving the Three Goals



My PC experience was very/fairly effective on key objectives, by decade of service

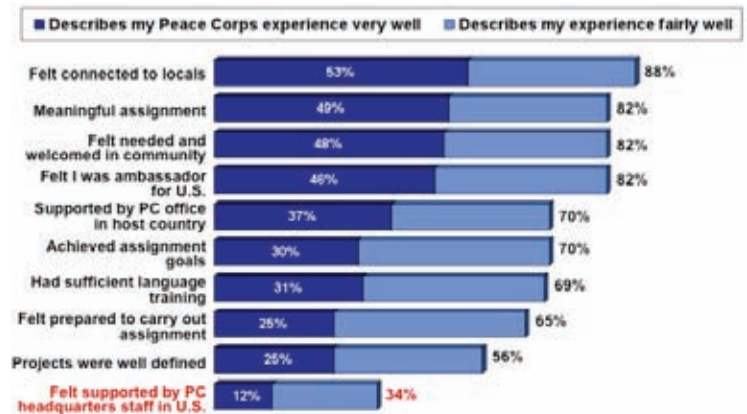
	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
Helping promote better understanding of Americans among people served	81%	82%	83%	84%	82%
Helping promote better understanding of people served among Americans	77%	78%	80%	79%	80%
Helping people of interested communities in meeting needs for trained workers	60%	64%	59%	56%	54%

### Goal 1: Helping people of interested countries meet their needs for trained men and women

The first goal, transferring skills to developing countries by helping them meet their needs for trained workers, scored the lowest of the three among our survey respondents. It is important to remember, however, that the Peace Corps founders viewed peace—not development—as the agency’s overriding purpose.<sup>7</sup> The U.S. government had, and still has, other aid programs and development assistance, chief among these today are U.S. AID and the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

While most RPCVs felt needed and welcomed in their communities (48 percent said this describes their experience very well) and believed the work they were given to do was meaningful (49 percent said very well), less than one-third were confident they had achieved their assignment goals (30 percent describes very well) perhaps in part because just 25 percent characterized their assignments as “well defined” and felt they were adequately prepared to carry them out.

Figure 2: How well does each describe your Peace Corps experience?



In describing their experiences in an open form question, 33 percent said the “best thing” about being a Peace Corps Volunteer was the people they met, life-long friendships they formed, and being accepted and welcomed by the local community. Thirty-one percent said the “best thing” was living in a foreign country and immersion in a new culture. Only 9 percent said a sense of accomplishment in making a difference was the “best thing” about their experience.

More recent RPCVs were also less likely to feel needed in the community (76 percent of RPCVs from the 2000s said this describes their experience well/fairly well, compared to 86 percent of RPCVs from the 1960s) and less likely to feel their assignments were meaningful and had an impact (74 percent of RPCVs from the 2000s said this describes their experience well/fairly well, compared to 86 percent from the 1960s). Furthermore, RPCVs from the 2000s compared to those from the 1960s were less likely to feel they achieved their assignment goals (RPCV responses showed a 9 percent decline from 1960s to 2000s), less likely to feel they were adequately prepared (11 percent decline), and less likely to feel that their projects were well defined (19 percent decline).

7 Ibid.

**Figure 3: Program Experience by Decade**

*% saying each describes their Peace Corps experience very/fairly well*

	Decade of Service				
	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
Felt connected to culture	87%	88%	89%	88%	85%
Meaningful assignment	86%	85%	82%	80%	74%
Felt needed and welcomed in community	86%	87%	85%	81%	76%
Felt I was ambassador for U.S.	81%	79%	82%	83%	81%
Supported by PC office in host country	72%	71%	71%	70%	64%
Achieved assignment goals	73%	74%	72%	68%	64%
Sufficient language training	56%	70%	76%	74%	71%
Felt prepared to carry out assignment	66%	69%	72%	69%	55%
Projects were well defined	61%	64%	58%	50%	42%
Felt supported by PC headquarters staff in U.S.	36%	34%	40%	35%	28%

These findings are consistent with the Peace Corps' own assessment. In June 2010, the Peace Corps released a Comprehensive Agency Assessment based on hundreds of responses the assessment team received from Volunteers, RPCVs, agency staff, host country partners, Members of Congress and their staff, and others.

As the world has advanced and become more sophisticated through new technologies, and countries worldwide now have university trained leaders and national development strategies, the assessment found that the Peace Corps must evolve its model for the 21st Century. Such modernization of the Peace Corps must help meet host country expectations and ensure Peace Corps Volunteers have meaningful and important work to do for which they have received the appropriate training and preparation to complete their assignments.

The current training process emphasizes general preparation for the volunteer experience. Before they deploy, Peace Corps Volunteers receive from 8 to 12 weeks of initial training that focuses on preparing them to live in host communities. There is cross-cultural training, language training, health and wellness training, and safety training, all of which is based on preparing the Peace Corps Volunteer for their experience. There is relatively less emphasis, however, on job training or preparing them to carry out skilled work.

Technical training to teach Peace Corps Volunteers to carry out assignments is typically done in the host country once the volunteer arrives. The 2010 Assessment found that the number of projects combined with each post developing its own training

content led to a need for improved technical training for Peace Corps Volunteers. Our survey results support this finding and suggest that more effective on-the-job teacher training for the Volunteers new to teaching may be among the greatest needs.

While language training has improved over the decades, according to the RPCVs, satisfaction with the preparation they were given to carry out assignments has declined. The share of RPCVs reporting they received "sufficient language training" rose from 56 percent among RPCVs from the 1960s to 71 percent among RPCVs from the 2000s. The share of RPCVs who "felt your training prepared you to carry out your assignment," however, declined from 66 percent among RPCVs from the 1960s to 55 percent among RPCVs from the 2000s.

Most assignments are based on the interests of Peace Corps Volunteers and involve partnerships with local organizations in the host country. Yet, who sets the goals for Volunteer assignments is unclear.

According to the RPCVs, 80 percent received placements that matched their interests or expertise prior to joining (figure 4). Also, 77 percent reported partnering with a local organization during their service to carry out their assignments. But despite these partnerships, RPCVs reported that it is not clear who sets the goals for their work, and this in part could explain why the majority of RPCVs do not feel confident they achieved their goals (30 percent "describes very well" in figure 2).

**Figure 4: Assignments**

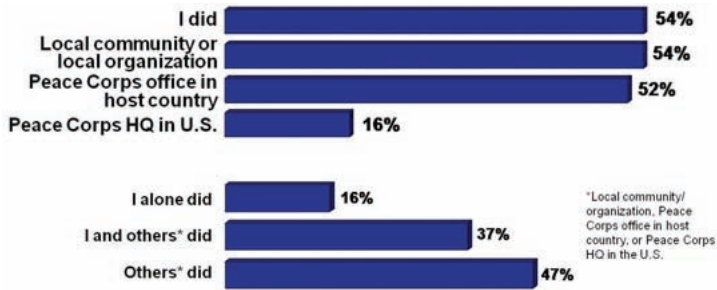


When asked who set the goals for their service (and allowed multiple responses) roughly half said "I did," the local community did, or the host country Peace Corps office did (figure 5). Further analysis of the data determined that just 16 percent in fact set the goals themselves, while 37 percent set the goals in conjunction with the local partner or Peace Corps, and 47 percent relied entirely on the local partner or



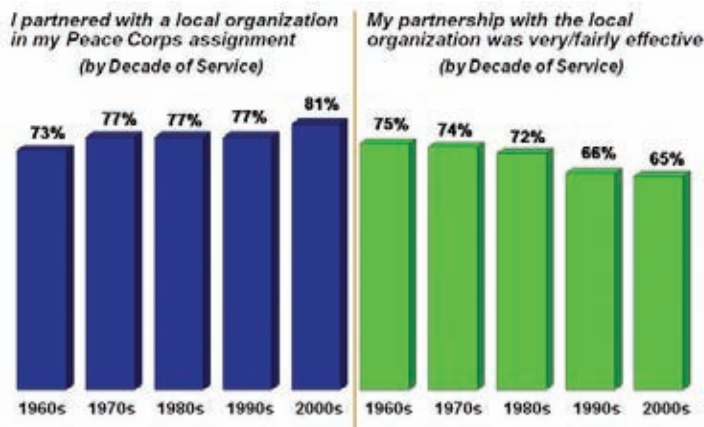
Peace Corps to set the goals of their service. These responses show that to measure impact, there must be clear goals and accountability for who determines them.

**Figure 5: Who set the goals for your Peace Corps Service?**



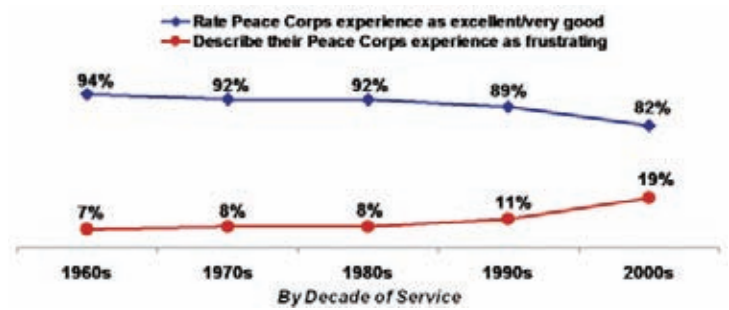
Measuring impact can become more complicated when there are so many local partnerships involved with the Peace Corps. In fiscal year 2009, Peace Corps posts reported 560 collaborations with host government agencies and more than 360 collaborations with local NGOs, universities and local private companies.<sup>8</sup> While reported partnerships with local organizations in the communities where Peace Corps Volunteers live and serve have risen over time, the effectiveness of these partnerships has declined according to the RPCVs (figure 6).

**Figure 6: Local Partnerships**



The result is that despite very high general levels of satisfaction, more recent RPCVs give their overall Peace Corps experience lower scores than do earlier cohorts and a higher proportion characterize it as frustrating (figure 7). This may be due in part to the gradual shift in the objectives of service from measurable objectives such as teaching, agriculture, and engineering to a greater emphasis on personal outreach like community and youth development that make it more difficult to assess impact. These findings also likely reflect the difficulty the Peace Corps has faced updating and adapting a 1960s model for today's world. A recommended strategy from the 2010 Comprehensive Agency Assessment is to improve the Peace Corps' monitoring and reporting systems for measuring impact of the first goal.

**Figure 7: Satisfaction has Declined**



**Goal 2: Helping promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of peoples served**

The Peace Corps has had much greater success helping promote a better understanding of Americans around the world. When the RPCVs were asked how their service impacted attitudes toward Americans in the community they served, more than 90 percent reported positive attitudes after completing their service compared to 78 percent when they arrived (figure 8). After 9/11, deliberate efforts were undertaken to deploy Peace Corps Volunteers to countries with significant Muslim populations to help promote cross-cultural understanding. The survey results attest that RPCVs felt their greatest impact in the field has been as agents of soft diplomacy for the U.S. rather than technical assistance.

8 The Peace Corps. (2010). *The Peace Corps: A Comprehensive Agency Assessment*.

## VELINGARA NET DISTRIBUTION CAMPAIGN

In his 1961 report to President Kennedy, Sargent Shriver said the second most important need that the Peace Corps could meet was eliminating malaria. Five decades later, the promise of his original vision is starting to be fulfilled and the Peace Corps is playing its part.

In Senegal in 2008, more than 14 million citizens were at risk of contracting malaria and the under-5 mortality rate was approximately 1 in 12. Malaria is a preventable and treatable disease with available tools to help combat it, including long-lasting insecticide treated bed nets (LLINs) under which families can sleep at night to protect against the potentially deadly bite of a mosquito that transmits malaria. In response to these startling statistics and facts, the Peace Corps began a LLIN distribution effort in select rural communities with the goal of eventually expanding the program to a larger area. The grassroots capabilities of the Peace Corps allowed Volunteers to use house-to-house communications strategies, design and conduct census-taking processes, design individual accountability mechanisms, and create incentives for regular bed net use.

In order to obtain the necessary resources to successfully expand the program beyond just local communities, however, the Peace Corps united with other organizations with varying skill sets and resources. In 2009, it officially began its collaboration with Senegal's Ministry of Health, Malaria No More, World Vision, and Tostan (founded by RPCV Molly Melching) and together these organizations set a goal to distribute LLINs throughout the entire Velingara district in southern Senegal. These partnerships with NGOs and the Senegalese Government allowed the Peace Corps to bring its rural LLIN distribution model to scale and combine bed net distribution with a large-scale education and communication effort.

Peace Corps Volunteers, other volunteers and community health workers helped oversee the initial census to determine where LLINs would end up, distributed bed nets by village to guarantee delivery, educated LLIN recipients about proper net usage, and conducted a follow-up "hang-check" to ensure that nets had been properly installed. Supplementing the bed net distribution effort was a comprehensive communication and education strategy geared toward increased awareness about the use of bed nets and malaria. The partnering organizations oversaw the creation of a national media campaign and ensured that villages united under a communal commitment to use their nets and that radios broadcasted malaria information and discussions.

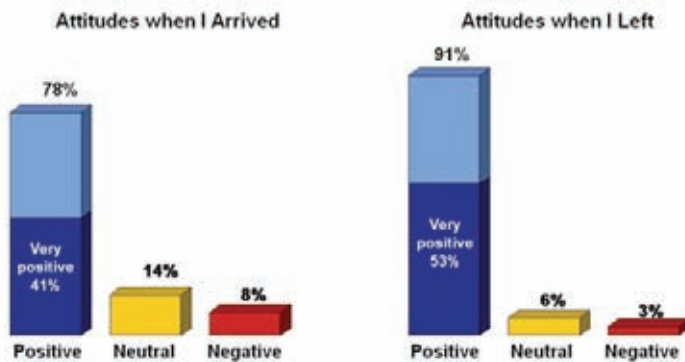
As a result of the partnerships and the combined distribution and communications efforts, nearly 100 percent of the population in this province has been covered with a bed net and the local population has demonstrated a marked increase in malaria knowledge. More than 99,000 LLINs have been distributed across the Velingara district; community health workers have developed good training and experience; the campaign has been adapted to other regions in Senegal; and efforts have been expanded to encompass coverage for the entire Senegalese population.

Each organization provided the unique strengths of its resources and networks in order to make the LLIN campaign a success. The Ministry of Health provided more than 350 volunteers to assist with the net distribution and follow-up processes. Malaria No More provided 80 percent of the funding for nets, malaria knowledge and attitude surveys, and a multimedia campaign. Tostan helped organize inter-village gatherings and logistics support, whereas World Vision contributed census data and human resources for project management, distribution, training, and grassroots communication. These invaluable assets, when combined with the Peace Corps' logistical and Volunteer efforts, enabled the partners to conduct the entire Velingara net distribution campaign within six months.<sup>9</sup> This partnership is literally saving thousands of lives that otherwise would be lost or diminished by malaria.

<sup>9</sup> Velingara Net Distribution Campaign, Malaria No More

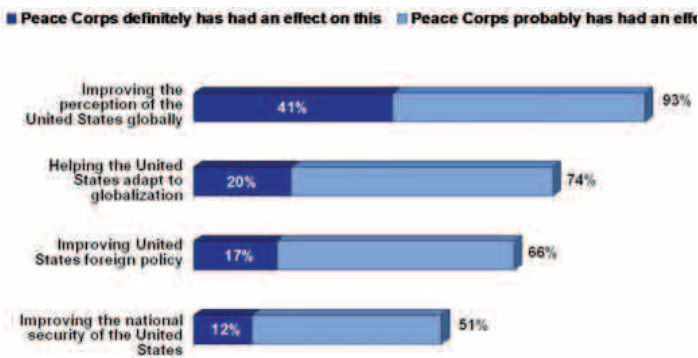
**TODAY, 22 PERCENT OF ALL PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS SERVE IN 38 PERCENT OF THE COUNTRIES CONSIDERED TO BE PREDOMINATELY MUSLIM (POPULATION AT LEAST 40 PERCENT MUSLIM). OVER 1,900 AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF WORK IN THESE 18 HOST COUNTRIES. THIS REMAINS A TOP PRIORITY FOR THE AGENCY.**

**Figure 8: Thinking about the community in which you served, what were the attitudes toward Americans when you arrived and when you left?**



RPCVs also believed the Peace Corps has had an effect on national security and improving the perception of the United States around the world. Among all RPCVs, 93 percent said the Peace Corps has improved the perception of the United States globally, 74 percent believed it has helped the U.S. adapt to globalization, 66 percent said it has improved U.S. foreign policy, and over half (51 percent) believed it has had an effect on improving national security (figure 9).

**Figure 9: Impact on National Security and Foreign Policy**



RPCVs who think the Peace Corps has improved U.S. national security believed that personal connections and greater cross-cultural understanding defuse tensions. When asked to elaborate on how the Peace Corps has improved national security, 21 percent believed the personal relationships developed between Peace Corps Volunteers and host country nationals

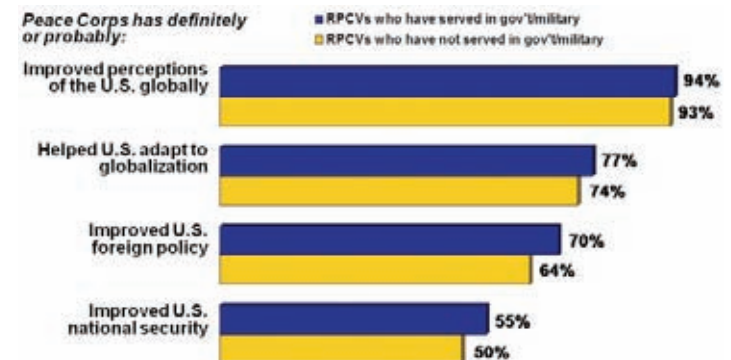
contribute to mutual understanding, appreciation, and respect saying "it is hard to hate those you know." Fifteen percent believed the more people outside the U.S. meet Americans the less vulnerable they will be to preconceived notions and stereotypes and the less likely they will be to harm Americans. And 12 percent believed the Peace Corps has improved national security by promoting an atmosphere of understanding across cultures.

RPCVs who believed the Peace Corps has improved U.S. foreign policy point to the employment of RPCVs in the foreign service and involvement in politics and policy. Twenty percent of RPCVs believed the Peace Corps influences foreign policy through the experience they bring to positions in the Foreign Service or U.S. Department of State. And 17 percent said that it is through the experience RPCVs bring to careers in politics or Congress that may also have an influence on U.S. foreign policy.

**“ HAVING PEOPLE COME FROM OUTSIDE IS A HELP... IT'S GOING TO HELP CREATE UNDERSTANDING.”**

—Indira Gandhi, addressing 97 Peace Corps trainees in New Delhi: October 1968

**Figure 10: Impact on National Security and Foreign Policy by Volunteers who have Served in the Military or Government**



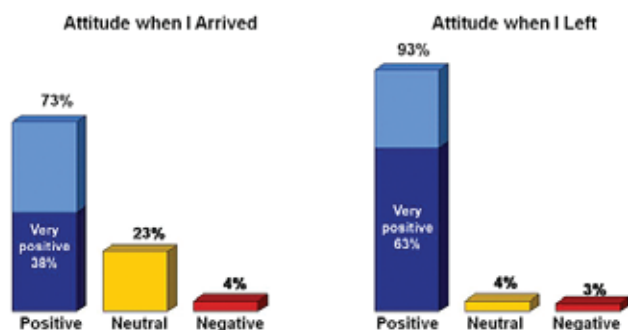
RPCVs who have served in the government or the U.S. military were more likely to feel that the Peace Corps has improved U.S. foreign policy and national security, and slightly more likely to feel it has helped the U.S. adapt to globalization (figure 10).

### Goal 3: Helping promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans

Achieving the third goal of the Peace Corps—helping promote a better understanding among Americans of other people and cultures—is a two-step process. The first part is the effect that their Peace Corps service has on the perceptions of the Volunteers. The second part involves how those RPCVs communicate the deeper appreciation of other cultures gained from service in their life choices, careers, and to their fellow Americans.

First, RPCVs in our survey reported a 20-point increase in their attitude toward the community in which they served from when they arrived to when they left (figure 11). Ninety-three percent of RPCVs reported a positive or very positive attitude toward their host community when they completed their service, compared to 73 percent when they arrived. Twenty-three percent felt neutral about the community in which they served when they arrived compared to just four percent when they left.

**Figure 11: What was your attitude toward the community in which you served when you arrived and when you left?**



Second, RPCVs reported they brought their experience home by applying the skills they learned, speaking about their experience, and advocating on behalf of global issues and the Peace Corps. Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) said they have applied the skills they learned in the Peace Corps to their work or another volunteer experience. More than half of RPCVs have spoken to audiences in the U.S. about their experience overseas, with 56 percent speaking to groups and 52 percent speaking at schools. And 1 in 5 have advocated lawmakers on global issues (21 percent) or for the Peace Corps (18 percent).

## Case Study: Recreating the Peace Corps experience for teachers at home

### THE STORY OF BRIAN GLENN AND FRAN HUCKABY



Brian Glenn and Fran Huckaby, Photo courtesy of NPCA.

The lifeblood of the Peace Corps lies with the stories of friendship, understanding and sustainable development and the powerful multiplier effect those stories portray.

Twelve years ago, Brian Glenn and Fran Huckaby (Papua New Guinea

1997-99) served as Rural Community Development Facilitators in six rural villages in the Eastern Highlands Province. The couple exemplified the important role of “facilitator” as they worked with the community to select local teachers and elect a community school board. They assisted with curriculum development and teacher training programs. They helped secure grants that led to the construction of six K-2 schools. Construction and planning addressed other needs too, as each school included a catchment tank for drinking water, and a small community library. There was also a grant to provide travel support for a community health worker.

The impact of this Peace Corps success story does not, however, end in the remote villages of a country too many Americans would be hard pressed to find on a map. It extends to the campus of Texas Christian University (TCU).

As an Associate Professor in the College of Education at TCU, Fran regularly applies some of her Peace Corps experiences as she prepares the next generation of classroom teachers. When teaching courses such as Diversity in American Education, or Philosophy and Ethics in Education, Fran often refers back to her Peace Corps experiences. Occasionally, Fran has a “PNG (Papua New Guinea) Day” in her classroom. She sets up the classroom like a PNG village, speaks to the college students only in the local language (“I can do this because I haven’t run into anyone yet who speaks Melanesian Tok Pisin!”) and then has the students take a test. The exercise is designed to give her future teachers the feeling of what it might be like for some of their future students who may speak a different language and be unfamiliar with the local environment, culture and customs.

This summer the couple traveled back to Papua New Guinea. While they didn’t know exactly what to expect upon their return, the RPCVs did know that several of the schools they started—perhaps four or five of them—received local government recognition and are still operating. “That means the government is now providing resources to support the schools and the teachers,” said Brian.

For Fran, one purpose is to update her cultural knowledge of the country. She also plans to lay the groundwork for an interdisciplinary study abroad program in which TCU students would learn—not by studying simply in an overseas university classroom—but more by traveling to various communities around the country. If launched, Fran and Brian believe the program could be the first study abroad program to PNG in the nation.

## A TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCE

The overwhelming majority of RPCVs viewed their overall experience as positive and would recommend the Peace Corps to a child or grandchild. Ninety percent rated their Peace Corps experience as excellent or very good and 98 percent would recommend the Peace Corps to their child, grandchild or other close family member. By and large, these findings were consistent across the regions in which RPCVs served, with East Africa, West Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pacific region all rating above 90 percent. The lowest overall satisfaction was among RPCVs from Europe, but even 86 percent of RPCVs serving there rated their experience as excellent or very good.

In an open form question, RPCVs cited the appreciation they developed of other cultures (69 percent) and the friendships they formed both in the communities they served (43 percent) and with other RPCVs (43 percent) as the top things they most valued from their experience.

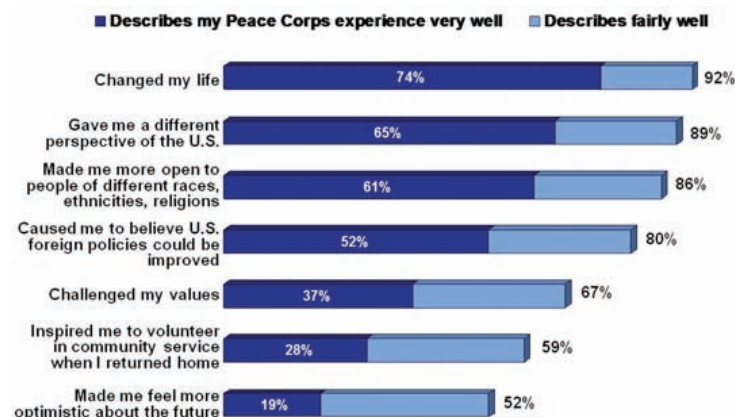
RPCVs also described their service as a transformative experience helping shape their view of the world and their own futures (figure 12). Ninety-two percent said the Peace Corps changed their lives. Eighty-nine percent said it gave them a different perspective of the U.S., and 86 percent said it made them more open to people of different races, ethnicities, and religions.

More than half of RPCVs said their service made them feel more optimistic about the future (52 percent) and two-thirds said it changed their values (67 percent), including being more inspired to volunteer in community service when they returned home (59 percent). Igniting a spirit for service is one of the most effective ways the Peace Corps has brought the world home.

**“IF WE CELEBRATED VOLUNTEER WEEK ALL YEAR LONG, IT WOULDN’T BE ENOUGH TIME TO HONOR ALL OF THE REMARKABLE, SELFLESS AMERICANS, WHO GIVE THEIR TIME, MONEY, LABOR AND LOVE TO HELP THEIR NEIGHBORS.”**

—Ronald Reagan, at a White House Rose Garden event during Peace Corps Week: March 1985

Figure 12: Peace Corps’ Impact on the Volunteers

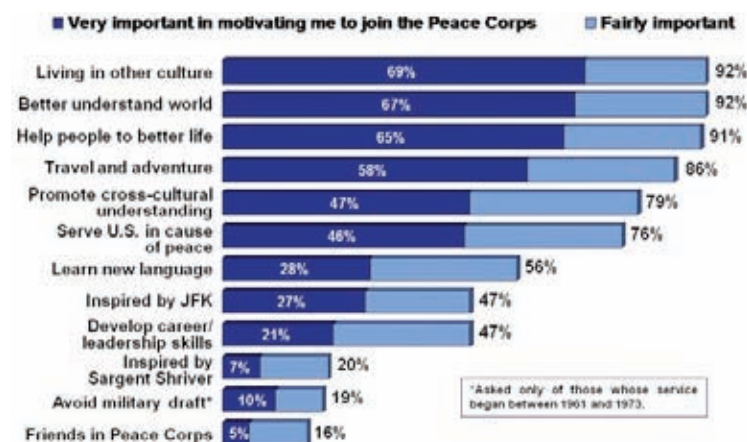


### Reasons for Joining

RPCVs across the decades cited altruism, adventure, and curiosity toward the world as key motivating factors for joining the Peace Corps (figure 13). Specifically, the top three reasons for joining were “wanting to live in another culture,” “wanting a better understanding of the world,” and “wanting to help people build a better life.”

Despite Richard Nixon’s charge during the 1960 campaign that Kennedy’s proposal was little more than a “kiddie corps” that would attract draft dodgers,<sup>10</sup> only 19 percent of RPCVs who served when the U.S. still had an active draft cited avoiding the draft as a very or fairly important motivating factor for volunteering. Although the Peace Corps did not become the draft-dodging vehicle that many policymakers feared, nearly one in five cited that as a reason for joining.

Figure 13: What Motivated You to Join the Peace Corps?



10 Meisler, S. (2011). *When the World Calls: The Inside Story of the Peace Corps and Its First Fifty Years*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

While overall development of career skills, such as learning a language or leadership skills, were seen as less important motivating factors than the opportunity to live abroad, there has been a significant generational shift in the view toward acquiring skills, possibly reflecting pressures RPCVs feel from employers today that place a greater demand on job skills and experience when they return home.

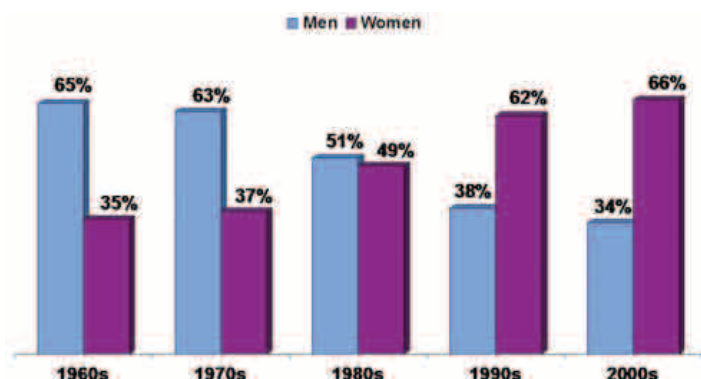
More recent RPCVs place a greater emphasis on career development as a motivation for joining the Peace Corps. This is likely a reflection of their stage in life, as well as changes in the workplace. Just 30 percent of RPCVs from the 1960s identified “wanting to develop career and leadership skills” as an important motivation (only 9 percent said it was very important), compared to 68 percent of RPCVs from the 2000s (36 percent said it was very important).

The importance of learning a new language has increased considerably over the decades, consistent with a more integrated and competitive global economy. While 56 percent of all RPCVs said “wanting to learn a new language” was an important reason for joining the Peace Corps, the share of Volunteers wanting to learn language skills has increased every decade—from 45 percent saying it was important in the 1960s to 71 percent citing it as important in the 2000s.

### Who Serves

The composition of RPCVs has done a complete turnabout over the past five decades. Nearly two-thirds of all Volunteers were men in the 1960s and 63 percent were men in the 1970s, while 62 percent of all Volunteers were women in the 1990s and two-thirds of Volunteers are women today (figure 14). Levels of education have remained remarkably constant, with 98 percent of RPCVs across all decades having at least a 4-year college education and more than 70 percent in each decade through the 1990s having some postgraduate work or degree. We note that they may not have had these levels of education during their Peace Corps service, of course, and that many of the RPCVs from the 2000s are still relatively young and likely to be getting further education.

Figure 14: Volunteers by Decade of Service



As America has become increasingly diverse by race and ethnicity and more older Americans are living longer and wanting to give back through volunteering, the Peace Corps has also worked hard to increase the diversity of its volunteer ranks. Over the past five decades, the share of minority RPCVs in our survey increased from 9 percent in the 1960s to 14 percent in the 2000s. According to the latest data from the Peace Corps, 17 percent of currently serving Volunteers in September 2010 were of minority backgrounds.<sup>11</sup> And 11 percent of RPCVs in our survey identified themselves as 50 or older at the start of their service in the 1990s and 2000s (this information was not available for earlier cohorts due to smaller sample size). Still, given the changing demographics of the United States and recent surveys showing the strong interest among older Americans in giving back, the Peace Corps needs to accelerate its efforts to increase the diversity of its Volunteers.

### Where Volunteers Go

Not surprisingly, where Peace Corps Volunteers have gone has changed significantly over the course of its history. Africa still hosts the largest share of Peace Corps Volunteers: 43 percent in the 2000s versus 35 percent in the 1960s. And although the country programs have changed, Latin America and the Caribbean, as a region, hosted a similar share of Peace Corps Volunteers: 29 percent in the 2000s versus 31 percent in the 1960s.

But the biggest shifts have been the decline in Peace Corps Volunteers in Asia (12 percent in the 2000s versus 26 percent in the 1960s) due in large part to the rise of Asian economies and the introduction of Peace Corps Volunteers in Eastern Europe after the fall of communism (15 percent in the 2000s versus 0 percent in the 1960s.)

11 The Peace Corps. (2011). *Peace Corps Congressional Budget Justification: Fiscal Year 2012*.

Figure 15: Regions by Decade of Service

	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
West Africa	19%	24%	30%	25%	20%
North Africa	3%	4%	6%	4%	3%
Southern Africa	2%	5%	9%	9%	12%
East Africa	11%	6%	8%	7%	8%
Central America	5%	10%	14%	13%	14%
South America	23%	14%	8%	8%	9%
The Caribbean	3%	6%	8%	7%	6%
Europe	0%	0%	1%	14%	15%
Middle East	6%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Asia	26%	22%	13%	12%	12%
Pacific Region	5%	11%	10%	7%	5%

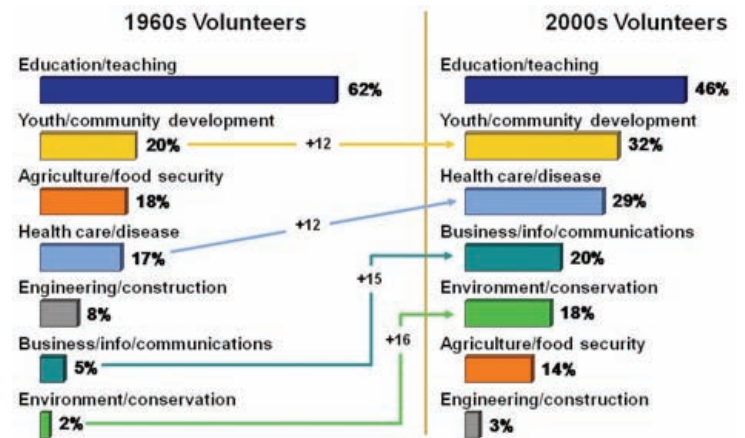
### What Volunteers Do

Peace Corps Volunteers serve for two years plus three months of training for a total of 27 months. The Peace Corps does not offer shorter-term assignments, although once a Peace Corps Volunteer has served, he or she is eligible to participate in additional shorter-term assignments as a part of the Peace Corps Response program. The work Peace Corps Volunteers do is ultimately determined by the needs of host countries that invite them and also reflects the underlying changes in the global economy over the decades. The rise of environmentalism and the information age has dramatically affected the service of Peace Corps Volunteers.

In his report to the President, Sargent Shriver indicated that the greatest need that the Peace Corps would fill was for trained teachers. Consistent with that report, the greatest demand from the field is still for teachers. Nearly two-thirds of Peace Corps Volunteers were teachers in the first decade compared to just

under half today; but teachers still constitute the highest percentage overall (figure 16). Making up the difference, youth and community development, health care, information, and environmental conservation have all grown as a share of volunteer activities since the Peace Corps's inception.

Figure 16: What did your Peace Corps Volunteer service focus on?



The impact of the Peace Corps on its Volunteers is profoundly personal. RPCVs report that their service influenced not only their political and policy views, but also such personal choices as their vocational and avocational pursuits (figure 17). More than half report their service influenced their political views (53 percent) and three-quarters said it influenced their view of U.S. foreign policy (74 percent). Additionally, 26 percent said their service influenced their religious or spiritual beliefs a great deal or a fair amount.

**“ TEACHING IN TANZANIA GAVE ME A LIFELONG INTEREST IN EDUCATION, ONE OF MY PRIMARY POINTS OF FOCUS AS GOVERNOR, AND IS CERTAINLY ONE OF THE REASONS WHY I AM ENJOYING MY WORK HERE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON. IT’S REMARKABLE THE PEACE CORPS CONTINUES TO THRIVE IN ITS 50TH YEAR, PROVIDING LIFE-CHANGING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICANS WHILE PRESENTING AN AUTHENTIC, DOWN TO EARTH VIEW OF OUR COUNTRY TO PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD. LIVING AND WORKING IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY HELPED ME APPRECIATE WHAT WE ENJOY IN THE U.S., ESPECIALLY OUR DEMOCRACY AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS. I ALSO GAINED AN AWARENESS OF THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE IN AFRICA AND OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO BE OF ASSISTANCE WHERE WE CAN.”**

—Bob Taft, former Republican Governor of Ohio

## THE STORY OF SAM GOLDMAN



Sam Goldman in Benin. Photo courtesy of NPCA.

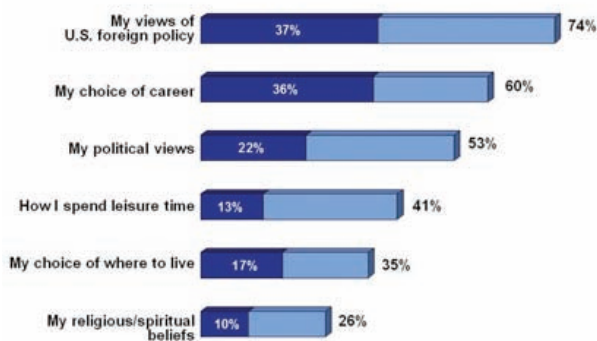
Sam Goldman (Benin 2001-2005) is the founder and CEO of d.light design, an international consumer company whose mission is “to enable households without reliable electricity to attain the same quality of life as those with electricity.” The company aims to improve the lives of 100 million individuals by 2020, beginning by replacing every kerosene lantern with revolutionary energy and lighting solutions that are affordable, durable and energy-efficient.

During Goldman’s Peace Corps service in Guinagourou, Benin, the son of one of his neighbors was badly burned by a kerosene lamp (one of many thousands of such accidents around the world). Goldman vowed to find a way to provide people in the developing world with safer, brighter, and more affordable lighting. Upon his return to the United States, Goldman enrolled in Stanford Business School and it was there that d.light design was born.

Since founding d.light design in 2007, Goldman has raised more than USD11 million in funding, started the India sales and marketing division, and overseen multiple product launches, including the award-winning S250 and S10 solar lights. As a result of his leadership, Sam has been selected as an Ashoka Fellow and World Economic Forum Young Global Leader.

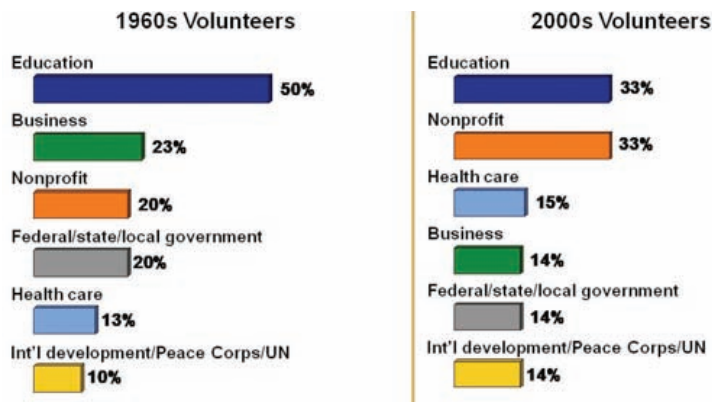
Goldman has said that “one of the most amazing phone calls” he has ever received was when the same boy who had been burned by the kerosene fire called from Guinagourou, Benin, to tell him that he had received a d.light lantern through the Peace Corps Volunteer network. “He had gotten my phone number and wanted to call personally to thank me for the light”, Goldman said.

Figure 17: Peace Corps' Influence on Volunteers' Futures



Sixty percent of RPCVs reported their service influenced their choice of career. The careers RPCVs pursued have changed a little bit with each generation. In the 1960s, when 64 percent reported their service area as education, 50 percent went on to pursue careers in education after their service. RPCVs from the 1960s also pursued careers in business (23 percent), the nonprofit sector (20 percent), federal, state, or local government (20 percent), healthcare (13 percent), and international development (10 percent).

Figure 18: Since your Peace Corps experience what has been your principal area of work?

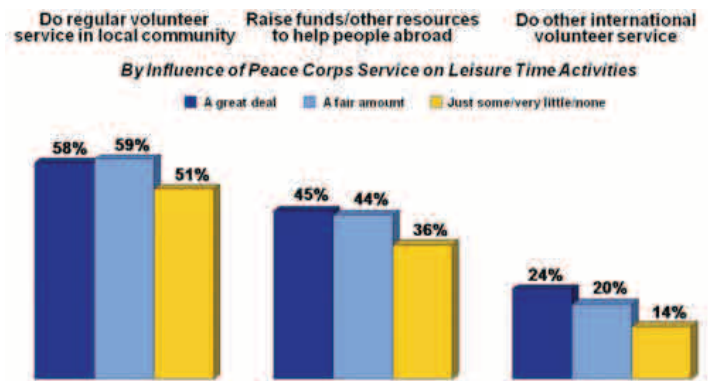


Careers in the nonprofit and health care fields have climbed the ladder over the decades, with 33 percent of RPCVs working in the nonprofit sector (compared to only 20 percent in the 1960s) and health care becoming the third most popular career path for RPCVs, outpacing business and federal/state/local government that were ranked higher among RPCVs of the 1960s. Careers in the government among RPCVs in the 1960s outpace such careers in the 2000s by 20 percent to 14 percent, respectively. The most recent decade of RPCVs, for which it is still too soon to know the full direction of their careers, are roughly divided between education and the nonprofit sector (33 percent each) and health care, business, government, and international development (14 percent each).



More than half (55 percent) of all RPCVs reported that they regularly volunteer in their local community, double the national average for volunteering in the United States, which the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports has been at approximately 26 percent over the last five years. And 39 percent of RPCUs have raised money or other resources to help people abroad. Among RPCVs who say their Peace Corps experience influenced how they spend their leisure time, the effect is slightly greater with nearly 60 percent reporting it influenced them to volunteer again in their local community and 45 percent saying it motivated them to help raise money or resources for the less fortunate around the world (figure 19).

Figure 19: Peace Corps Influence on Volunteering



Case Study: Bringing the Peace Corps home

THE STORY OF JOHN COYNE

John Coyne was with the first group of Peace Corps Volunteers to Ethiopia (1962-64) and taught English at the Commercial School in Addis Ababa. Over his career, he worked for the Peace Corps in Washington, D.C. and as an Associate Peace Corps Director in Ethiopia. While in Washington, drawing on various models, he wrote the concept paper that outlined a new role for Peace Corps Volunteers—the Crisis Corps, later renamed Peace Corps Response.

In 1987 he began publishing the newsletter RPCV Writers & Readers with another Ethiopian PCV, Marian Haley Beil; in 1999 the newsletter morphed into the website Peace Corps Writers—which has since morphed into [www.peacecorpsworldwide.com](http://www.peacecorpsworldwide.com). This is a valuable resource for those interested in learning about how Peace Corps Volunteers view the world. John is the co-founder of the Peace Corps Fund—a non-profit foundation to support Third Goal activities of RPCVs



John Coyne. Photo courtesy of John Coyne.

and is a member of the board of Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs. He is an outstanding example of an RPCV who works to share the breadth and depth of the Peace Corps experience, most often by sharing the wonderful stories of other RPCVs.

## KEY MOMENTS: PEACE CORPS HISTORY

### 1965

- A coup leads to a civil war in the Dominican Republic. U.S. troops invade and despite great risk to personal safety, Peace Corps Volunteers remained behind to aid civilians caught up in the fighting.
- One thousand of the first 3,000 Volunteers to return convene in Washington, D.C. for the Citizens in a Time of Change Conference—at the call of President Johnson and Vice President Humphrey.

### 1966

- Peace Corps reaches its peak membership, with 15,556 Volunteers across 47 countries.

### 1971

- President Richard Nixon, a Peace Corps detractor, brought the program under the umbrella of the ACTION agency for federal volunteering.

### 1979

- President Jimmy Carter, whose mother had been a nurse in the Peace Corps, restored Peace Corps autonomy via executive order.

### 1981

- President Ronald Reagan appointed Loret Miller Ruppe as Director of the Peace Corps. She was the longest serving director, and maintained a high level of popularity throughout her tenure.
- Peace Corps begins to focus heavily on promoting small business development in developing nations.

### 1982

- Congress re-establishes the Peace Corps as an independent agency.

### 1987

- Peace Corps reaches the lowest number of Volunteers since its first three years, with 5,219 Volunteers.

### 1989

- The Berlin Wall falls and the Peace Corps begins to send Volunteers to Eastern Europe for the first time.

### 1996

- The Crisis Corps is established for experienced former Volunteers to give short-term relief in countries facing natural disasters.

### 2001-20011

- Peace Corps substantially ramps up its efforts to combat HIV/AIDS and malaria, particularly in Africa, tied to PEPFAR and the President's Malaria Initiative.

### Safety and Security

The issue of safety of Peace Corps Volunteers has recently received increased attention during Congressional hearings in the Spring of 2011, following the tragic murder of Kate Puzey, a Peace Corps Volunteer in Benin. The details of the Puzey tragedy shined a spotlight on the Peace Corps' inadequate handling of the case. Ms. Puzey reported to Peace Corps country headquarters that a Peace Corps contractor at the school where Ms. Puzey volunteered was allegedly molesting female students. After the tragedy, more Peace Corps Volunteers who had been victims of assault during their service came forward to draw attention to what they saw as Peace Corps' uneven and inadequate handling of safety issues and a culture they described as "blame the victim."

The Peace Corps promised to take a hard look at itself and improve its safety and response policies. Director Aaron Williams pledged to make safety reforms a top priority and to improve safety training. During his testimony before the House Committee on Foreign

Affairs on May 11, 2011, Director Williams outlined the Peace Corps's reform agenda concerning the safety and security of Peace Corps Volunteers and enumerated steps that have been taken and will be taken to ensure continued safe and secure experiences for Volunteers. Although most changes and improvements revolve around the issue of sexual assault victims, Williams makes a clear commitment to improving the quality, efficiency, and transparency to bolster the safety of all Peace Corps Volunteers.

Bills pending in Congress would codify reforms the agency has put in place such as better staff training and protection for whistleblowers, and would require more detailed crime statistics and the Peace Corps and U.S. Department of State to formalize how U.S. Embassy officials respond to crimes against Peace Corps Volunteers.

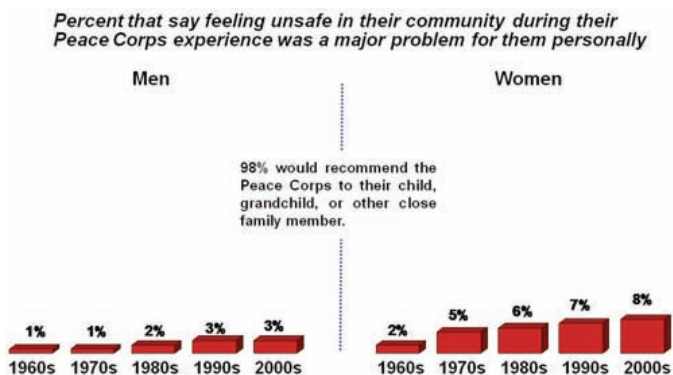
Although the great majority of RPCVs reported that they felt safe in their service and did not express major concerns about safety (figure 20). During that time, there has been a gradual increase in the percentage of

women who reported feeling unsafe as the number of women in the Peace Corps rose dramatically from the 1960s to the 2000s. Volunteer demographics changed from two-thirds male in the 1960s to two-thirds female today. There was an increase in the number of female Peace Corps Volunteers who report that safety was a major concern for them (from 2 percent in the 1960s, gradually climbing to 6 percent in the 1980s, and to 8 percent in the 2000s). Just 1 to 3 percent of men the across five decades report concerns about safety and security.

Nearly all RCPVs (98 percent) would recommend the Peace Corps to their child, grandchild, or close family member. Although not expressly asked in the context of safety, it could still be interpreted that if safety fears were prevalent among RCPVs, they would have second thoughts about sending their children, grandchildren or close family members in harm's way. And when asked to describe in an open form question the "worst thing" about their Peace Corps experience, 15 percent identified illness and getting sick, 9 percent said lack of support or leadership from Peace Corps staff, 8 percent mentioned loneliness and isolation, and 6 percent said missing friends and family at home or not being able to communicate with friends and family. Safety concerns were not mentioned.

Notwithstanding these encouraging findings about the safety and security of Peace Corps assignments, vigorous efforts must be undertaken to reduce concerns around safety and security as much as possible, and any percentage, however low, is cause for concern when lives are at risk or Volunteers are in harm's way.

**Figure 20: Safety and Security**



## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Sargent Shriver's report to the President in February 1961 laid a clear foundation for the agency its founders envisioned; however, that vision was lost over the subsequent years. It is our belief that the original framework is even more relevant today and points the way forward for the agency's next 50 years, if the Peace Corps is to continue to grow and evolve to meet its full potential.

According to the 1961 founding report, the Peace Corps' role was to "reinforce existing private and public programs of assistance and development," as well as, "to initiate new programs requiring Peace Corps manpower."<sup>12</sup> "The resources, energy, and experience of our non-governmental institutions, including colleges and universities, foundations, trade unions, businesses, civic groups and religious bodies must be tapped. This must be a cooperative venture of the whole American people."<sup>13</sup>

When President Kennedy launched the Peace Corps in 1961, he wondered if the skeptics' prediction of failure would be its fate. But by August 1962, when he sent off some 600 Volunteers, the Peace Corps was widely acclaimed as a success. The Volunteers had shown they were up to the challenge. After the ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House, he came back to the Oval Office in high spirits with his then Special Assistant Harris Wofford, who was about to leave to become the Peace Corps special representative in Africa and director of the 300-strong Ethiopian program. The President said: "The Peace Corps will be truly serious when 100,000 Americans are serving abroad each year—one million over a decade. Then, we will have a more informed U.S. foreign policy."

We recommend that Shriver's original plan for the Peace Corps to send Volunteers through five channels should be reviewed and reconsidered, as one of the ways Kennedy's hope can be fulfilled. The original plan foresaw the Peace Corps operating through five different channels:

1. Through grants to international service programs carried out by private agencies: This would expand existing voluntary programs and encourage other private organizations to undertake projects as well as promote variety and experimentation;
2. Through agreements with colleges, universities, or other educational institutions: Already in 1960, 57 universities had contracts with the International

<sup>12</sup> Shriver, S. (1961). Summary Report to the President on the Peace Corps. Office of the White House Press Secretary.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

Cooperation Agency in 37 countries for education or development projects. Shriver also felt universities were ideally suited to recruit, select, and train Volunteers from among their students;

3. Through programs of other U.S. government agencies: There is a need for U.S. government agencies and overseas programs, through recruitment, training, and placement, to help supply skilled Volunteers to American aid projects already underway and enhance their impact;
4. Through programs of the UN and other international agencies: In a similar way, the Peace Corps can help recruit, train and offer Volunteers to international agencies; and
5. Through directly administered Peace Corps programs with host countries.

In the first years, several Peace Corps programs were run by universities and private organizations—e.g., the Indiana Association of Universities, Notre Dame, CARE, and the Experiment in International Living. Shriver did not press for the other channels, in the early stage, because he felt he was facing the challenge of jumping out of a plane: there was one jump and he had to land safely. He was responsible and did not think it was time to disperse and devolve the responsibility. The fifth channel became the exclusive model of the Peace Corps.

With the efficiency of just one model to oversee, there was a downside: the expense of maintaining and operating a government-to-government program severely limited the program’s growth. Far from achieving Kennedy’s vision of one day sending 100,000 young Americans overseas to serve their country in the interest of promoting peace, the present day Peace Corps sends roughly 8,600 Volunteers abroad annually, down from a peak of 15,556 in 1966.<sup>14</sup>

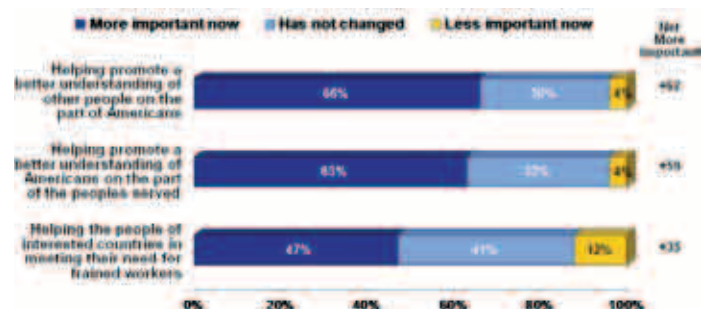
We recommend that the original plan for Volunteers to serve through the other proposed channels, particularly the second and third, be seriously reviewed and reconsidered as a course for expansion in the

years ahead. A task force to study the potential for that approach need not brainstorm in the hurry that Kennedy asked Shriver to undertake in 1961.

### Toward a Stronger Peace Corps

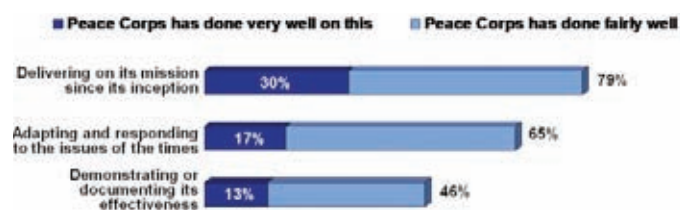
The three Peace Corps goals are considered no less important today than when the agency was founded.<sup>15</sup> In fact, the majority of RPCVs believed promoting cross-cultural understanding is more important today than ever before (figure 21).

**Figure 21: Compared to when the Peace Corps was founded 50 years ago, how has the importance of each of its three main goals changed?**



Most RPCVs believe the Peace Corps has delivered on its mission and adapted at least fairly well to the times; however, less than half believe it has done a good job at documenting its effectiveness (figure 22). This echoes the earlier point about the lack of aggregate data on performance and transfer of skills making it difficult to evaluate the impact or to determine what the Peace Corps’ return on investment is in sending Volunteers overseas. For the Peace Corps to take a leadership role in international service, it must be able to document its effectiveness.

**Figure 22: Fulfillment of the Peace Corps Mission**



**“FOR NEARLY 35 YEARS THE PEACE CORPS HAS REPRESENTED THE UNITED STATES’ COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL INVESTMENT. IT DOES NOT OFTEN RECEIVE THE HEADLINES THAT POLITICAL ACTION OR ECONOMIC PROGRESS DOES, BUT UNDERNEATH BOTH IS STEADY WORK DONE BY PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITIZENS OF THE COUNTRIES THEY SERVE.”**

—Hillary Clinton while visiting Asuncion, Paraguay – December 1996

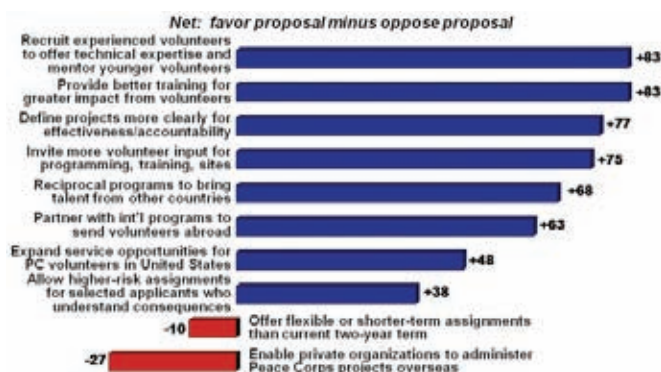
<sup>14</sup> The Peace Corps. (2011). *Peace Corps Congressional Budget Justification: Fiscal Year 2012*.

<sup>15</sup> For further discussion on ideas for strengthening and enhancing the Peace Corps see Kevin F. F. Quigley and Lex Rieffel, “Ten Times the Peace Corps: A Smart Investment in Soft Power,” The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, Policy Brief 2008-02.

While RPCVs recognized the need for reforms, they also defended the basic model of the Peace Corps on which their experiences were based. Most proposals we tested with our survey enjoyed wide support—the two exceptions were shorter-term assignments for Peace Corps programs and enabling private organizations to administer Peace Corps projects overseas (figure 23). While these responses are negative as it relates to the Peace Corps itself, they do not oppose these ideas being advanced outside the Peace Corps.

By wide margins (net favor minus oppose), RPCVs supported recruiting more experienced volunteers to offer technical expertise on projects and mentor younger volunteers; providing better technical training for entry-level volunteers to improve impact; and defining projects more clearly both for effectiveness and accountability purposes. RPCVs also supported developing reciprocal programs to bring talent from other countries to volunteer in the U.S. and partnering with other international service and development programs to send more American volunteers abroad.

**Figure 23: Proposals to Strengthen the**



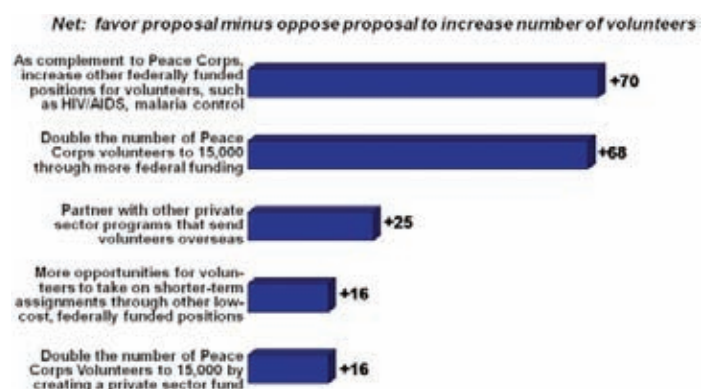
### Peace Corps Experience

President Kennedy wanted the Peace Corps to have 100,000 volunteers serving every year. The Peace Corps has scarcely reached a tenth of that number for most of its history, apart from 1966 when there were more than 15,000. Our survey also asked RPCVs which proposals they would favor to get to 15,000 again (figure 24).

By wide margins, RPCVs supported increasing federal funding for the Peace Corps to double the number of Volunteers, and to increase other federally funded positions for volunteers such as for HIV/AIDS and malaria. Efforts have been made over the last decade to mobilize Peace Corps Volunteers to meet needs in targeted areas, such as HIV/AIDS and malaria. And other federal initiatives to promote international

volunteer service, such as Volunteers for Prosperity that was created by Executive Order in 2003 and became law in 2009, specifically recognize the need for highly-skilled volunteers to target urgent needs such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, clean water for the poor, and other issues of high importance. Inviting private sector administration of Peace Corps projects is largely opposed by RCPVs, as is shortening the service period in the Peace Corps. RCPVs supported increasing the opportunities for overseas service outside the Peace Corps.

**Figure 24: Proposals to Expand the Number of Volunteers**



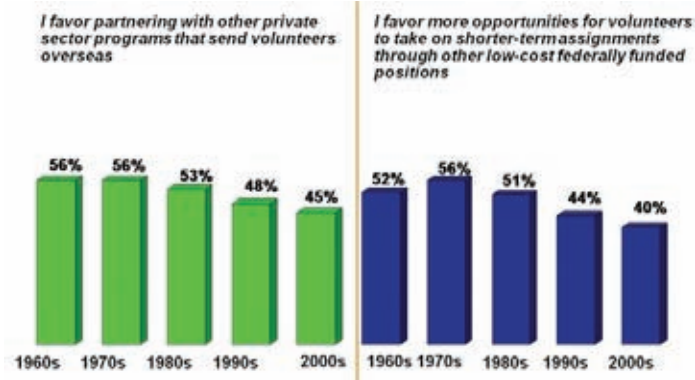
RCPVs from the first three decades are slightly more supportive of reforms, with majorities supporting Peace Corps partnerships with other private sector programs to send more Americans for service overseas and more opportunities for Peace Corps Volunteers and others to take on shorter-term assignments through other low-cost federally funded positions.

While more recent RPCVs are more critical of the Peace Corps, and more likely to describe their experience as “frustrating” (figure 7), they are paradoxically more defensive of its basic structure and less inclined to reform (figure 25).

**“THE ‘70’S WERE TURBULENT AND PEACE CORPS WAS NOT IMMUNE, FINANCIALLY OR POLITICALLY. LITTLE DID I KNOW WHEN I WAS CONFIRMED THAT PEACE CORPS WOULD BE UNDER ATTACK FROM THE ADMINISTRATION WHICH TRIED TO SUBMERGE IT WITHIN ACTION AND EVEN TO ABOLISH THE TITLE OF PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR. WHILE I WAS PROUD TO HAVE GROWN THE PROGRAM ON MY WATCH, IT IS A MATTER OF GREATER PRIDE THAT NONE OF THOSE INITIATIVES SUCCEEDED, THANKS TO A RESERVOIR OF GOODWILL ON THE HILL PLUS A MARVELOUSLY CREATIVE AND DEDICATED STAFF.”**

—Nick Crow, Peace Corps Director 1973-1974

Figure 25: Recent Volunteers Defend Basic Structure



Despite much of the good work by the Peace Corps since its creation, there is much more that could and should be done to expand the reach and influence of international volunteer service going forward.<sup>16</sup> More than ever before, there is a great need for the kind of work, services, and goodwill the Peace Corps generates.

While only a small fraction of President Kennedy's vision for the Peace Corps has been achieved, the 8,600 Volunteers overseas today are some of the best and the brightest and their work is often outstanding. We believe it is possible to increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers without diluting its effectiveness and to build on other international volunteering efforts to fulfill Kennedy's dream.

### Our Recommendations

In anticipation of the 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps, the ServiceWorld coalition was formed from the Initiative on International Volunteering and Service at the Brookings Institution. With its companion Building Bridges Coalition, the ServiceWorld coalition seeks to find and support the ways the United States can in this new century fulfill the original vision of the Peace Corps and the hopes of other international volunteer service efforts that complement and are consistent with that vision.<sup>17</sup>

**“ I THINK THERE IS NO OBLIGATION MORE PRESSING UPON OUR GOVERNMENT THAN TO TAP THE IDEALISM OF OUR YOUTH; TO PROVIDE WAYS AND MEANS THROUGH WHICH OUR YOUNG PEOPLE CAN VOLUNTEER FOR SERVICE ON HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS WHERE HUMANITARIAN SERVICE IS NEEDED ... IT WOULD COST OUR GOVERNMENT LITTLE TO TAP THE RICH MAIN STREAM OF YOUNG AMERICANS' IDEALISM. BUT REWARDS WOULD BE RICH BEYOND COMPARISON.”**

—Senator Lyndon Johnson, University of Nebraska student convocation, September 22, 1960

Today, the ServiceWorld coalition has more than 300 non-government organizations, colleges and universities, corporations, community and faith-based groups, and many others working together to advance toward the international service goals of not only President Kennedy, but of other presidents, both Democrat and Republican, since the founding of the Peace Corps. Both the National Peace Corps and Civic Enterprises, and the authors of this Report, are active participants in helping to shape the agenda of the coalition. Together, we are developing an agenda for expanding international volunteer service. We propose to strengthen, reform, and leverage some existing programs and infrastructure, and to launch new initiatives to create more opportunities for Americans, including RPCVs, to work alongside volunteers from other countries.

In moving forward with this agenda, we expect this report of the views of RPCVs will itself be of great value, and we hope more interested RPCVs will become participants in the coalition, especially those who participated in our survey.

The plan proposes to engage the energy of thousands of additional Americans who would be ready to volunteer overseas if there were opportunities to do so. We believe such a quantum leap in the Peace Corps and in other international volunteering will strengthen our nation's ability to tackle global challenges, help close the employment gap during this economic downturn, and lead to a more prosperous and secure world.

<sup>16</sup> For a background discussion on these ideas, see David Caprara, Kevin F. F. Quigley, and Lex Rieffel, "International Volunteer Service: A Smart Way to Build Bridges," The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., Policy Brief 2009-01.

<sup>17</sup> For more information about these coalitions, see [www.buildbridgescoalition.org](http://www.buildbridgescoalition.org) and [serviceworld.org](http://serviceworld.org).

Below are core principles and proposals we have identified for an expansion of international volunteer service, followed by an action agenda for Congress, the Administration and private and non-profit sectors.

### Our Principles

**Partnerships, Not Paternalism** – We will foster a culture of volunteer service and social innovation with volunteers from many nations serving side-by-side at work on shared problems. We will stress the goal of building social capital internationally through person-to-person contact and capacity-building, and show that Americans have as much to learn from others as others have to learn from us.

**Global Service 2.0.** – Through the Peace Corps, government-to-government agreements have enabled volunteers to serve for at least two years in more than 130 countries. We support a major expansion of the Peace Corps. Our plan also provides new opportunities for shorter terms of service directly through non-government organizations working overseas. Already, hundreds of nongovernment programs have emerged since the Peace Corps' creation, which send tens of thousands of volunteers overseas every year. We seek to leverage limited resources through partnerships with non-profit and private sector programs (NGOs, faith-based organizations, and corporations). Recent surveys show that new volunteers, among them Millennials and Baby Boomers, can be readily tapped.

**Next Generation of Global Leaders** – We believe international service, study abroad, and exchange programs should be supported as an integral part of quality education in the United States and around the world. We want to scale up these programs and strengthen the links among them.

**Interfaith Service** – Too often in the past, people of different faiths have been warring in the name of religion. We will support global partnerships that bring people of different faiths together in shared work. We believe such partnerships are among the most effective ways to foster peace and reconciliation in "hot spots" of conflict.

**Creating Opportunity** – We see the value of international service as a bridge to high-quality jobs. That service experience can help Americans be more competitive in the global marketplace—providing valuable skills, perspectives, social networks and incentives for their future careers.



President Reagan with the first group of Peace Corps Volunteers to return from Grenada after a 6 year absence in the country, 1985. ©Peace Corps.

**Innovation and Technology** – Social innovations and new technologies are strengthening the reach and impact of international volunteer service. With the click of a mouse, individuals can find service opportunities in countries around the world. With the use of new technologies, volunteers can be more efficient and effective in meeting urgent needs. We will work to ignite more social innovation and use of new technologies to strengthen international volunteer service.

**Fiscal Responsibility** – Given the present fiscal crisis and the many urgent needs of our country, we must be innovative in achieving our goals and show a high return on investment. Through partnerships with NGOs, the cost of supporting volunteers overseas can be reduced. Where possible, we hope Congress will draw funds for expanded international service from existing funding streams, making such volunteer service a core component of existing programs. In building public-private partnerships, we can increase the private and independent sectors' share of funding and ensure government resources are well leveraged.

**Measurable Results** – We will focus on achievable goals, establish effective measures of accountability, and report on results. These efforts will include assessments of the participation in international service among the U.S. population over 16, as conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau's annual survey and reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; international

service policy implementation; and the effects of international service on volunteers, host organizations, and host communities. We expect to be able to show improvements in cross-cultural understanding, human capital development, civic engagement, capacity building, education, the environment, and global health.

The Peace Corps has grown over the last decade, but at a pace too slow to reach the goal of doubling within a reasonable number of years. Together, these programs, by 2015, can mobilize 100,000 volunteers to serve abroad each year—one million over a decade—fulfilling President Kennedy’s vision. In his 2002 State of the Union Address, President George W. Bush called on Congress to double the Peace Corps and eventually increased the Peace Corps to its highest Volunteer levels in the previous three decades, showing interest in the Congress in growing the Peace Corps. As Barack Obama said in his 2008 message to the National Peace Corps Association: “We will double the size of Peace Corps... and we’ll reach out to other nations to engage their young people in similar programs, so that we work side-by-side to take on the common challenges that confront all humanity.”

### Our Proposals

We offer the following initial recommendations supported by a broad-based, bipartisan coalition of more than 300 organizations.

1. **The Peace Corps:** The Peace Corps should double its ranks to 15,000 volunteers by 2015 and forge partnerships with other volunteer-sending and international development organizations to maximize impact and leverage funding. In addition to requesting an increase in funding for these new slots, the Peace Corps must continue to be aggressive in increasing the safety and security of its Volunteers. Bills pending in Congress would codify reforms the agency has put in place such as better staff training and protection for whistleblowers, and would require more detailed crime statistics and the Peace Corps and U.S. Department of State to formalize how U.S. Embassy officials respond to crimes against Peace Corps Volunteers. We also propose that the Peace Corps should strengthen current programs, lower the cost per volunteer, enable more volunteers to serve, and respond to requests from additional countries. It should work to form service partnerships with countries such as Brazil, India and Nigeria where there are currently no Peace Corps Volunteers.

**“ I’M NOT DEFENDING THE OLD PEACE CORPS, I’M ATTACKING IT! WE DIDN’T GO FAR ENOUGH!... WE NEVER REALLY GAVE THE GOAL OF ‘WORLD WIDE PEACE’ AN OVERWHELMING COMMITMENT.”**

*—Sargent Shriver speech at Yale university, two months after 9/11: November 10, 2011*

2. **Volunteers for Prosperity:** Volunteers for Prosperity should expand from its present 43,000 to 75,000 skilled Americans each year recruited and deployed for flexible term assignments through a network of U.S. nonprofits that work in the developing world on urgent problems, such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, education, clean water, and helping entrepreneurs start local businesses. This increase should occur through the expansion of the Volunteers for Prosperity’s Serve Program, which offers modest stipends to volunteers, more than matched by individual and private sector contributions.
3. **Global Service Fellowships:** Building on progress in funding Global Service Fellowships with private sector support, Global Service Fellowships should be created to mobilize 10,000 volunteer fellows each year for up to one-year assignments to help build the capacity of NGOs and faith-based institutions working in the developing world to innovate and solve significant global challenges. These new opportunities for international service directly through experienced and tested NGOs will enable Americans to serve who would have much to offer but are not able or ready to enlist for the two years that the Peace Corps requires. The Global Service Fellows should be selected in a competitive process. Members of Congress may nominate fellows from their districts and states, similar to the nominating process for the Military Academies.
4. **An International Social Innovation Fund:** An International Social Innovation Fund should be created to fuel further innovation in how Americans can have a greater impact through international volunteer service and increase the capacity of local organizations to effectively utilize their time and talents. To enhance the impact of Americans serving overseas each year through government and non-government organizations, we will build on the examples of the Volunteer Generation and Social Innovation Funds authorized in the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act.



The Peace Corps, Volunteers for Prosperity, Global Service Fellowships, and the International Social Innovation Fund should be asked to give appropriate attention to mobilizing volunteers who will advance the following goals. In all cases, programs should measure outcomes and be accountable for results:

- **Promote a New Generation of Global Leaders through Service Abroad:** We aim to make serving abroad the norm, not the exception, for the education of Americans. Participants in such global service coming out of high school and before, during and after college and graduate school will develop an ethic of service, concrete skills (in language, entrepreneurship and leadership), and a global perspective. These programs will be training grounds for a pipeline of new global leaders who have the insight and conviction needed to solve global problems, and to foster understanding among cultures, religions, and people over the course of their lives.
- **Align International Volunteering and Study Abroad:** Central to promoting a new generation of global leaders, we propose to broaden the mission of study abroad programs in colleges and universities to include the development of international volunteering projects in the developing world that expose students to less traditional locations and better integrate international service into mainstream curriculum. Given the already substantial role the federal government plays in funding study abroad activities, we will be able to leverage existing resources and broaden support for international service through programs in the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Education.
- **Promote Opportunities for Americans Age 50 and Older to Serve Abroad:** We propose to ramp up efforts to engage older Americans—the longest-living, best-educated, wealthiest, and most highly skilled generations of Americans in our history—in international service to use their lifetime of experience, skills and knowledge to help meet our most pressing problems. We believe the connection between older Americans and younger Americans on international service projects can enhance outcomes and the experiences of the volunteers.
- **Promote Multi-Lateral Service:** We propose to find the ways and means to enable volunteers from the United States to serve side-by-side with volunteers from host countries and from other countries. Such multi-lateral service will strengthen international bonds among people of different nations. The proposals by Sargent Shriver and President Johnson to host volunteers from other countries in the United States should be reviewed and seriously considered. In advancing a small pilot program called Volunteers to America, in 1967 President Johnson said that our nation has “no better ambassadors than the . . . volunteers who serve in the Peace Corps,” and added: “I propose that we welcome similar ambassadors to our shores. We need their special skills and understanding, just as they need ours.”
- **Increase International Service Opportunities for Returning Veterans:** Many veterans maintain their interest in volunteering after their military service. They have acquired key skills during their service and can be outstanding examples to young people. The veterans themselves have

Peace Corps Volunteer in Malawi, 2009. ©Peace Corps.



easier transitions home when they do volunteer. We propose to utilize the international experience and leadership skills of veterans to contribute to international development through volunteer service. Service initiatives such as the Peace Corps, Volunteers for Prosperity, and Global Service Fellowships should include a number of available volunteer positions for recent veterans of war.

- **Partner with the Private Sector:** Programs should draw on the expertise of employees in multinational companies and businesses that have international and regional volunteering initiatives. International corporate volunteering hubs should provide logistical, program management, public sector coordination and evaluation support for those engaging in international volunteering. A shared services model across companies would lower costs and reduce risks, while making it easier to identify opportunities, increase sensitivity to local customs, and support volunteers on assignment. The increase in corporate engagement will target not only current employees, but also retired workers to use their skills and expertise in a service role. Volunteers from companies can gain credentials and acknowledgements for volunteering achievements. Corporations that provide matching funds, enable time-off for service, deploy their work forces to assist non-profits with capacity-building and strategic planning, and engage in other innovative practices that strengthen international volunteer service should be recognized and best practices should be shared.
- **Promote Use of New Technologies to Strengthen Service:** Programs should use new technologies to strengthen international volunteer service. Globally, nearly 27 percent of the population uses the Internet and more than 60 percent have mobile phones, with the fastest growth in the developing world. New models that use technology to enhance service are emerging, such as virtual volunteering, collaborative online volunteering, SMS texting to speed health information reporting, geo-location targeting of needs with volunteers, and more.
- **Provide Presidential Recognition:** American volunteers serving abroad should be able to qualify for the President's Volunteer Service Award. This



Peace Corps Volunteer in Gambia, 2008. ©Peace Corps.

award, which today is given predominantly to American volunteers who serve in the United States, should be expanded to provide recognition at the highest levels for their commitment to serving their country through serving in communities around the world. As a way to promote excellence in this field, Presidential awards should also be given annually to non-government organizations, universities, and corporations with the most outstanding international volunteer service programs.

- **Measure the Outcomes of Expanded International Service Opportunities:** We should ensure accountability for results as we bring international volunteer service to a much larger scale. We propose research in three key areas: 1) the scope and type of international volunteer service performed by Americans; 2) the activities and outputs generated by international volunteer service; and 3) information on the impacts of international volunteer service on volunteers themselves, host organizations and communities. Regular reports should be published and shared with policymakers, practitioners, opinion leaders and the public so we can continue to develop U.S. policies that support and improve international volunteer service.

## CONCLUSION

The Peace Corps was a bold experiment, fraught with risk. It represented an extraordinary leap forward in U.S. policy and embodies a longstanding tradition in American history—one of service to others.

The Peace Corps' mission was and remains to advance peace. Sargent Shriver in closing his Class Day Remarks at Yale in 1994 said, "I hope you remember to believe in things 'til you die. I hope you remember to be guided by beliefs powerful enough to change the world. I hope you remember the example of the Peace Corps Volunteer, the Head Start parent, the Special Olympics athlete. They each in their own way are waging peace." The voices of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers echo and reinforce that sentiment. Their perspectives show that, through the Peace Corps, the Volunteers have

advanced three great goals and in doing so their service has had a transformative effect on themselves.

The Peace Corps should continue to remain a bedrock of international service. For the Peace Corps to grow as its founders hoped, it will have to embrace a world with more opportunities for international service and enhance its efforts to show the impact the Volunteers are having in meeting its first goal—the need for trained men and women in host countries to tackle this century's pressing challenges. On its 50th anniversary, the Peace Corps and the more than 200,000 Volunteers it has mobilized and sent throughout the world have a unique opportunity to seize the moment when idea and fate meet again in a creative hour.

**“ I HOPE YOU REMEMBER TO BELIEVE IN THINGS ‘TIL YOU DIE. I HOPE YOU REMEMBER TO BE GUIDED BY BELIEFS POWERFUL ENOUGH TO CHANGE THE WORLD. I HOPE YOU REMEMBER THE EXAMPLE OF THE PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER, THE HEAD START PARENT, THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETE. THEY EACH IN THEIR OWN WAY ARE WAGING PEACE. MAYBE YOU WILL EVEN REMEMBER ME AND MY FAMILY—MY CHILDREN, MY WIFE, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, JACKIE. REMEMBER THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY—OF GIVING AND RECEIVING—OF LOVE.”**

—Sargent Shriver, *Yale Class Day Speech: May 22, 1994*

Peace Corps Volunteer in Micronesia and Palau, 2007. ©Peace Corps.



## APPENDIX: VOICES OF THE FIRST RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS

For the three-day *Citizens in a Time of Change* conference the weekend of March 5-7, 1965, some 1,000 Returned Volunteers with 250 leaders of our national life made their way to Washington, D.C. At the opening plenary, in a packed State Department Auditorium, Sargent Shriver began: "Who would have thought three years ago that the Peace Corps was going to take over the State Department?"

"We all know that when John Glenn came back from outer space, the Congress and the people of the United States listened to him very attentively, because he'd been out there. All of you have been out there, in the rest of the world. And we need to hear from you. . . . The real question I think is: What kind of citizens do we want to have in the United States between 1965 and the year 2,000? And what specifically are you going to be able to do about it?"

Briefly, Shriver talked about the War on Poverty he was organizing for the President, and told of an extraordinary experience he had just had in the mountains of Maryland near Camp David, visiting with the first thirty Job Corps Volunteers—poor, out of school, out of work, and, as one seventeen-year old said, "I thought this was my last chance to make anything out of my life."

To the Peace Corps conferees, Sarge said: "These youngsters to me are very much like you. As volunteers from the disadvantaged part of our society they can unite with you from the advantaged part of our society. Together the two of you can become a giant pincers movement in a war, converging in the great center which is smug and self-satisfied and complacent."

Then Ethiopia Volunteer Gary Bergthold took the podium to report answers to questions sent to all of the first 3,000 RPCVs. "With the possible exception of the astronauts, Peace Corps Volunteers are probably the most questioned group in the United States," he began. A surprising 2,300 had responded. Ninety percent said they wanted to attend the Conference. About half wanted to know how they might contribute to the War on Poverty. One of the questions asked how their resources could be harnessed. The most common reply was that harnessing was the last thing they wanted. Only six of the total number of those responding said they wanted to enter politics. For many, a homecoming frustration was that their friends and family seemed to look upon the world with so little genuine concern and understanding. When one Volunteer told a friend he'd been in Ethiopia for two years, the response was: "Well, thank goodness you weren't in Africa!"

Next came the first keynoter chosen by the RPCV committee organizing the conference, Nigerian RPCV Roger Landrum. "We are sons and daughters of America but we are in a sense also sons and daughters of 1,000 towns and villages scattered around the world," he said. "I know Nigeria better than I know Kansas, better than my father knows California. The Volunteers in this room are personally concerned with the vital interests of the people of 46 nations with which our country has had little contact – except for a few economic interests or where Communism scared us in. The return home faces one with the question whether these other interests, so enlarged by our service overseas, have any real meaning in America, and for a new career at home."

After other RPCVs also spoke eloquently, there were talks by Chief Justice Earl Warren, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, and Vice President Hubert Humphrey. McNamara was very brief: "We have three and three-quarter million people in the Defense Department today but I doubt very much that we have influenced the peace of the world as much as the small handful of you in this room and your colleagues have."

The Vice President challenged those who said they did not want to go into politics. "If you think politics is a little dirty, why don't you get yourself a bar of Ivory Soap and get in and clean it up?" He added: "You have lived a richer life. . . . You have had experiences that are beyond the imagination of most of your contemporaries, and in the main you are better because of it and you know it. You have lived a richer life and have tasted many cultures. You know what John Adams once characterized as "the spirit of public happiness." He quoted President Johnson's letter asking him to convene this conference: "The Great Society requires first of all Great Citizens, and the Peace Corps is a world-wide training school for Great Citizens."

"By 1970," Humphrey said, "we hope that there will be about 50,000 back here in the United States." In a sweeping assessment of the problems needing their engagement, he talked of the struggle ahead that year to enact a voting rights act as the next stage of the civil rights movement, and called on the Volunteers to join also in helping to fulfill the promise of the Economic Opportunity Act as the opening gun in the war against poverty.

Then, for most of the next two days, the conference divided into 24 different discussion groups, each co-led by a leader in one of our society's key sectors—including education, business, labor, government, the professions—to discuss what they could do for the

country and how to apply their overseas experience creatively and successfully in the careers ahead of them. Before the conference, more than fifty separate papers were written and circulated on the workshop subjects or general questions. Each workshop developed findings and recommendations for action that were combined for each major field and reported in the closing plenary.

Large press coverage, including the account of participating media leaders, carried the conference story far and wide. In *The New Yorker* Richard Rovere said it was “the most informal as well as the liveliest gathering ever to have taken place in that ungainly pile of concrete in the heart of Foggy Bottom.” The *Saturday Review* emphasized the Volunteers’ “verve, confidence and high good humor.”

Loud applause by the conferees greeted the announcement that hundreds of Volunteers were wanted as teachers in Philadelphia, Syracuse, and Washington, D.C. The principal of the Cardozo

High School in the Washington slums, Dr. Bennetta Washington, who had enlisted 26 RPCVs to teach there, said, “We are searching for great teachers and we think you are a reservoir of great teachers.” She added, “I do not believe that they themselves know what a catalyst for change they were. They really made education come alive.” Work should be “love made visible,” and the Volunteers “made their love visible.”

Afterward, RPCV conference planner Gary Berthold said: “This Conference did a lot more to disturb some of us, to shake us up, than two years in the Peace Corps.” In planning the Conference, one Volunteer had asked: “How do we get visions—not just details?” The Conference got both. Planner Roger Landrum concluded that the whole Peace Corps experience, including the Conference, “is prophetic of institutions and interactions to come.”

*Excerpts from the Peace Corps’ report Citizens in a Time of Change, 1965.*

## METHODOLOGY

On behalf of Civic Enterprises and The National Peace Corps Association, Peter D. Hart Research Associates conducted 11,138 online interviews among Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) between March 31 and April 4, 2011. RPCVs were asked to participate in the survey through e-mail invitations sent to all members of the National Peace Corps Association and

through notices in online newsletters published by the National Peace Corps Association. The survey results were weighted, based on data provided by the Peace Corps through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, to be representative of the more than 200,000 volunteers who have served from 1961 to 2011.

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