



# Domestic Partners

Monday, June 11, 2012

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## ***News about Peace Corps Coverdell Fellows, Master's International, and domestic partnerships...***

Dear Peace Corps Domestic Partners:

We hope you enjoy this inaugural issue of our *Peace Corps Domestic Partners* newsletter, which we will be sending you every spring, summer, winter and fall moving forward.

This newsletter is being developed by the Peace Corps' new Office of University and Domestic Partnerships (UDP), recently created to continue building and strengthening our agency's relationships with institutions of higher learning and nonprofit organizations in the United States. UDP is housed within the Peace Corps' new Office of Strategic Partnerships (OSP), which oversees all of our agency's domestic and international partnerships.

We are convinced that our new structure will help us better meet our obligations to Peace Corps staff, current Volunteers, and returned Volunteers around the world and to all of you, our valued partners.

We all look forward to continuing to work with you and your organizations in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,

University and Domestic Partnerships Team

## **University of Alaska-Fairbanks Offers Coverdell Fellows and Master's International Programs**

In 2011, the University of Alaska-Fairbanks (UAF) became the 27th university in the country to offer both a Coverdell Fellows and Master's International program. UAF's



## **Welcome to Our New Coverdell Fellows Schools**

After our competitive 2011 Invitation to Participate, Coverdell Fellows is pleased to announce that we have brought on the following new graduate school partners: Andover Newton Theological School, Babson College, California State University Long Beach, Clark University, Future Generations Graduate School, Monterey Institute of International Studies, SIT Graduate Institute, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Yeshiva University. View our [searchable database](#) of all Coverdell Fellows programs.

## **New Mexico State University Fellows**

### **Have You Ever Seen a Hoop House?**



New Mexico State University Plant and Environmental Sciences Department master's

Native/Rural Development program and its Natural Resources/Agricultural Sciences program are now enrolled in both Peace Corps graduate school initiatives.

Anthony Gasborro, UAF professor emeritus of extension forestry who serves as coordinator for both programs, sees Alaska as a perfect fit. "In many ways, the conditions in Alaska are similar to conditions in Third World countries. For our remote villages, we have no roads infrastructure and it is necessary to fly there by plane. We also have communications infrastructure that, in some parts of the state, is not as good as in developing countries."

A land-grant, sea-grant, and space-grant facility, UAF is the flagship institution of the University of Alaska, the only public institution of higher learning in the state. Located 200 miles south of the Arctic Circle, the Fairbanks campus' unique location is situated favorably for Arctic and northern research. Its several lines of research are renowned worldwide, most notably in Arctic biology, Arctic engineering, geophysics, supercomputing, natural resources management, and Alaska Native and other indigenous studies.

[Learn more about UAF Peace Corps programs.](#)

## APIASF

### RPCV Mariko Hughes Serves Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders at APIASF



The Peace Corps has developed partnerships with nine minority higher education organizations in the United States including the Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF). APIASF is the nation's largest nonprofit organization to provide scholarships

to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) with financial need. Founded in 2003, APIASF strives to see that all AAPIs have access to higher education and resources that cultivate their academic, personal, and professional success, regardless of their ethnicity, national origin or financial means.

"I came to APIASF because I wanted to work in the nonprofit sector and continue my work in education with underserved students," says Mariko Hughes, who served as a Peace Corps TEFL Volunteer in an Azerbaijani village from 2006 to 2008 and continued her service for a third year in a larger city in Azerbaijan.

"I wanted to extend this experience of work in education back in the U.S. and my time at APIASF has been a wonderful

student and Paul D. Coverdell Fellow Juliette Enfield is working with agricultural research assistant Mike Petersen to collect height and harvest data from spinach and lettuce. Late October and mid-November might seem late to be planting salad greens in New Mexico, but a group of NMSU faculty members, students, and farm crew are not deterred by custom. For the third consecutive year, they are growing rows of Trout's Back lettuce and Bloomsdale spinach from seed in a dozen hoop houses, also known as passive-solar high tunnels. [Read more about the hoop house project.](#)

## Tulane Master's International Student Pursues Guinea Pig Project



Tulane Master's International student Jacqueline Lauer, currently serving in Peru, is working on a *cuy* (guinea pig) project in her community. The project lends six guinea pigs to two different families, and once the guinea pigs start breeding, each family has to give six guinea pigs to a different family, and the process continues. Lauer hopes the project will improve nutrition in the community and provide supplemental income for those

confirmation of that choice,” says Hughes. “In my position as program assistant for the Gates Millennium Scholars program at APIASF, I get to talk with students every day on the phone and through email, making sure that each scholar understands every aspect of the award, and feels confident navigating his or her financial aid.”

Hughes knows her work is important because, contrary to stereotypes, many students in AAPI communities need assistance to pursue a higher education. “Many AAPI ethnic groups have bachelor’s degree attainment rates much lower than the national average. This and other findings from the 2009, 2010, and 2011 National Commission on Asian-American and Pacific-Islander Research in Education reports go a long way toward unpacking and debunking the ‘model minority’ myth that continues to be such a barrier to underserved AAPI students seeking support in pursuing the opportunity of higher education.”



When asked what she plans for her future, Hughes says, “I hope to continue in education. This position has solidified that for me. My motivation comes from working with students and being a part of supporting them in their educational successes.”

[Learn more about APIASF.](#)

## DePaul University Fellow

### Carla Ellis Progresses from Peace Corps Fellow to Country Director



Carla Ellis (Kenya/1990–1992), Peace Corps/Jamaica country director, had clear ideas early in her career about the direction she wanted to take. As soon as she joined the Peace Corps, she knew she wanted to be a Fellow. She says, “I learned about Fellows before I left for my assignment. I

remember carrying around a piece of paper with information about the Fellows program for two years.” During her service, another goal Ellis set for herself was to someday become a country director. “As a Volunteer, I decided that I would be a country director. I believe in the mission and goals of the Peace Corps.”

[Learn more about Ellis' story.](#)

families involved. [Read more about Tulane Master's International student projects.](#)

## City Year

The Peace Corps has developed and is now implementing formal partnerships with five of the largest domestic volunteer organizations in the U.S., including City Year. As a result of this collaboration, Peace Corps’ New York regional office staff participated in a joint team-building and best-practices event at City Year’s office in New York City. In February, Peace Corps’ Boston regional office staff hosted a joint general information session at Boston University with City Year Boston alumni and Boston University RPCVs. This panel focused on opportunities for both domestic and international service, and encouraged applicants to consider both Peace Corps and City Year as joint career experiences. [Learn more about City Year.](#)

## Share Your Third Goal Stories

The Peace Corps is proud to announce the new Office of Third Goal and Returned Volunteer Services. This office combines the Coverdell World Wise Schools program, career and transition services for RPCVs, and resources for conducting successful Third Goal presentations. It just finished hosting the largest RPCV Career Conference to date, including the inaugural

## University of Washington Master's International Student

### Kathy Paananen Promotes Modernization in Thailand



According to Master's International student, Kathlyn Paananen, "My Peace Corps service in rural northeast Thailand has taught me lifelong lessons of how to work and integrate into another culture far different from my own. As a

Volunteer in the community business and organizational development program, I have worked implementing grass-roots projects." Paananen's program is designed to bring local volunteers into the Sub-District Administrative Organization (SAO), the most local form of government, to assist in capacity-building activities.

[Read more of Paananen's story.](#)

## Where Can I Learn More About Peace Corps Domestic Partnerships?

[Learn more about Paul D. Coverdell Fellows.](#)

[Learn more about Master's International.](#)

[Learn more about higher education partnerships.](#)

[Learn more about service partnerships.](#)

## The UDP Team

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"Take an RPCV to Work Day," and is thrilled with the positive feedback the event has received.

The Office of Third Goal and Returned Volunteer Services wants your help! Please let staff members know what you did for Peace Corps Week so they can share your success stories and ideas

([thirdgoal@peacecorps.gov](mailto:thirdgoal@peacecorps.gov)).

Also, when you register your upcoming Third Goal activities (no matter what time of year they occur), you will receive a Third Goal Kit with stickers and bookmarks to hand out, as well as a brand new map to show people where Peace Corps Volunteers have served. Simply go to

[www.peacecorps.gov/thirdgoal](http://www.peacecorps.gov/thirdgoal)

and click the "Register Now" button on the right. Thanks in advance for helping make the culture and traditions of other countries and people come to life in the United States.

## Fellows, Master's International Valentine Story



Coverdell Fellows alum Allyson Snell met her future husband, then-Master's International student Adam Blankenbecker, during their staging for Peace Corps service in Washington, D.C. in 2006. Soon, they were stationed on opposite sides of

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Guatemala. Says Snell, "We didn't go into the Peace Corps looking for love, and I think we worked well as a Peace Corps couple because we focused on our projects and our communities first. Now, years later, our Peace Corps experiences are something we can go back to and reflect on. The Peace Corps has played and still plays an important part in our lives and it always will." The two married in August 2011 in the White Mountains of New Hampshire surrounded by family and friends.

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