



# Fellows

NEWS ABOUT FELLOWS/USA

SPRING 2011

FROM THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



## Happy 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to the Peace Corps!



Brandeis University's Heller School decorates its auditorium with flags from Peace Corps countries around the world.

March 1 has arrived, and people worldwide have started celebrating. *Jeopardy* featured a Peace Corps category. The Empire State Building lit up in red, white, and blue. [Bulgaria](#) presented the Peace Corps with the Presidential Medal of Honor for 20 years of service in that country.

Now and in the months to come, the world will continue to witness tributes to the Peace Corps, and many of these efforts will be spearheaded by Fellows/USA programs.

The University of Maryland-Baltimore County [Shriver Peaceworker Fellows](#) recently hosted "Bringing the World Home: Stories from 50 years

Peace Corps Founding Director Sargent Shriver launch the agency, gave a presentation about the agency's early days. The evening was full of food, music, photography, and even a Peace Corps birthday cake.

In Massachusetts, two schools have held events. [Clark University's](#) International Development, Community, and Environment department hosted a world fair on March 1. Attending RPCVs represented Peace Corps countries, including [Armenia](#), [Chile](#), [Macedonia](#), [Madagascar](#), [Mali](#), [Mongolia](#), [Nicaragua](#), [Senegal](#), [The Gambia](#), and [Uganda](#). On March 7, Brandeis University and [The Heller School of Social Policy](#)

of Peace Corps." The event brought RPCVs together for an "open mic" night, during which they were encouraged to share their Peace Corps stories. Bill Josephson, who helped

and Management celebrated with a gala reception. As one of the newest Fellows/USA partner institutions, Brandeis used the gala to announce its partnership. The event featured a panel discussion where RPCVs encouraged others to volunteer and take part in the Peace Corps mission.

"A World Together," intended to highlight [Duke University's](#) role in the developing world, is a yearlong initiative. Kicking off in February, Duke screened the film *American Idealist: The Story of Sargent Shriver*, brought together a reunion of RPCVs, and hosted the presentation of the 2011 [North Carolina Peace Corps Association Peace Prize Award](#).

**How will you celebrate?  
Register your event on the National Peace Corps Association's online calendar.**



Duke University hosts a "Serve for Sarge" event to honor the Peace Corps 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

# Peace Corps Fellows Continue Service at “The Agency”

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Service to the greater community does not have to end after volunteering abroad. With Fellows/USA, many eager and altruistic students commit themselves to the next step by serving underprivileged American communities. And Fellows/USA does not have to be the last stop in one’s Peace Corps service! Currently there are 12 former Fellows employed with the Peace Corps in the United States.

According to these Fellows, working for the Peace Corps has given them a chance to continue supporting the agency’s mission. Recruitment coordinator Jacob Hall ([Nicaragua](#), 2000–2002) explains, “The reason why I do what I do every day is to further the three goals of the Peace Corps.” Fellows at the Peace Corps have a significant hand in recruiting new Volunteers, marketing the agency, promoting Third Goal activities, maintaining the func-



Fellows working at Peace Corps headquarters enjoy a moment for a group photo. (Left to right: Joseph Alustiza, Debra Pinkney, Susan Gasper, Michael Garcia, Danel Trisi.)

tions of regional and foreign offices, and more.

The ins-and-outs of agency service are, of course, quite different than those experienced as a Volunteer. Hall adds, “I think Peace Corps staff has to live vicariously through the achievements of our Volunteers. When one of our former applicants sends us an email or postcard telling us about their experience, it’s very fulfilling. I’ve seen recruiters hold up a postcard like a championship trophy.”

Along the journey from PCV, to Fellow, to Peace Corps employee, RPCVs gain important career training and learn vital skills that will carry them to their next opportunity. Working at Peace Corps “has allowed me to build on what I did as a Volunteer and learned in graduate school,” says Michael Garcia ([Guatemala](#), 2003–2005), who currently works as a recruitment and placement specialist

for [Peace Corps Response](#).

Many of these Fellows consider working for the Peace Corps to be a wonderful capstone to a Peace Corps career—a way to polish skill-sets and to give back to the agency that has brought so much into their lives. Former Fellow and current San Francisco Public Affairs Specialist Nathan Sargent ([Armenia](#), 1998–2000) says, “Peace Corps has been a part of my life for 13 years—as Volunteer, student and staff—and I’m grateful for every moment.”

## In Memoriam



Peace Corps Director Sargent Shriver visits an orphanage in Konya, Turkey.

[Sargent Shriver](#) died on January 18 at the age of 95. Though Sarge was unable to witness the many inspiring 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary events, he would surely be proud of the activities and celebrations honoring the remarkable contributions of RPCVs, Peace Corps staff, and Peace Corps friends through the years.

# Peace Corps Experience Inspires Professor to Launch Fellows/USA Program

Don Spiers, founder and coordinator of the [University of Missouri–Columbia](#) (MU) Fellows/USA program, was named 2010 Outstanding Senior Teacher by the [MU College of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources](#). We asked Don to share with us how his own experiences as an RPCV led him to launch a successful Fellows/USA program:

“I likely would have been picked in college as the last person who would join the Peace Corps. A bit intro-

verted, studious, and slightly dull would have been a true description back then. I had just received my master’s degree in zoology and was looking for a job when I saw the sign asking for a biologist (No experience needed!) to manage a Smithsonian program in South America. To this day, I do not know where I got the courage to send in the application.

Months later, the offer arrived to go to Venezuela and work with insect-eating

fish to control mosquitoes. At the end of the offer, they said that I had to join the Peace Corps. I immediately replied and began a series of firsts—including my first plane ride and first time out of the United States. In Venezuela, we traveled the coasts, llanos, Andes, and Lake of Maracaibo, capturing fish.

Once back in the States, I followed through on my new-



University of Missouri Coordinator, Don Spiers.

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## Fellows/USA Census Hits a Record High

Thank you to all of our programs for completing your fall census! We are delighted to announce that we had 537 Fellows enrolled this past semester, our highest number to date, and an achievement that will be reported to Congress.

School	Fellows Enrolled	Continued
<a href="#">University of Arizona</a>	58	<a href="#">Kennesaw State University</a> 5
<a href="#">University of Denver</a>	57	<a href="#">Seton Hill University</a> 5
<a href="#">Johns Hopkins University</a>	41	<a href="#">Florida Institute of Technology</a> 4
<a href="#">Columbia University Teachers College</a>	33	<a href="#">George Washington University</a> 4
<a href="#">Duke University</a>	29	<a href="#">Loma Linda University</a> 4
<a href="#">University of Michigan</a>	25	<a href="#">University of Maryland–College Park</a> 4
<a href="#">The New School</a>	22	<a href="#">University of Oregon</a> 4
<a href="#">Carnegie Mellon University</a>	20	<a href="#">University of Colorado–Denver</a> 3
<a href="#">Western New Mexico University</a>	19	<a href="#">University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee</a> 3
<a href="#">Indiana University–Bloomington</a>	13	<a href="#">Georgia College and State University</a> 2
<a href="#">Western Illinois University</a>	13	<a href="#">Rutgers University</a> 2
<a href="#">University of Maryland–Baltimore County</a>	12	<a href="#">University of Missouri–Kansas City</a> 2
<a href="#">University of South Carolina</a>	12	<a href="#">University of Wyoming</a> 2
<a href="#">University of Southern California</a>	12	<a href="#">Drew University</a> 1
<a href="#">Marquette University</a>	11	<a href="#">Monmouth University</a> 1
<a href="#">Bowling Green State University</a>	10	<a href="#">Northern Arizona University</a> 1
<a href="#">Duquesne University</a>	10	<a href="#">University of Alabama at Birmingham</a> 1
<a href="#">University of Vermont</a>	10	<a href="#">University of Rochester</a> 1
<a href="#">Fordham University</a>	9	<a href="#">University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point</a> 1
<a href="#">Illinois State University</a>	8	<a href="#">Xavier University of Louisiana</a> 1
<a href="#">New Mexico State University</a>	7	* <a href="#">Clark University</a> 0
<a href="#">University of Cincinnati</a>	7	** <a href="#">Humboldt State University</a> 0
<a href="#">University of Missouri–Columbia</a>	7	* <a href="#">University of Notre Dame</a> 0
<a href="#">University of Pennsylvania</a>	7	* <a href="#">University of Washington</a> 0
<a href="#">Southern New Hampshire University</a>	6	* <a href="#">Willamette University</a> 0
<a href="#">University of Maryland–Baltimore</a>	6	
<a href="#">University of New Orleans</a>	6	
<a href="#">Yale University</a>	6	
<a href="#">Cornell University</a>	5	
<a href="#">George Mason University</a>	5	
		<b>Total: 537</b>

\* New Fellows/USA program.  
 \*\* Program temporarily suspended.

# Where Are They Now?

William Conard, Thailand, 1992–1994

Master's in Teaching and Learning, Urban Teacher Corps

DePaul University, 1996–1997



William Conard now serves as principal for a Harvard University-lauded high school in Massachusetts.

My journey with the Peace Corps began with an advertisement in the newspaper promoting an adventure of a lifetime. The ad caught my eye and unleashed my imagination to the possibilities. Without initially knowing where [Thailand](#) was or what to expect, I took a leap of faith and went abroad to teach English.

I wasn't expecting to meet Mother Teresa, make lifelong friends, or even be introduced to my lovely wife, Waraphon. Yet, the Peace Corps began a life journey that has led to my evolution as a human being and my career success today. Throughout my time in Thailand, my experience was transformative. The Thai people believe that this day is the most important day, and this moment is the most important moment, and this person, in front of you right now, is the most important person.

My undergraduate degree had been in English and, after Peace Corps, I decided to move forward in my educational path by studying at the Urban Teacher Corps at [DePaul University](#) in Chicago. Through Fellows/USA and under the mentorship of Dr. Barbara Radner, the director of the Urban Teacher Corps, I received my master's degree in teaching and learning, and from there I went on to earn a doctorate in educational leadership, also from DePaul.

Today, I am the principal of [Randolph High School](#) (RHS) in

Massachusetts. RHS has approximately 750 students in grades 9 through 12, and is a culturally rich school with 17 different languages spoken. I'm very proud to say that Harvard University named us an exemplary and outstanding high school last year. In 2009, RHS was identified by Dr. Ronald Ferguson, director of [Harvard's Achievement Gap Initiative](#), as among the most effective schools in the state at producing eighth- to 10th-grade learning gains among racially and socioeconomically diverse student bodies.

Since I've been at RHS, I've built upon my vision that everyone is capable of success: the teachers, the parents, and, most importantly, the students. I believe that instilling confidence and a belief that each of us is powerful beyond measure is the basis of a life that will make us happy as we serve others.

I have been fortunate enough to travel around the world promoting education, and I have also served my country by promoting the American spirit of

humanitarian kindness. While I believe I've accomplished many things, my greatest achievement has been the ability to keep my life balanced and harmonious. In the stressful world in which most of us work and live, I really do try to receive each person as the most important in my life at that moment and I do what I can to help that person leave me better off than when they came. I have the Peace Corps, Fellows/USA, and my Thai friends to thank for this wonderful gift.

To read personal stories by our Fellows, visit the Fellows in the Community section of our Web pages.

## Don Spiers, *page 3*

found interest in the environment and travel to pursue degrees at [Michigan State University](#) and the [University of Florida](#), and to work at [Yale](#) and, eventually, MU. In 2004, RPCV Brady Deaton became MU chancellor, and he set at the top of his agenda the desire to globalize our campus. I began almost immediately with a fellow RPCV, Vicky Riback Wilson, to create an MU Fellows/USA program. There was overwhelming support

across the campus, and we eventually gathered together six departments from widely different disciplines.

We started admitting the first RPCVs in 2007, and since then, we have successfully placed up to five new Fellows each year. Their work has provided services in the areas of food supply, education, and general health. At the same time, they have increased interest in the global community through presentations

and one-on-one interactions with students and faculty.

Our first three cohorts of graduating Fellows have identified our most successful attribute as our ability to facilitate active exchange across six diverse disciplines of ideas. Such an interactive process is not often found at universities and we find that this is a major attraction for new Fellows. We are confident that, as our Fellows graduate and leave campus,

they are positioned to become leaders in the international arena. I know that the interest in world cultures that was stimulated in me by the Peace Corps over 30 years ago was a channel for the development of this successful program."



# Fellows/USA Schools Offer Doctoral Degrees



Jayne Park (l) and Angela Delp, Fellows/USA Ph.D. candidates at the Florida Institute of Technology, take a moment to relax at a Peace Corps Third Goal event.

Fellows/USA has made great strides over the past quarter-century in the number and diversity of degree programs that we offer. In recent years, we have also seen the emergence of another positive trend: doctoral degrees.

## Starting on Firm Ground

One Fellows/USA school to offer terminal degrees is the [University of Cincinnati](#) (UC). Under the stewardship of Johanna Looye, UC Fellows/USA coordinator, selected RPCVs receive financial aid and participate in internships while earning their doctorates of regional planning.

According to Looye, a key ingredient to helping the doctoral program get off the ground was that “we had our master’s program well established and had good connections in the community before we decided to launch our Ph.D. program.”

Looye adds, “One concern was how to accommodate the research component of a Ph.D. program with the community service.” UC solved this problem by requiring the same amount of service hours for master’s and doctoral candidates, but

stretching out the doctoral service component over a longer time period so that Ph.D. Fellows would have a lighter workload.

## Exacting Commitment

Marguerite Baty Lucea ([Turkmenistan](#), 1993–1995), a post-doctoral Fellow at the [Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing](#), agrees that the workload for a Fellows/USA doctoral student can be highly demanding.

Her warning to other students: “The course work was so intense, as well as working on my own research during my Ph.D., that I didn’t have as much time to dedicate to Fellows activities—the social hours and the community activities.”

## Paying Dividends

Nonetheless, Lucea has discovered clear benefits to combining Fellows with a doctoral degree. She says, “My Ph.D. research took me to the Philippines, where I looked at the overlap of intimate partner violence and HIV risk. With my Peace Corps experience, I felt very comfortable in diving

right into the culture, making contacts with people, and also being respectful of what other people were already doing.”

Other students agree that the rigors of a Fellows/USA doctoral degree are well worth the efforts. Teri Bolinger ([Ukraine](#), 2007–2009) opted to return to school as a mid-career professional.

She is currently studying at the [University of Colorado Denver’s](#) School of Public Affairs and says of her quest to earn a Ph.D. “I was inspired to pursue doctoral studies during my Peace Corps service in Ukraine. When we say ‘Life is calling. How far will you go?’ it means more than traveling halfway around the world to learn from and be of service to others. It is an ongoing challenge to learn more, do more, and be more wherever we are.”

## Living Up to the Legacy

Kat Haessler ([Senegal](#), 2003–2004), a doctoral candidate in Looye’s program at UC, agrees with Bolinger in interpreting her Fellows/USA doctoral degree to fit into a higher calling.

She says, “There is a powerful legacy of those that came before you: the high quality work they did, as well as the expectations of those around you to perform to this quality standard in both the academic and volunteer arena. Your internship places you in the position of being your school’s ambassador to the outside world. These are large shoes to fill, but Peace Corps prepared you for that.”

## A Life-Long Mission

Another doctoral graduate, [Jared Buono](#) ([Ghana](#), 1997–1999) earned his Ph.D. in wa-

tershed management from the [University of Arizona](#). He now manages his own nonprofit and works both in the United States and abroad on projects ranging from water harvesting to water sanitation.

Buono sums up the Peace Corps Fellows/USA journey when he says, “The Peace Corps has been at the core of my professional motivation for 15 years, and Fellows/USA was a great opportunity for me. I don’t know why any RPCV who goes back to school wouldn’t want to participate in the program.”



Fellow Teri Bolinger is studying for her Ph.D. at the University of Colorado–Denver.

## Use the patch logo!



**The Peace Corps has authorized Fellows/USA partners to use the patch logo. To receive an electronic copy, email [fellows@peacecorps.gov](mailto:fellows@peacecorps.gov).**

# Fellows/USA Programs Rank Among Top Peace Corps Schools

Every year, the Peace Corps publishes a [list of the schools](#) across the United States that produce the most Volunteers. We're proud to say that 16 of our Fellows/USA programs and two new programs in development hail from schools on this distinguished list.

## Large Schools

### Rank

- 3 University of Michigan
- 3 University of Washington
- 12 University of Arizona
- 17 University of Minnesota—Twin Cities\*
- 19 University of Oregon
- 23 Indiana University—Bloomington
- 24 University of Maryland—College Park

## Medium Schools

### Rank

- 1 The George Washington University
- 4 Cornell University
- 13 University of Vermont
- 15 Emory University\*
- 18 University of Notre Dame
- 25 Bowling Green State University
- 25 Duke University
- 25 Marquette University

## Small Schools

### Rank

- 6 Johns Hopkins University
- 13 Willamette University
- 18 Clark University

\*Program in development.



Fellows at Indiana University—Bloomington, a top-ranked school in producing RPCVs, prepare for National Peace Corps Week and the Peace Corps 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

# From the Fellows/USA Program Manager



Julie Driver

My niece, who is an indefatigable optimist, and I recently played phone tag for several days. When we finally connected late one night, I listened with a growing sense of comfort as she recounted her continuing adventures as a high school junior.

It was comforting to hear the voice of the strong young woman she has grown into from the frail child we feared losing because she was dangerously premature. It was comforting to hear her joy at making the chorus for the spring musical, and her surprised satisfaction with achieving a perfect grade in math.

Comfort also came from knowing that, despite the heart-breaking turmoil plaguing so many people around the world this spring, life is actually a small-scale, day-to-day kind of event.

The true measure of how well we succeed in life lies not in our reaction to major problems, but rather in how gracefully we clear the frustratingly frequent minor hurdles, how respectfully we treat the strangers all around us, and how much

effort we put into achieving the modest victories that eventually add up to significant ones.

It's easier to complain. In some ways, it can even be more satisfying to complain about a problem than to fix one. After all, what can we, as individuals, do to fix what is wrong with our world?

The short, simple answer to that question is: we can try. We can get up every time we fall. We can smile. We can sincerely apologize when we make a mistake. We can say "please" and "thank you."

Perhaps if we do the simple things, we will lift the comfort level of others, as my niece did for me. A little lift may be all it takes for us to accomplish more complex goals. Like chaos theory's proverbial butterfly, our efforts may have wondrous effects far beyond our immediate circle of influence.

For nearly six years I have been blessed with the opportunity to be a part of the Fellows/USA community. You are a community of doers, not of complainers. I've seen firsthand the positive effects of your efforts, and am confident the ripples will continue to spread and benefit others.

This time at Peace Corps has been a tremendous gift. In parting, I'd like to leave you with the words of my favorite storyteller, Garrison Keillor.

Be well, do good work, and keep in touch.

