

Neukom Family Foundation Helps Bring New Peace Corps Fellows to TC

The Fellows/USA program at Teachers College, Columbia University, recently received a grant from the Neukom Family Foundation, made possible by Teachers College trustee Gillian Neukom Toledo. The Neukom Family Foundation's support, combined with an endowment from Elliot and Roslyn Jaffe and AmeriCorps grants, enabled Teachers College's Fellows/USA program to enroll 32 new returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) in fall 2004 to teach in New York City's high-poverty schools.

Teachers College, which will celebrate the 20th anniversary of its program in 2005, has already begun using the funding to expand summer

training as requested by past Fellows. Now with twice the training time of past cohorts, Fellows can complete more course work before they begin teaching—and thus have fewer courses during their initial semester of teaching. Moreover, there is more adjustment time for those RPCVs who come to New York directly from overseas. The expanded training period also has allowed Fellows more time to observe expert urban teachers and to seek out teaching positions earlier. By doing more in the summer, Fellows have more time to tutor students through 50 hours of school-based fieldwork during the regular school year.



Cousins, *from first page*

"Teachers will encounter an increasingly diverse classroom that demands fresh and culturally relevant approaches," says Baker. "European-centered instructional techniques will have to change to meet this diversity. People who can embrace a broad, international viewpoint will be highly valuable to the classrooms of the future."

Originally from Kalispell, Montana, Baker was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Kochkor-Ata, Kyrgyzstan, from 1999 to 2000, and in Jalal-Abad, Kyrgyzstan, from 2000 to 2001. This Central Asian experience provides a good foundation for Baker's current participation in the U.S. Department of State's Armenia School Connectivity

Program, an Internet connectivity exchange program for teachers in the United States and Armenia.

As part of the program, U.S. teachers travel to Armenia for two weeks in July to collaborate with Armenian teachers, and Armenian teachers come to the United States in October for a reciprocal cultural exchange.

"The motto of WNMU is to 'ignite the spirit of learning in both the student and the educator,'" says Baker. "My Peace Corps service and my time as a Peace Corps Fellow have done just that: fostered a rich and supportive environment in which this spirit has burned bright."



Peace Corps
Fellows/USA
Paul D. Coverdell
Peace Corps Headquarters
1111 20th Street NW
Washington, DC 20526
OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE



Presorted Standard
Postage & Fees
PAID
Peace Corps
Permit No. G-264



fellowows

volume 13, issue 1 • winter 2005

Fellow Teaches Native American 'Cousins' of his Kyrgyzstani Students

To Peter Baker, teaching history to Native Americans in Arizona as a Peace Corps Fellow jogs fond memories of his days teaching English as a foreign language to Kyrgyzstanis as a Peace Corps Volunteer.

"Thinking back, I see many similarities between my life here and my service overseas," says Baker. "When I was in Kyrgyzstan, my host country friends told me about their belief that Native Americans were their 'cousins.' Judging by their similar facial structure, their traditional circle-shaped dwellings, and the belief that the origins of both are traceable to Asia thousands of years ago, the lineage of the Kyrgyz and the Navajo peoples may have, indeed, been close."

A Fellow at Western New Mexico University (WNMU) in Gallup, Baker teaches full time at Window Rock High School in Fort Defiance, Arizona, the capital of the Navajo Nation.

"While serving in the Peace Corps, I was mistaken a few times for being Russian, and here I'm regarded as an 'Anglo,'" says Baker. "This reminds me of the subjugation that the Navajo and the Kyrgyz have endured in the past, and this pushes me to consider exactly what kind of education is proper and relevant to my students' needs."

Like his Kyrgyz students, Baker's students on the reservation face the prevalence of alcoholism, drug abuse, unsafe sex, and poverty. To be a successful teacher, he has to deal with these issues in spite of language barriers.

In his second year of a three-year program, Baker is immersed in student teaching and takes an intensive load of graduate-level courses. "The structure of WNMU's program seems like the only logical way to train educators," he says. "More than most other disciplines, learning to teach requires hands-on, practical, real-world experiences."

"Because I am consumed by teaching history during the day, and by studying teaching at night, there is a natural



Western New Mexico University Fellow Peter Baker (top, right) poses with his students in Kyrgyzstan where he was a Volunteer from 1999 to 2001.

relationship between what I do as a student and what I do as a teacher," Baker adds. "I can't imagine studying education at a university without having students to interact with and learn from."

As a student who has benefited from hands-on experiences, Baker incorporates this teaching concept into his lesson plans at Window Rock. For example, in April 2004, he took his students on a Close Up Foundation trip to Washington, D.C., to teach them about the U.S. government.

"I chose to study education in a challenging and unique setting

with other motivated and like-minded colleagues," says Baker. "Peace Corps Fellows/USA has been a good way to continue my service. It allows me to bring back to the States what I've learned overseas."

"My work in Kyrgyzstan and the Navajo Nation has made me as much a student as it has made me a teacher," he adds. "Being a returned Peace Corps Volunteer, teaching and living in the Navajo Nation, and studying education has given me a unique perspective that I believe will soon come to the forefront in the American educational system as a whole.

cont'd back page ▶



NAU Fellows Work to Improve Flagstaff Community

By Valerie Okonieski

Communities in and around Flagstaff, Arizona, are benefiting from the work of two Northern Arizona University (NAU) Fellows, Michael Toops and Daniel Neely. Although they served in the Peace Corps in different countries—Toops was in Costa Rica (1992-1995) and Neely in Honduras (2000-2002)—their Volunteer experiences helped each discover his commitment to helping improve communities. Through the Fellows/USA program at NAU's College of Business Administration, they are continuing their work in communities as they refine the practical skills they learned as Volunteers.

In Costa Rica, Toops worked with small businesses and agricultural associations to help develop new business ideas. He provided counseling to many small businesses to help them grow, helped build a factory with a group of Costa Rican women, and tutored at local schools.

"Many of the women in the association I supported have moved from the community to start new lives in other towns," said Toops. "Many made the move because while building the factory, they discovered they had power over their own lives."

For his Fellows/USA internship, which began in September 2003, Toops works at the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Coconino Community College. He works part-time while taking classes throughout the school year and will graduate in May 2005.

At SBDC, Toops assists clients and works on strategic planning for the center, with the goal to expand services throughout Coconino County. He also facilitates an independent business alliance, consisting of several small business owners seeking ways to better compete in a global market primarily dominated by corporations.

While Toops spent eight years putting the skills he learned in Costa Rica to use before becoming a Fellow at NAU, Neely enrolled in the program immediately after his service in Honduras. As a Volunteer, Neely worked in community development and started several programs, including a trash-collection program that provided trash cans for the community. He also started a nonprofit organization to help protect the national forest in Honduras and organized the first international mountain bike race in the country.

His service in Honduras helped Neely realize he wanted to continue working in development. After learning about the Fellows/USA master of business administration (MBA) program at NAU, he decided it was the best program for him.

"It's working out well and I can see how this degree will help me in the future," Neely said. "Furthermore, the NAU MBA program has a project management focus that will tie into development work seamlessly."

Neely is in his second year of the two-year program, working at the Flagstaff Affordable Housing Authority (FAHA). Through FAHA, he helps keep Flagstaff homes affordable by advocating for policies and down payment assistance. FAHA also acquires plots of land on which they build affordable homes for citizens, and it runs a battered women's shelter that helps abused women and children

find places to live, and offers employment assistance.

In addition to working with community organizations, Toops and Neely are collaborating with former MBA Program Director Joseph Anderson on a paper for a conference on entrepreneurship in the third world. They will present the paper in January at the United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship/Small Business Institute national conference in Indian Wells, California.

NAU Fellows receive full tuition waivers and may receive additional scholarships. In recognition of his hard work and dedication, Toops just received the first Doris Patton MBA Alumni Scholarship.

"This is a quality program that continually challenges you," Toops said. "Certainly, as with all experiences, I feel like I am growing and learning every day."

"I feel like I am growing and learning every day."

Northern Arizona University Fellows Daniel Neely (l) and Michael Toops (r) are collaborating on a conference paper with former Fellows/USA Coordinator Joseph Anderson (c).





Waltz, Foxtrot, Meringue, Cha Cha—in Nursing School?

By Susan Umstot and Lori Edwards

What started as a one-time enrichment experience for a first-semester nursing class that focuses on communication skills with older persons has become a tradition and a service/learning-to-dance experience. Every month, a group of Peace Corps Fellows at the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing (JHUSON) accompany Lori Edwards, JHUSON instructor

and Peace Corps Fellows coordinator, to Mercy Ridge Retirement Community to learn to dance with the residents of this wonderful facility.

“Dancing with the Elders” has created an avenue for sharing between the nursing students and senior citizens. The residents are generally from the surrounding Baltimore area and have sold their homes to live in a facility where services are more easily accessible. Most come to dance because, as they report, “Dancing was what we did growing up. It was how we socialized.”

JHU Fellow Jeanne McCarter dances with a resident of the Mercy Ridge Retirement Community in Baltimore.



The nursing students get to learn about “the old days” in Baltimore while informally gaining interview skills for their nursing careers. As they learn about the communities around Baltimore, their community assessment skills are also refined. They also learn to assess the mobility and motivation of the dancing elders.

Some students become the motivators for these men and women, encouraging them to participate for exercise, socialization, and fun. When someone is not there a particular month, the students go looking for them. Likewise, when the students are not there, the residents ask Edwards, “Where are your students?”

Dancing provides the same value for opening up lines of communication in the suburbs of Baltimore as it does in Malawi, Nicaragua, Mali, and numerous other countries where the Fellows have served.

The conversations generated before and after the dancing have created intergenerational friendship and understanding. The lessons have also demonstrated to the aspiring nurses how creative strategies for health promotion can be used effectively. The hour-long sessions pass quickly as new friends are made and new dance steps are mastered, steps that will improve the skills for these Fellows/nurses and improve the health of the dancing elders.

Program Enables Fellow to Give Back to Community

By Valerie Okonieski

Hearing stories from her grandparents about the exotic places they traveled gave University of New Orleans Fellow Rebecca Otte the “travel bug” at an early age. When Otte learned that joining the Peace Corps would give her the opportunity to see different parts of the world while giving back to the community, she rushed to apply and was assigned two years of service in Mali.

In Mali, Otte was a water and sanitation Volunteer, spending much of her time teaching basic hygiene to the Malian people, and as she says, “helping to show the school children that there were other countries in the world and where exactly was the ‘Ameriki’ that we came from.”

Otte’s time in Mali solidified her desire to go back to school to get her master’s degree upon completion of her Peace Corps tour. The slow pace of Malian life gave Otte time to reflect and opened her eyes to different fields of study. She decided to pursue a master’s degree in community planning, so when she heard about the Fellows/USA program at her close of service conference, she made

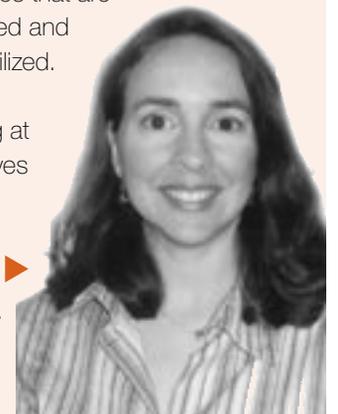
a mental note to apply to the program someday.

Seven years passed before Otte applied to the Fellows/USA program at the College of Urban and Public Affairs at the University of New Orleans (UNO), where she was accepted. Community planning is a perfect career option for Otte because, she says, it allows her to use her undergraduate engineering experience to help revitalize failing communities. With one year already completed, Otte will finish the two-year master’s program in 2005.

Fellows at UNO begin internships after their first year of study that continue through their second year of course work. Otte is an intern with the

New Orleans Regional Planning Commission (RPC), where she helps improve air quality in and around New Orleans. She also assists the RPC’s brownfields program coordinator with day-to-day issues and projects and coordinates outreach efforts, such as organizing meetings with government officials, planning workshops for local businesses, and developing promotional materials. The brownfields program helps assess and clean up commercial and industrial properties that are neglected and underutilized.

“Working at RPC gives me a real-life look at ▶



cont’d next page

University of New Orleans Fellow Rebecca Otte





Duquesne Fellows Connect With the Community

Computers are everywhere. Right? But look in western Pennsylvania, and you won't find them in logical places—like classrooms. Take Washington County's Ringgold School District, for instance, where the high school isn't wired for computers yet. Astonishingly, Ringgold is not alone. Several

of the region's public and private schools, and numerous nonprofit organizations lack critical technology.

One solution to bridging this technology gap lies in a warehouse in Pittsburgh's East End, where Peace Corps Fellow (2003-2004) Domenico Palombo, a student in Duquesne's Graduate Center for Social and Public Policy, is leading the Computers for Friends project. The project delivers vital technology—including computers, CPUs, keyboards, monitors and the know-how that serves as technical support—to classrooms and agencies across the region.

A collaboration of Duquesne University, the Pittsburgh Technology Council, and Three Rivers Connect, Computers for Friends refurbishes private and federal surplus computers and provides technical training and Web development services to low-income schools and community groups in southwestern Pennsylvania. In just one year, more than 800 refurbished computers have been placed in needy schools throughout the region. Nearly 3,000 more—donated by private groups and government agencies—are

on track for refurbishment and distribution. Last winter, Ringgold High School's technology challenges were partially solved by Computers for Friends. It received not only refurbished computers, but volunteer assistance to install network wiring as well.

"Information technology (IT) literacy is such a core component of functioning in today's society, and it is disturbing to see schools without access to computers and communities with extremely low IT literacy rates," said Palombo. "By bringing computers and computer literacy to people who otherwise would not have such access, we are empowering individuals in their personal growth as well as contributing to the socio-economic advancement of this region."

Computers for Friends is just one of several community development projects in which graduate students from Duquesne's Fellows/USA program play leading roles. Every year, civic-minded public policy and business students serve as community development Fellows at nonprofits throughout the city. The students work directly with agencies to assist with vital tasks, such as pro-

gram development, research, and implementation.

"Nonprofits gain tremendously from the level of experience the Fellows bring. Most of the Fellows have developed and implemented programs from the ground up on tight budgets in developing countries," said Evan Stoddard, Ph.D., Duquesne's Fellows/USA coordinator. Stoddard is also associate dean of the McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts and associate director for community outreach at the Graduate Center for Social and Public Policy. He reports that Duquesne's Fellows receive a small, grant-funded stipend for the countless hours they spend researching, developing, and helping to run these programs. "Finding talented people dedicated enough to work for so little is invaluable to an organization serving needy populations on shoestring budgets," he says.

Since the inception of the Fellows/USA program at Duquesne in 1998, 25 Peace Corps Fellows have served more than 30 agencies in the Pittsburgh area.

Palombo also applied his technology expertise as a Peace Corps Volunteer on the Carib-

Otte, from previous page

what a planner does and how planning goals are achieved," said Otte. "The political process to achieve goals can be quite complex. At RPC, I am learning how the process works to combine those interests into a viable project."

Otte also works with the planning commission's bike and pedestrian coordinator, con-

ducting research for a new program to install bike racks in downtown New Orleans. The experienced planners there are helping her develop a website for the Southern Rapid Rail Transit Commission.

Even though Otte is not entirely sure what she wants to do after graduation, the skills she is acquiring from her course work

and internship are preparing her for jobs in the planning field.

"If I could craft a job for myself, it would be to restore/renovate abandoned commercial or school buildings to be used as homeless shelters and/or community centers," said Otte. "That type of job would combine my engineering side with my human interest side."

Fellows at UNO are eligible for graduate assistantships that pay tuition in addition to a monthly stipend of \$850 at the master's level and \$1,000–\$1,250 a month at the doctoral level. Otte receives the stipend and a graduate assistantship.

bean islands of St. Vincent and the Grenadines from 1999 to 2002, where he led a government-sponsored project that computerized 39 schools and provided IT literacy and vocational training. After implementing successful programs overseas, he wanted to use his skills to help here at home.

"As developed as the United States is, we have a large degree of social stratification and neglected, disadvantaged communities," he said. "This is not just about providing skills and training; it's about advocacy and motivating individuals and organizations to contribute something back."

Duquesne Fellow (2003-2005) Iris Winter, whose community development work is with the Girl Scouts of Southwestern Pennsylvania, believes knowing the needs of those you serve is crucial for sustainable, useful programs. Winter is compiling and analyzing data for a comprehensive community profile that the Girl Scouts will use to fine-tune

programs for scouts and volunteers. "I feel Girl Scouting makes a real difference in the lives of girls," said Winter. "However, if the programs aren't what the girls are looking for, or if there aren't enough adult volunteers, then we're not making the kind of impact that we could be."

Winter was a primary teacher trainer in the Peace Corps in South Africa from 1998 to 2000. "I think one of the greatest impacts adults can make in the community is through interaction with young people," she said. "Any program that offers an adult a chance to be a mentor gives the youth and the adult wonderful opportunities to grow in all the right ways."

The Fellows say that volunteering brings many rewards. "Knowing that you have touched one person's life, helped one person make something of himself or herself, is enough to justify the countless hours and frustrations that sometimes go along with volunteering," said Palombo.

Article and photos adapted and reprinted with permission from Duquesne University winter 2004 magazine



Duquesne Fellow Domenico Palombo stands among thousands of computers that will be distributed to Pittsburgh area schools.

Peace Corps Fellows/USA

We hope you like *Fellows'* new look!

To submit stories or ideas:

Write

Peace Corps Fellows/USA
Paul D. Coverdell Peace Corps Headquarters
1111 20th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20526

Call

800.424.8580, ext. 1440

Fax

202.692.1421

E-mail

fellows@peacecorps.gov

Visit

www.peacecorps.gov/fellows



Michele Titi, Ph.D.

Director

mtiti@peacecorps.gov

Cary Ballou, Ph.D.

Associate Director

cballou@peacecorps.gov

Gina Wynn

Marketing Specialist and Newsletter Editor

gwynn@peacecorps.gov

Fellows newsletter is mailed to Peace Corps Fellows and alumni, Fellows/USA program coordinators, community partners, and domestic and overseas Peace Corps staff.

Fellows is a publication of the Peace Corps. Views expressed in *Fellows* are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Peace Corps. Use of funds for printing this publication has been approved by the U.S. government's Office of Management and Budget.

Fellows/USA Welcomes New Programs in the Carolinas and New York

Duke University in Durham has become the first Peace Corps Fellows/USA partner university in North Carolina. It is offering two options for returned Peace Corps volunteers (RPCVs)—a master of public policy (MPP) degree or a master of arts in international development policy (PIDP).

Fellows opting to study public policy may earn a joint or concurrent degree in law, business, divinity, medicine, or environment. International development policy Fellows may specialize in development management, applied economics, social policy, environmental management and policy, or peace and conflict resolution.

Internships are with organizations in the local low-income community helping to educate youth about global issues. Fellows may also work with the Duke-Durham Neighborhood Partnership Initiative, which increases Duke's role in the community by addressing issues and needs identified by surrounding neighborhoods and schools. Scholarships will range from \$7,500 to \$10,000 with the possibility of RPCVs acquiring other grants, loans, or assistantships.

The new Fellows/USA program at **Fordham University** in The Bronx, New York, gives RPCVs the chance to earn full-tuition scholarships for pursuing a

master of arts degree in international political economy and development.

Internships address the creation, preservation, and financing of affordable housing in the Bronx for immigrant and other low-income families.

The Fellows/USA program at the **University of South Carolina**'s Moore School of Business in Columbia allows RPCVs to pursue an international master of business administration.

Possible areas of focus include corporate accounting and finance; treasury and risk management; financial institutions

and capital markets; securities analysis and portfolio management; economic and business analysis; brand management; customer relationship management; management for the corporation; human resources; entrepreneurship; operations; information systems and technology; and economic development.

As interns, Fellows work with the local Small Business Development Center to help promote Hispanic and other minority entrepreneurs. Peace Corps fellowships of \$20,000 are available, including fee reduction and work grant stipends to total \$26,000 or more.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

...about the Fellows/USA MPP at Duke

Contact Katherine Flynn at 919.613.7412 or Katherine.flynn@duke.edu.

...about the PIDP at Duke

Contact Stephanie Alt Lamm at 919.613.7356 or pidpinfo@duke.edu.

...about Fordham University's Fellows/USA program

Visit www.fordham.edu/iped or contact Henry Schwalbenberg, Ph.D, at 718.817.4064 or iped@fordham.edu.

...about the Moore School of Business

Visit <http://mooreschool.sc.edu> or contact Reena Lichtenfeld at 803.777.6749 or rlichten@moore.sc.edu.



Promote world peace and friendship during peace corps week

February 28–March 6, 2005

"The benefits of the Peace Corps will not be limited to the countries in which it serves. Our own young men and women will be enriched by the experience of living and working in foreign lands...They will return better able to assume the responsibilities of American citizenship and

with greater understanding of our global responsibilities."

President John F. Kennedy speaking to Congress, March 1, 1961

Help celebrate 44 years of making a difference in the world by making Peace Corps Week 2005 a rewarding experience for your community. This is your

opportunity to help Americans nationwide increase their understanding of the world and its people. Sign up to participate today! Register online or complete and mail the reply card attached to the Peace Corps Week brochure, which you will receive in the mail this winter, to receive a free presentation kit.

Questions?

e-mail
pcweek@peacecorps.gov

or call
800.424.8580
(press 2, then ext. 1961)

Online registration is available at www.peacecorps.gov/pcweek

Former Coordinator Wins Award for Exceptional Post-Peace Corps Service

One term of Peace Corps service didn't do it for Daniel Tamulonis. After two years in Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo) from 1975 to 1977, he served there again, from 1977 to 1979. That didn't do it, either. Starting in 1979, he served again, this time as associate director of the Peace Corps for education. And following Peace Corps employment, he led the groundbreaking Peace Corps Fellows/USA program at Teachers College, Columbia University for nearly 10 years, starting in 1993. But the years attest only to Tamulonis' commitment; they don't begin to reveal the extent of his accomplishments, for which Tamulonis recently became the first individual recipient of the Peace Corps' new recognition program for outstanding service as a returned Volunteer.

At a ceremony at the annual conference of the National Peace Corps Association in Chicago in August 2004, Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez recognized Tamulonis for his outstanding accomplishments in promoting the third goal of the agency—educating Americans about cultures of the countries where the

Peace Corps serves. Because of Tamulonis' work with the Teachers College Fellows/USA program, tens of thousands of children in New York City have been taught by returned Peace Corps Volunteers.

During his near-decade of service at TC, Tamulonis labored to build an exemplary teacher education and internship program for Peace Corps Fellows. He forged relationships with key staff at the New York City Board of Education to place Fellows in some of the most challenging schools in New York City, where they could "bring the world back home." Tamulonis encouraged his Fellows to integrate Coverdell World Wise Schools Peace Corps materials into their lessons to bring cross-cultural perspectives to their students. More than a third of the 450 Teachers College Fellows graduates have remained in New York City public schools as teachers, principals, and administrators, where they continue to fulfill the third goal of the Peace Corps.

One of Tamulonis' notable legacies is the financial benefits he helped secure for the Teachers College Fellows program. He

was instrumental in getting a \$900,000 endowment for the program at Columbia, established by Roslyn and Elliot Jaffe of Dress Barn, and a \$500,000 gift from Elliot Jaffe, which institutionalized the Fellows/USA program at Teachers College.

Every year, Tamulonis hosted sessions for Fellows and other Teachers College RPCVs to report on their experiences in U.S. classrooms during Peace Corps Day and Peace Corps Week. He has also been involved with National Peace Corps Association activities and several regional RPCV groups.

In 2003, Tamulonis returned to the classroom. He left Columbia to help found the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning. As a first-grade teacher, he provides one-on-one time for each of his primarily minority students. He incorporates information about his Peace Corps experience into his lesson plans as a way of teaching cultural awareness and acceptance.



Former Fellows/USA Coordinator at Teachers College, Columbia University Daniel Tamulonis (l) forged relationships with key staff at the New York City Board of Education like Victoria Hom, (r) who is an alumna of the Fellows/USA program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, the Shriver Peaceworker Program.

Crisis Corps Seeks Fellows/USA Alumni for HIV/AIDS Assignments



For more information and current openings:

Visit

peacecorps.gov/rpcv/crisiscorps

or call

800.424.8580, ext 2250