

update...

ACTION/DOE AGREEMENT EXPANDS ENERGY PROGRAM

(See pg. 2)



Original Projects Continue, New Communities Funded

On October 31, ACTION and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) signed an interagency agreement that allocated nearly \$2 million in DOE funds to expand ACTION's Community Energy Project (CEP) and launch additional demonstration community conservation programs.

The Community Energy Project, created under the Office of Voluntary Citizen Participation (OVCP) last February through an initial agreement between the two agencies, demonstrated how diverse cities, towns and counties across the United States mobilized their own financial, technical and human resources to tackle the energy crisis on their own through low-cost/no-cost conservation efforts. DOE allotted \$300,000 to CEP to carry this out.

During the last nine months, CEP successfully initiated broad-based, energy-saving campaigns in 20 communities ranging in population size from 4,600 to 860,000 and in geographic locations from Maine to New Mexico. CEP is assisting these communities with technical advice and mini-grants of up to \$5,000, and the Energy Department is making existing weatherization funds for low-cost materials available to low-income participants of the conservation programs. With this minimal government assistance, the local communities design and carry out projects on their own.

"We are certainly pleased with the results of our first agreement with ACTION," says Melvin H. Chiogioji, DOE's deputy assistant secretary for State and Local Assistance Programs. "While the 20 communities have not all completed their conservation drives, they have already demonstrated how groups of citizens anywhere can pitch in together and generate enthusiastic support from every corner of their communities to achieve significant energy savings."

The new DOE/ACTION agreement provides the Community Energy Project with \$1,999,100 to assist 35 additional cities and towns across the country with mini-grants and technical support in community-wide conservation drives involving basic low-cost/no-cost weatherization measures. CEP also will continue helping the original communities which are still conducting their campaigns.

The second part of the agreement will enable nine communities to demonstrate how more advanced conservation techniques can be developed through voluntary self-help efforts. Six of these cities and towns will be selected during FY 1981

from on-going CEP-supported projects. They will augment do-it-yourself energy-saving steps such as caulking and weather-stripping windows and doors with more complex efforts to cut down fuel consumption in mobile home communities, parks and transportation, set up conservation curricula in the schools and tap abundant energy resources in the sun, wind and water.

CEP will initiate three broad-based demonstration projects in Arkansas, Colorado and Michigan to tackle diverse conservation problems, particularly among low-income families through technical skill training and voluntary citizen action. A minimum of 25 stipended volunteers from each demonstration project will receive seven weeks of skill



training by the National Center for Appropriate Technology in Butte, Mont. After training, they will return home and train other citizens in such skills as natural resource development, mobile home conservation and solar technology - whatever can best meet the conservation needs of the community involved.

The Catholic Social Services will sponsor the demonstration project in the cities of Highland Park and Hamtramck, Mich., both of which are in the city limits of Detroit. They are densely populated urban areas, and each city has a high proportion of low and fixed-income residents who rent their homes.

The seven principal municipalities in Adams County, adjacent to Denver, Colo., will participate in a demonstration effort sponsored by the county commissioners. About 60 percent of the mobile homes in Colorado are located in Adams County, which also has a large low-income and elderly population.

The third project will be conducted in a series of different size communities in rural and semi-urban areas in the state of Arkansas. Energy Futures, Inc., a non-profit conservation agency, will sponsor the demonstration which will apply conservation techniques which are appropriate for the individual communities.

The whole idea of citizens banding together and waging their own war on the high cost of fuel began last fall in Fitchburg, Mass. With the help of ACTION, the Massachusetts mill town launched the first all-out, citywide volunteer effort in the country to come to grips with the energy crisis. (See ACTION Update, Oct. 31, 1979, Dec. 20, 1979, April 9, 1980, May 21, 1980, Aug. 13, 1980.)

An intensive nine-week campaign conducted last fall by the Fitchburg Action to Conserve Energy (FACE) program brought about significant decreases in energy consumption for the people in that city. An estimated 3,000 of Fitchburg's 14,000 households took low-cost/no-cost conservation steps during the drive, resulting in a fuel use reduction of about 14 percent for each participating household.

Consequently, under the first DOE/ACTION agreement last February, 20 additional communities started to follow in the footsteps of Fitchburg. "Local citizens - rich and poor, young and old - all who are affected by the high cost of fuel are working together to 'BUTTON UP NORTHAMPTON,' 'WRAP UP MILWAUKEE,' 'CON*SERVE DALLAS' and 'GET WISE - WEATHERIZE,'" says CEP Director Francis Luzzatto. "Neighborhood centers are sprouting up in these communities teaching residents to tighten up their homes and reduce energy waste. Volunteer crews are pitching in to seal up cracks in houses belonging to the elderly and handicapped. Clearly, people are willing to help themselves when they work together on an energy conservation campaign."

These self-help energy-saving drives are all under way. Some have already achieved their initial goals. Most are expected to do so by the end of this year. That, however, will not be the end of the 20 community campaigns.

"The energy crisis is not going to vanish and these cities and towns are willing to go to larger conservation efforts," adds Luzzatto. "Through their intensive one-two- and three-month drives, they are developing powerful coalitions of citizens who are determined to find other ways to conserve fuel and create alternative energy sources until the crisis is whipped."



Sykes Swears-In Peace Corps Overseas Staff



Washington, D.C.--Nov. 4, 1980. In a ceremony at Peace Corps headquarters, Deputy Director William Sykes swore-in ten new PC overseas staff members. From left to right (front row): Martha Milk, Associate PC Country Director for Health, Honduras; Martha Desrossiers, Associate PC Country Director for Health, Ecuador; Kate Rastery, Program Training Officer, Paraguay; Jim Dawson, PC Country Director, Fiji; and Dick Mullaney, Associate PC Country Director, Botswana. (Back row): Ken Barber, Associate PC Country Director, Senegal and Tom Osborn, Associate PC Country Director, Sierra Leone. (Not shown in photo: Mike Frame, Associate PC Country Director for Agriculture, Nepal; Michael Hersh, Program Training Officer, Ecuador; and Bill Prewitt, PC Country Director-designate, Zaire.)



Mini-Grant Aids Refugee Resettlement in New York's Chinatown

A \$5,000 mini-grant was recently awarded to the Chinese Development Council for Indo-Chinese refugee resettlement assistance in New York City's Chinatown. The mini-grant is one of a number of similar grants given by ACTION and made possible by a special \$50,000 allocation to ACTION from the Department of Health and Human Service (HHS).

ACTION's joint effort with HHS is an attempt to find solutions to the problems of refugee resettlement in the United States. Throughout FY 80, in addition to the special allocation, HHS provided \$640,000 toward this mutual goal.

ACTION Deputy Director Mary King presented the grant to the Chinese Development Council,

which will use the money for audio-visual equipment to teach English. The council is representative of the organizations selected to receive the grants.

The population of the New York City Indo-Chinese community has grown dramatically with the addition of newly arrived refugees primarily from Vietnam and Cambodia. Because of the economic and cultural barriers facing the refugees, learning English is an essential first step for integration into American life. In addition, the magnitude of the refugee influx has created severe burdens on local public and private institutions attempting to provide needed services. Consequently, ACTION and HHS are working together to help local organizations provide the necessary assistance to refugees settling in their communities.

ACTION to Work with Cuban/Haitian Boat People

Since early last year, some 120,000 Cubans and 40,000 Haitian "boat people", have settled in this country. Arriving in thousands of small sea crafts, they were fleeing political repression and seeking better economic opportunities. Of that group, about half the Cubans and nearly all the Haitians have settled in Florida, which is closest to "home."

It is generally a poor and racially mixed group, which receives minimal help from outside sources. Only half are employed – and the majority of those who are employed, work in menial jobs.

ACTION, in an effort to respond to the needs of these "entrants" as they are called, entered into an agreement with the Department of State Bureau of Refugee Programs last September. It provides for the transfer of half a million dollars in State Department funds to ACTION to administer a Cuban/Haitian resettlement program in Florida.

"This is a targeted, collaborative effort of various ACTION offices and the private voluntary sector on behalf of these new immigrants," says Fred Gloss, special assistant to the deputy director of ACTION. "And the concept has the potential for future use in other states."

Under the program, the Florida State Office of Voluntary Citizen Participation (S/OVCP) is mobilizing the volunteer efforts, and will aid the Florida chapter of the Independent Foundation (IF) – an organization of former VISTA and PC volunteers – to recruit 200 former volunteers, new VISTA volunteers and 1,200 additional citizens throughout the state to assist the "immigrants."

According to Dic Berberian of ACTION's Office of Voluntary Citizen Participation, the Support Services Assistance component of S/OVCP will provide training and technical assistance to the volunteers and will enable IF to establish a computerized "skills bank" to identify RPCV and community volunteers.

VISTA will contribute 30 volunteers toward this effort. Some volunteers will work out of one of several Voluntary Action Centers (VACs) throughout the state in cities with a high concentration of Cubans or Haitians, according to Henry Jibaja, ACTION's Florida state program director and Willie Bellotte, Florida state program officer, who are coordinating the program. Those cities include Orlando, St. Peterburg, Ocala, Pensacola, Miami, and possibly Gainesville and Tampa.

A VISTA in each VAC will oversee volunteer efforts, identify and mobilize community resources and needs, assign local volunteers and RPCVs to public and private agencies that serve Cuban and Haitian entrants, and organize training for local volunteer participants.

"VISTAs not serving in a monitoring capacity will be involved in several other activities," Bellotte says. "For example they will work in mutual assistance agencies – funded by VISTA and OVCP mini-grants – in which various immigrant and refugee groups help each other." According to Bellotte, the VISTAs will also help establish free clinics and self-help agencies in some selected cities.

"The VISTAs plan to develop and implement a strategy for acquainting local refugee agencies and groups to available volunteer resources," he continues. "Along with the RPCVs and local volunteers, they will try to create a deeper understanding among the general population of the needs of all immigrant and refugee groups in Florida."

"VISTA volunteers working directly with the entrants will be either French or Spanish speaking," Jibaja says. "And we hope to recruit RPCVs who served in French-speaking countries and have a working knowledge of the language. All French-speaking volunteers will be trained in the Haitian Creole dialect."

According to Jibaja, there is an already-existing VISTA project in Miami, working with Haitian immigrants and staffed mostly by Haitian volunteers. The inter-agency agreement will fund additional volunteers for that project.

State Department funds will also help initiate an RSVP project in Miami and other parts of Dade County to serve Haitians and Cubans. "We anticipate that many of the RSVP volunteers will be Hispanics themselves," Jibaja says.

"The volunteer groups represent an excellent source of skilled experience and manpower to deal with the needs of the newly arrived immigrants," Gloss concludes. "We expect the project to demonstrate that the services of all these groups can be successfully integrated into an effective program... the ultimate result of this program will be the increasing capacity of all immigrants groups in Florida to assume responsibility for their own communities."

Consumer Co-op Bank: A Progress Report

Targeting Loans to Low-Income Groups

In Grand Rapids, Mich., a small housing co-operative which serves low-income people, is using a \$40,000 loan to rehabilitate several of its dwellings. In Fresno, Calif., a day care center co-operative with the help of a \$14,000 loan, is refinancing the building in which it is located. And a \$67,000 loan to a farm-workers co-op in Salinas, Calif., will enable members to purchase an additional 64 acres of land.

These cooperatives are only three of some 60 recipients of National Consumer Cooperative Bank (NCCB) loans. The bank was established in August 1978, for the purpose of making loans at prevailing interest rates, to cooperatives unable to obtain credit from traditional lending institutions and to provide technical and financial assistance to low-income cooperatives with special needs.

ACTION was on an interagency task force that helped set up operating structures and draft policy related to low-income participation. Sam Brown currently serves on the bank's board of directors.

Since opening for business in March 1980, the bank has made some \$22 million in loans—ranging from \$15,000 to over \$1,000,000—to a variety of cooperatives involved in one of a number of fields—housing, food, agriculture, health, legal services and others. Ten of those cooperatives received a loan from the bank's Self-Help Fund which provides financial and technical aid to new co-ops or to co-ops with special needs at less than prevailing interest-rates.

"Congress mandated us to use 'best efforts' to make sure that at least 35 percent of our loans go to co-ops run by, or for low-income citizens," says NCCB President Carol Greenwald. "So far, about 18 percent of our loans have been made to low-income citizens. If some pending loan commitments go through, we'll soon exceed the 35 percent target."

One such co-op is the Capital City (food store) cooperative in St. Paul, Minn., which recently received \$71,000 from the bank's Self-Help Fund. It was organized in January 1979, by low-income senior citizens who felt the need for a neighborhood co-op offering competitive prices. Members, nearly all senior citizens, give four to 24 hours a week of volunteer service to the store and receive a ten percent discount on food purchases.

The loan will help purchase inventory equipment and working capital. "The most immediate result will be a new and larger store about a block closer to most of the members," says John Leavitt, store manager and its only paid employee.

Regional bank offices are now open in Minneapolis, Seattle, Boston, Charleston, S.C.; Fort Worth, Texas, and Alameda, Calif. Additional offices are scheduled to open soon in Detroit and New York.



Low-income food co-ops are among loan recipients.

Office of Compliance, Positive Adjunct to Management

"Basically, this office is an adjunct to management," said Raul Rodriguez, director of the Office of Compliance. "We're a kind of 'quality control' for all facets of the programs and operations of ACTION and Peace Corps.

"Our goal," he continued, "is to impact positively on the management and administration of the agency." Specifically, this is accomplished through two divisions—Inspector General and Equal Opportunity.

During a recent interview, Rodriguez explained that the Inspector General's division is made up of two components—audits and investigations. "These offices identify problems and concerns throughout ACTION/PC, thus providing an opportunity to correct them. However, despite a popular misconception, they don't do police work."

Every federal agency is required by law to conduct regular audits. At ACTION and Peace Corps, that office is headed by Dean Pratt. "We ensure that the agency, the programs and the personnel do things according to the rules and regulations—and that includes contractors and grantees," said Pratt. "Our function is not operational, but rather a basis to advise management."

For instance, in FY 80, a total of 41 audits were completed and ranged from Peace Corps posts to contracts. "Eighteen PC offices were audited," said Pratt, "to determine the integrity of fiscal and management operations. One of those also included a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of the program in a particular country. Based on the information we got," he explained, "PC may modify, change or stay with the program they now have."

The office of Investigations, under the direction of Mike Wolfson, works primarily in two ways. One, an investigation which is reactive to a complaint, to something discovered during a routine audit, to something in the media, etc. Or, two, proactive, where the office initiates an investiga-

tion. "These investigations," said Wolfson, "are designed to determine violations of ACTION/PC regulations, criminal or civil fraud statutes, and irregularities in the compliance and integrity of programs and operations." Last fiscal year, 28 investigations were conducted, ranging from unauthorized use of government telephones or vehicles, the recordkeeping of grantees, to equal opportunity complaints.

The Equal Opportunity Division (EO), headed by Bart Crivella, is responsible for seeing that the agency takes affirmative action to establish and maintain an equal employment program. "We also have," said Crivella, "a system for processing discrimination complaints within 180 days."

The division also trains EO counselors and managers in equal opportunity policies and goals, supports the agency's upward mobility program and carries out special emphasis programs (Last year it sponsored a Federal Women's Awareness Month as well as activities around Hispanic Heritage Week.)

In terms of grantees and contractors, the division works closely with program offices to ensure that minority (8A) contractors receive equitable consideration during the awards process. (Over the last three years, the number of these contracts has increased 80 percent.) Within the last few months, EO developed and issued an agency policy on sexual harassment and set up a system for handling those complaints.

Rodriguez emphasized that the functions of the Office of Compliance are a high priority with ACTION Director Sam Brown and PC Director Richard Celeste. "They have both worked closely with us to see that we are given every opportunity to do our job completely and thoroughly. I feel that what we do is beneficial to our personnel, our programs and our goals. We're here to assist and work with the agency."

Staff Spotlight: Pat Pickering

For many people, their first contact with ACTION and Peace Corps is often Pat Pickering.

Pickering has been running the Office of Public Response (better known as the WATS lines) for eight years, and she and her staff of five returned Peace Corps or VISTA volunteers, handle upwards of 200 calls a day. "From legitimate, sincere inquiries to some really off the wall ones," she laughs. "What you need most to work here is sense of humor, as well as patience and sensitivity."

Obviously, Pickering herself has those qualities, and as the office grew, they were called upon more and more. "When we opened the WATS lines, we received about 200 calls a week—now that's our average daily input, but once it reached 432!" She explains, however, that it was the day after New Years.

"I believe we have a rather unique operation here," Pickering says. "I'm not sure there is another agency where you can simply call in and ask 'What do you do?' I know other places have special purpose WATS lines, but we answer all types of questions, or refer callers to the appropriate office."

Some callers, of course, are next to impossible to refer. "One of the strangest we've gotten" chuckles Pickering, "is from the gentleman who called to tell us that the Chinese, dressed up as Mexicans were going to invade the U.S.!" On a serious note, Pickering explains that both she and her staff feel a satisfaction in talking with callers "who are sincere, interested and excited about the opportunities our programs offer."

At a personal level, Pat Pickering takes voluntarism to heart. "I try to live what I preach," she says and explains that she volunteers more than ten hours a week to various committees of her church. She also gives many hours a year to ACTION's Federal Women's Advisory Committee, and has been a volunteer at the Arena Stage Theater for seven years. "We're involved in fund-raising, staffing information booths, ushering, and every year I help with the Arena's flea market and auction."

One would imagine there is not much time left for other things, but that's not the case with Pickering... Several years ago she decided to return to college at night, and in 1979 received a bachelor's degree in sociology from George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. She is currently doing graduate work in urban planning.



By the way, did we forget to mention that Pickering is also the single parent of two daughters? "Leigh is 19, and a junior at St. Andrews College in Laurinburg, N.C.," she says proudly, "and Amy is 16, and a junior in The Alternative High School" near their Arlington, Va. home.

Something I believe, and something I've tried to teach my girls, is that everybody should be doing something for others that does not involve making bucks," says Pickering. "Your salaried job usually only makes use of parts of you—and your drive, talents and sensibilities—volunteer work enlarges and gives depth to the way you experience the world."

Pickering feels similarly about ACTION and Peace Corps. "When I came here I felt, and still do, that the purpose and aims of the programs were consistent with what I believe... These programs affect the quality of life and I like being a part of that."

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PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER BOSTON AREA OFFICE

Effective November 1, 1980, Crystal Gandrud is the new public information officer in the Boston Area Recruitment Office. She came from Detroit where she held that same position since joining ACTION in June 1978.

A PCV in Zaire in 1975-77, Gandrud lived and worked in Japan for three years before that. While in Japan she taught English to Japanese students, designed teaching materials and did editing and speechwriting for a law firm in that country. She worked on the staff of the Smithsonian Magazine in Washington, D.C., 1970-71, and earlier did freelance photography and film editing and designing for various publishing firms.

For several years after graduating from college in 1965, Gandrud made films for the National Science Foundation in Minneapolis. She was among a group of recipients of several awards at the 1968 Cannes Film Festival for the film, "Single Cell Animation."

Gandrud has a BA in English and journalism from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and has also studied French and Japanese at the Alliance Francaise in Paris and the Tokyo School of Languages respectively.

SCP PROGRAM SPECIALIST

Preston Murray is a new program specialist in the Senior Companion Program (SCP). He comes to this position with eight years of experience with older citizens, beginning as a project supervisor for the Foster Grandparents Program (FGP) in Wayne County, Mich. from 1972-74, and then as project director for the FGP/SCP program in Oakland County, Mich. from 1974 until now.

He served in an advisory capacity to the governor of Michigan on alcohol and drug abuse among the aged, and has worked with the mentally retarded at the Michigan Department of Mental Health. Murray received a BA in psychology in 1972 from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He has done graduate work in gerontology at the University of Michigan and at Wayne State University in Detroit.

PROGRAM COORDINATOR FOR PC ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Effective October 20, Peola Spurlock is the new program coordinator to the Peace Corps associate director for development education. She will be involved in outreach activities involving returned volunteers and in implementing programs which sensitize people to the Third World.

Spurlock has extensive experience in journalism, counseling and public relations. Among her works are "The Art and Science of Supervision," "Group Dynamics; An Approach to Problem Solving" and "A Prescription for Changing Your Life," an assertiveness training document for women. Spurlock also has written articles for New Directions Magazine, which is published by Howard University in Washington, D.C. In addition, she serves on the board of directors of Capitol Hill Homemakers and Health Services, which operates in the Third World and in the U.S.

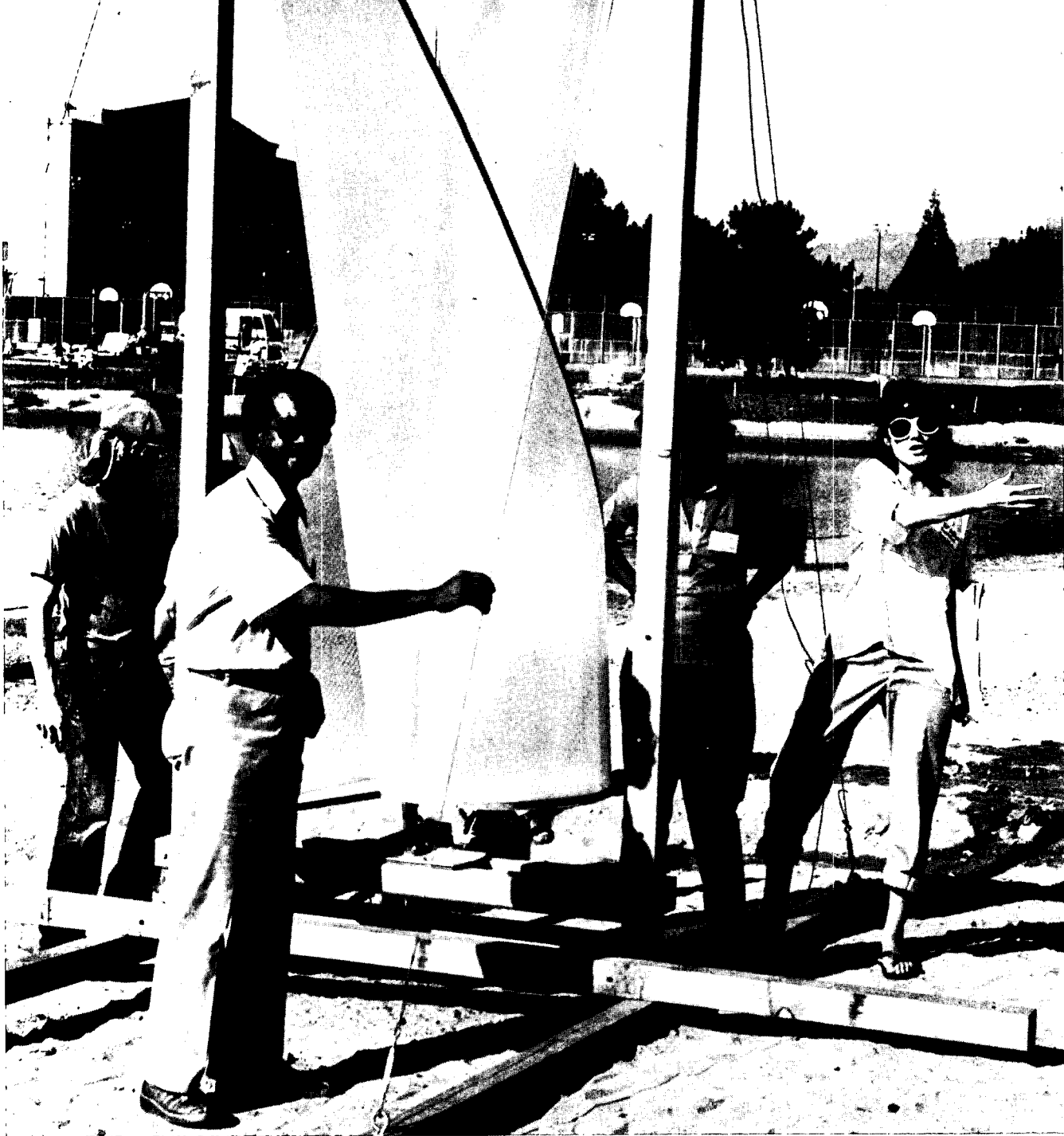
A recipient of a BS in psychology and an MA in education from Howard, Spurlock worked at the University from 1969-78, beginning as an administrative secretary, and later as an information officer and alumni relations officer. Just before joining Peace Corps, she was president for PJ Consultants, which provides technical assistance to local corporations and community groups. She is currently studying for a Ph.D in community psychology at the University of Maryland in College Park.

COPE

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Employees and family members of employees wishing assistance in resolving personal, family, social, legal, financial, drug and alcohol abuse problems may obtain confidential help by calling :

**COPE Counseling Center
484-7400**



Appropriate Technology Fair

Willie Hall (foreground) ACTION's area coordinator in northern California, inspects a windmill, one of the appropriate technology exhibits at the "Survival in the Eighties" (SITE) Appropriate Technology Fair held at Laney College in Oakland, Calif. October 3-5. A fair visitor looks on at left, along with Maria Jackson and Pat Le Donna (right) who helped coordinate the Fair.

The SITE Fair was held to provide and exchange information on how low-to-moderate income people can produce and conserve energy, develop better means of producing and distributing food, and achieve better health and nutrition. It was jointly sponsored by ACTION, Laney and Merrit Community Colleges in Oakland, Farallones Institute in Berkeley, and a number of public officials in California

The Northern California Office participated in organizing the fair with the help of a \$5,000 mini-grant from ACTION's Office of Voluntary Citizen Participation. Some 300 elementary and high school students, 25 senior citizens and other individuals volunteered in setting up the fair and staffing the exhibits.

PAT PICKERING (from page 9)

Nearing the end of the interview, this reporter had a sort of "what's wrong-with-this-picture" type of feeling. What's wrong is that Pickering is leaving ACTION and going to work with the Department of Energy. But how can that be... after all she said about...giving, quality of life, etc.

"It's really not inconsistent at all," she says. "At Energy I'll be working as an energy conservation specialist. There is truly a resource crisis in this area that has to be acknowledged. What I'll be doing will hopefully contribute to improve the quality of life. So, it does fit in.

"On a daily basis, the very best part of working here has been the people, and I will miss them. But professionally, I think it's time to move on." she says. "And, of course, I'll still have all my other involvements and my volunteer work. Remember, I said that one's paid job is just a part of being involved."

OPEN SEASON FOR HEALTH PLANS

November 10 - December 5, 1980

ATTENTION ACTION STAFFERS! Don't put this off any longer... The deadline for enrolling, changing or modifying your health benefits plan is almost here. December 5, 1980 is the closing date, and this opportunity comes only once a year. In 1981, 16 new plans are being offered, for a total of 121 individual plans. Brochures, summary sheets and comparison charts are available for review, both at headquarters and in each Regional Office and Service Center. For more information or materials, contact Gerrie Cappello of the Labor Employees Relations Branch on FTS 254-8050.



Holiday Stress Workshop, December 10

The holidays are coming...For many this is a time for good cheer. For many others, it is a time of depression or loneliness. It's a busy time, a time of pressure and above all, a time of expectations—very often unrealistic expectations. Coping with stress during this season can be difficult or impossible. In an effort to help people deal realistically with what can be a very trying period, the Office of Labor Employee Relations will be holding a *Holiday Stress Workshop*. The date is Wednesday, December 10, and the time and place will be announced shortly. All ACTION and Peace Corps headquarters employees are urged to attend. Even if the holidays are good times for you, you may learn something about helping others who may be alone or seem depressed.



ACTION UPDATE

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