

## update...



## THE WHITE HOUSE

March 1, 1981

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
PEACE CORPS

For the last twenty years, more than eighty-thousand American volunteers have fought, and often conquered, illiteracy, hunger, poverty and illness in more than ninety countries. Their efforts, dedicated to world peace through international goodwill, have done much to replace fear and mistrust with mutual understanding.

These Americans are past and present Peace Corps volunteers. On this anniversary, and on behalf of all their countrymen, I commend them today for their personal contributions to international friendship and peace.

*Ronald Reagan*

President Praises  
Peace Corps Volunteers



## Ruppe Nominated as Peace Corps Director



Loret Miller Ruppe, 44, of Houghton, Mich. and Potomac, Md., has been nominated by President Ronald Reagan to be director of the Peace Corps. "I have always had a great interest in the Peace Corps," Ruppe said, "and I'm very thrilled and excited about the nomination."

On February 18, an informal reception was held at Peace Corps headquarters to welcome Ruppe. The late afternoon event gave Ruppe and Peace Corps and ACTION employees a chance to meet and talk with each other. Sandy McKenzie, director of the Office of Volunteer Placement, and John Guerre, PC management analyst, presented her with a plant on behalf of the staff.

Obviously touched by the warmth of her welcome, Ruppe thanked the guests and said she looked forward to working with them. She also stated her belief in the Peace Corps and its continuing relevance. "At a time when we're seeking a strong peace, I think this program can be a very important part of that," she said.

Ruppe has traveled extensively through North and East Africa, spending time in Kenya, Morocco, Egypt and the Spanish Sahara. During these travels, Ruppe saw the potential for partnerships with Third World countries to meet human needs. Her attendance at the 1978 Conference on Africa in Ditchley Park, England, furthered her interest and concern with problems in the developing world.

Ruppe headed up George Bush's Michigan presidential campaign last year, and after Ronald Reagan selected Bush as his running mate, she co-chaired the Reagan/Bush State Committee and was instrumental in uniting Michigan Republicans behind the ticket.

Born in Milwaukee, Wisc., Ruppe attended Marymount College in Tarrytown, N.Y. and Marquette University in Milwaukee, with a concentration in history and education.

Finishing her studies in 1957, she married Philip Ruppe, and the couple settled in Houghton, Mich., where Ruppe began her long career as a volunteer organizer and civic leader. She served as chairperson of the Houghton United Fund Campaign, as president of the St. Joseph's Hospital Guild, and as an active member of the Houghton County Republican Committee. In 1966, she assisted her husband, Philip, in his successful campaign for election to the 90th United States Congress, where he represented Michigan's 11th district for six terms.

As a congressional wife in Washington, Ruppe served as president of the International Neighbors Club IV, an organization which assisted wives of government officials, members of Congress and foreign diplomats.

Ruppe and her husband, who retired from Congress in 1979, have five daughters and now live in Potomac, Md.

# VISTA/Private Sector Work in Neighborhood Development

Federal support for subsidized housing, economic development and community improvement projects is limited, and becoming more so. Experts are of the opinion that public funds must be linked-up with private monies to assist neighborhoods and communities in physical and economic decline.

Federal involvement in neighborhood revitalization programs increasingly includes a three-way partnership of community-based organizations, the private sector (such as private financial institutions and corporate investment firms) and the government.

VISTA volunteers have been a part of this process for several years in a number of urban neighborhoods. One example is their work through the Chicago-based National Training and Information Center (NTIC). The VISTA role was brought out at a recent-Feb. 9-11-New York City conference co-sponsored by NTIC,—a VISTA regional grantee,—and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The conference, entitled "Neighborhood Reinvestment and the Private Sector," opened with remarks from William O. Bailey, president of the Aetna Life and Casualty Company. Aetna has been

involved for over a year in an urban investment program along with six neighborhood groups receiving technical support from NTIC. Four of these groups have used VISTA volunteers directly in the program.

For example, in Philadelphia's Lower Kensington community, volunteers Carol Boylan and Andrea Trexler assisted the neighborhood organization in researching the availability of eligible vacant structures to be acquired for rehabilitation. Aetna is committed to provide interim financing at lower-than-market-interest on these properties until they can be purchased by a newly created local development corporation. The community has established "blockwatch" programs to provide site security, while Aetna is providing liability insurance. VISTAs act as liaisons between the community and the Aetna staff insurance agent hired for Lower Kensington, and assist the community in documenting its insurance needs. Overall, Aetna has committed insurance coverage to the development site in all six neighborhoods.

Edward H. Budd, president of The Travelers Insurance Corporation, announced the formation of the "Urban Focus Program," a joint national effort between Travelers and NTIC.

(cont. pg. 6)



Edward Budd





# Training and Counseling, Keys to Career Development

One of the principal recommendations made by the agency-wide Task Force on Equal Opportunity and Career Development in its report submitted last August, was that a position of career counselor be established and filled in the Personnel Management Division of ACTION, Office of Employee Development and Training. (PMD/EDT)

Erica Smith, who has a master's degree in career counseling, fills the new position, and is available to provide individual counseling and guidance to all interested employees.

Vertis Stovall, Jr. was selected to fill a second personnel development and training position in PMD/EDT, that of career development specialist. He is primarily responsible for creating programs for organizational systems.

What that means is that Stovall puts together career programs that affect an entire occupational field. For example, he is now working on a plan for the state program officer series, where the grade span is GS-5-12, and developing bridge positions so that people in the lower grades can cross over. Employees must qualify to enter into the program, and then individual training plans and growth assignments are produced, targeted toward career advancement.

"The program officer design is the first of its kind in this agency," says Stovall. "It will serve as the prototype for other ones—we're looking at doing something similar in accounting or computers."

Stovall is also responsible for designing Senior Executive Service and management level development programs.

Smith, on the other hand, works mainly with individuals. "Some of the people who come to see

me are referred by co-workers or supervisors, but the majority just walk in," she explains. "Employees at all different levels come in to talk. I help them focus on their career goals based on skills, experience, etc. I can also tell them about writing a 171, or how to conduct a job search, or what training they need. Most of all I try to be factual and realistic. Obviously, if you've spent ten years in computers, it's going to be pretty hard to become a public information specialist."

If an employee enrolls in an individually mapped-out career development program and completes it, the Personnel Management Division guarantees that that person will have the qualifications to apply for a certain job. It does not, however, promise selection. "We recommend training, in-house and out, and map out a career strategy for the employee," says Glenn Blackburn, chief of the Training Branch. "We want to give everybody a chance to progress, but it's really up to the individual. And I believe if you work hard and have ambition, you can go up."

Blackburn points out another crucial factor in career development—the supervisor. "Much of the responsibility belongs to supervisors," he says. "But, since many of these concepts are new at ACTION, we will first have to advise supervisors of the fact that they play an important role in the advancement of their employees. We will assist them in developing training plans for their staff, and encourage them to keep open the lines of communications with employees as to career goals."

Career development is available to all employees of ACTION, regardless of grade or occupation, through the resources of PMD/EDT and Smith and Stovall. They can be reached at FTS 254-3102.



# PC Latin America Director Urges Increased Hispanic Recruitment

*The following article by Ed Dela Rosa, Peace Corps regional director for Latin America, was reprinted, courtesy of Hispanic Link news service.*

In the two decades that dedicated Peace Corps volunteers have served Latin American people, the involvement of Hispanic-Americans has been minimal -- in some areas, non-existent.

For the most part, the Peace Corps has presented a white face to its host countries. Six percent of the nearly 5,700 volunteers now in the field are minorities. Fewer than two percent of these are Hispanics.

Such exclusion hurts the Peace Corps and the United States by promoting an erroneous view of America among people of other countries. We fail to show the diversity of American society -- its many races and peoples.

New approaches to recruiting volunteers are required. Hispanic-Americans need to be made aware that Peace Corps service is possible, and that it is very beneficial to the countries served, to the Hispanic community in America and to the individual volunteers.

Traditionally, the Hispanic population has been largely isolated from the efforts of Peace Corps recruiters. Ninety-five percent of all volunteers have been recruited from colleges and universities, but only five percent of all college graduates are minorities. Naturally, our recruiters are frequently chosen from the articulate, committed ranks of returned volunteers, few of whom are minorities.

We need to look for volunteers in the right places, plugging into the activities of Hispanic church, community and business leaders, seeking potential volunteers in farming communities, in community centers, and in community colleges and vocational schools with high Hispanic enrollments. We need to reach retired Hispanic men and women -- as we are trying to reach all older Americans -- who are thinking about what to do with the rest of their lives.

Such changes will mean that when the Peace Corps is asked a question about Hispanics, a response will be given by a Hispanic person, rather than by a well-intentioned person who may provide an answer that is way off the mark.

Most Peace Corps workers agree that it takes about a year of a volunteer's two-year investment before he or she can adjust to cultural differences



and develop language skills adequate to make real progress in a host country.

Hispanic volunteers have a decided advantage in Spanish-speaking countries where cultural similarities in food, music and traditions already exist between themselves and the host people. They have no need for the usual six-to-eight week language training program. In Latin America, they find it easier to get a running start.

A crucial part of my agenda as Latin America director is to see a significant increase in the number both of Hispanic Peace Corps volunteers and of Peace Corps staff. We must also increase the number of Peace Corps programming and training contracts granted to Hispanic firms. We're at work now trying to make good the Peace Corps' sincere goal to increase Hispanic participation.

*(cont. pg 6)*

### VISTA/PRIVATE SECTOR *(from pg. 3)*

He discussed the partnership approach that will be used between the corporation and community groups in various phases of neighborhood development where "a common ground of concern" has been established which affects both insurance and investment activities in lower-income urban neighborhoods. "Revitalized neighborhoods represent good markets with considerable potential for our insurance business and real estate investments," Budd said. "We're primarily interested in projects that have a long-term stability for an urban neighborhood; projects that create a cooperative spirit among neighborhoods, the public and the private sectors." He pointed out that Travelers' support of urban neighborhoods included such economic initiatives as placing deposits in local credit unions and minority-managed banks, and funding anti-arson and community-safety programs.

The Travelers program will extend into ten neighborhoods in the first year. Local leaders from these communities participated in the conference and met with Budd.

VISTAs also are playing a part in the initial phases of these projects: In the Buckeye-Woodland area of Cleveland, volunteer Sandra Kluk documented the insurance needs and helped organize

the initial meeting with Travelers. She recently began working with the Buckeye-Woodland Community Congress.

In the Buffalo (N.Y.) neighborhood of Waterfront-Lakeview, volunteer Gilbert Rodriguez worked with neighborhood leaders and assessed residential and commercial insurance needs which eventually—with NTIC assistance—brought Travelers into the neighborhood to begin negotiations and planning.

Phil Sampson, staff economist to the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, and a conference speaker representing Senator Jake Garn (chairman of the committee), acknowledged that the NTIC national effort and the local efforts using VISTAs, "are meeting an important need and are at the forefront in developing the capacity of neighborhood groups to negotiate with lending institutions and generate interest in the private sector for neighborhood reinvestment."

Following Budd's remarks, NTIC Director Gale Cincotta welcomed Travelers to "the growing partnership between American corporations and neighborhood organizations..." since, "We all know that the pool of government funds alone will not be sufficient to revitalize our cities."

### HISPANIC RECRUITMENT *(from pg. 5)*

Peace Corps service enhances job opportunities and yields considerable educational benefits. I know employers who would sooner hire a returning Peace Corps volunteer than a Ph.D in foreign relations.

My long experience working with Latin American countries has taught me that the problems of the poor in those nations are essentially the same as the problems of America's poor. After two years' volunteer experience overseas, an individual is far better equipped to return to work in U.S. communities. Although charity, indeed, may begin at home, the know-how needed to get a job done

need not wholly be acquired there.

We Hispanics must realize that our community in — say, Robstown, Texas — extends well beyond the borders of the town. We need to be moving in larger circles, employing our skills and energy at county, state, national, and international levels, for the life of our local communities exists in all these areas.

Only by spreading our involvement over the full range of human activity will we gain full participation in decision-making processes. Only then will we make our views fully heard.



## National Awards Given to VISTA PC Television Spots

A New York advertising agency was recently honored for its work on behalf of ACTION/Peace Corps. At an awards luncheon, sponsored by the American Advertising Federation, Ted Bates and Co. Inc. received a Citation of Excellence in public awareness/education for TV campaign spots it had made on behalf of VISTA and Peace Corps. The luncheon was held on Feb. 23, in New York City to honor groups which had made outstanding accomplishments in 1980 in national public service advertising.

Bates was among 45 agencies, associations or radio stations nationwide, recognized for TV, radio or news media work in one of three categories – fund raising, public awareness/education, and volunteer recruitment. Some 300 people attended the



luncheon, where 64 citations and awards were presented.

The award winning Peace Corps spots, which run from 10 to 60 seconds, are part of an ongoing national recruitment and general awareness effort that began last Spring. The spots were filmed in the 2,000

year-old rice paddies of the Philippines where Peace Corps volunteers are teaching people to harvest fish in order to increase the protein in their diet.

The VISTA 15th Anniversary spots were designed to raise the general awareness of the program's activities in its 15 years of existence. The announcements ran throughout 1980, the year of the anniversary, and featured such sports and entertainment personalities as Jack Lemmon, Phil Silvers, Angela Lansbury, Joe Frazier and Henry Fonda.

## PCV and Staff Directory to be Published

A directory of returned Peace Corps volunteers and staff will be published by the Peace Corps Institute (PCI). The Institute is a private non-profit organization, founded last year to support Peace Corps goals, with special emphasis on the Third Goal – to promote a better understanding on the part of the people in this country of the people of the Third World (PCI has no official connection with Peace Corps.)

To accomplish the Third Goal, PCI needs a method of contacting former volunteers and staff who can, through civic clubs, educational forums

and a variety of local organizations, articulate the problems, customs, cultures and needs of the Third World, based on their overseas experience. That method will be the directory, which will include not only names and present addresses, but dates and place of service, skills areas, education and current employment.

Questionnaires are now being circulated by PCI to individual RPCVs, RPCV groups, as well as former and current staff. The Institute asks that they be completed and returned as soon as possible. Questions may be directed to Francie Schwartz, PCI project manager, at (703) 241-2030.

# Major Changes in Federal Life Insurance Program

March 1-31 has been declared open season to allow for enrollment or waiver of coverage of Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI). During this month, all employees who do not file a waiver of coverage will automatically be covered by basic life insurance, as all previous life insurance waivers become cancelled after March. All employees should have received appropriate forms.

There are several changes in the FEGLI program, as follows:

- the addition of two new forms of optional insurance,
- an increase in the amount of regular life insurance for employees under age 45,
- eligibility of retiring employees to continue their coverage by opting to pay premiums after age 65, to prevent the 75 percent reduction in their coverage.

Basic coverage is equal to the employee's annual salary to the next highest \$1,000 plus \$2,000. Employees with basic coverage may also choose from one of three additional options:

- the standard \$10,000 additional coverage, now offered at lower premiums (with exceptions),
- purchase of additional coverage in multiples from one to five times an employee's basic pay (with cost varying according to age and salary),
- purchase of family coverage of \$5,000 for spouse and \$2,500 for each eligible child (with cost varying according to age).

Employees under 45 years of age receive a graduated coverage (up to twice their annual salary), based on their age. This is at no additional cost and is automatic with basic coverage.

Employees retiring after December 9, 1980, may elect to receive a lesser reduction (normal reduction 75 percent) or no reduction at all in coverage, by paying the appropriate additional premium.

If you have further questions, or if you haven't received insurance forms, please contact Bruce Hildebrand, Employee Management Relations Branch, Office of Personnel Management, at FTS 254-8050.

## 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

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### ACTION UPDATE

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