

update...

First Lady Embraces Foster Grandparent Program

First Lady Nancy Reagan visits with Foster Grandparents and children during a recent trip to the St. Ann's Infant and Maternity Home in Hyattsville, Md. The home, which offers short-term care to some 70 unwanted and neglected youngsters, established an FGP program in October. Mrs. Reagan spent an hour with the children, Grand-

parents and staff.

The "grandchildren" were obviously delighted with the visit and, in one instance, a five-year-old boy literally knocked her over with enthusiasm. The children seemed reluctant to see her leave, including a four-year-old girl who, as Mrs. Reagan headed for the door, wouldn't let go of her hand.

Speaking of Mrs. Reagan's role in FGP, Chief Jack Kenyon said, "We feel the primary thing she will be able to do is encourage private sector involvement." He added that the First Lady has filmed public service announcements on FGP to be aired, nationwide, beginning in May - Older Americans Month.



Conference Examines Role of Older Americans in Peace Corps

Peace Corps service often conjures up images of bright-eyed youths working in the backwoods of developing countries – images which are not entirely accurate. About 260 older volunteers currently serve in Peace Corps, and agency efforts to enlarge that number have increased, particularly in the last year and a half.

The reasons are numerous, but the ones heard most frequently are “experience, commitment, maturity.” Older Americans are often the most experienced group of potential volunteers, and the increasing need for highly-skilled people in Peace Corps has made their recruitment, placement and support a priority.

In response to this effort, Peace Corps’ Office of Volunteer Services (OVS) recently sponsored a day-long workshop to examine the needs, strengths and special concerns of older Americans in Peace Corps. Peace Corps Placement and Office of Health Services staff attended, along with representatives from the Office of Special Services, Office of Recruitment and Communications and PC Regions.

The goals, according to OVS’s Gail Garland, workshop coordinator, include the following:

- Examine assumptions about older persons and the effects of these assumptions on decision-making.
- Inform participants of current efforts to recruit, place and support more older Americans in Peace Corps.
- Provide country-specific guidance to placement of older volunteers in Peace Corps.
- Become familiar with actual needs and abilities of older persons.
- Determine areas of further training in an effort to improve Peace Corps’ ability to deal with older Americans.
- Assist Peace Corps Washington staff in dealing more effectively with older applicants, trainees and volunteers

These goals were addressed through a variety of smaller sessions and speaker presentations that included OAVP staff and two older returned volunteers from Kenya and Korea.

Participants learned of current efforts to involve older volunteers. Those methods include:

- Contacting by recruiters of retirement and pre-retirement organizations.
- PC representation at gerontological conferences and meetings.
- Hiring of more older recruiters.
- Linking of recruiters through the domestic operations network, as in Ohio, for example, where recruiters are in close contact with RSVP project directors and are training RSVPs to recruit for Peace Corps.
- Revision of PC medical guidelines.
- Revision of the volunteer delivery system to allow more time from invitation to the beginning of training, resulting in the placement of more volunteers from every age group.

(cont. page 5)

Oldest PC Volunteer Begins 13th Year of Service



“I’ve got quite a few productive hours left,” says Odilon “Odi” Long, 79, the oldest Peace Corps volunteer now in service, as he starts his fifth assignment in Africa. Wilbur H. Wertz, 77, of Seattle, Wash., serving in Honduras, is the next oldest.

With 12½ years in the Peace Corps under his belt, Long, from McHenry, Ill., has logged more years in service than any other volunteer in the 20-year history of the Peace Corps, according to existing records.

Long joined the Peace Corps on March 1, 1967, the very day he retired after 41 years with American Telephone and Telegraph Co. and Illinois Bell. As a volunteer, he served in Gabon, Togo and Sierra Leone, helping villages, paramount chiefs and country officials design and construct schools, bridges, roofs and a football pavilion.

“I’ve rubbed elbows with the lowly and the high,” notes Long, whose proudest moment in West Africa occurred on New Year’s Day in 1978. The then President of Sierra Leone, Siaka Stevens, presented him with a medal, the country’s highest civilian award, as an officer in the Order of Rokel for his faithful and dedicated work

"I went...to render a service..."

in the field of construction. Long, who carries the medal around in his pocket, is the only foreigner ever to receive this honor.

Long served 6½ years in Sierra Leone before returning to the United States last August on home leave. His biggest project in the country was the design and construction of 147 primary school classrooms upcountry in Bunumbu. His design, maximizing light and fresh air in the building while withstanding the heat and rain of the tropics, was adopted by Sierra Leone's Ministry of Education for construction throughout the country.

Long was born in Fort Kent in northern Maine on March 10, 1902. The Canadian border town had been settled largely by French-speaking immigrants, and when he was a boy, French was his first language. Thus, it wasn't too difficult for him to relearn the language for his first Peace Corps assignment in French-speaking Gabon.

His early life also prepared him for any hardship he might endure in developing countries. "As soon as we got out of the cradle, our dad would give us an axe," quips Long, who had 10 brothers and sisters. He was a lumberjack at age 15, cutting and hauling logs on a horse-drawn sled. Three years later, he joined the Army and served four years, first with a field artillery unit at Camp Pike, Ark., and then in coast defense in the Panama Canal Zone.

"I'm accustomed to inconveniences. Believe me, nothing was harder than the stormbreak days in the telephone company. We'd have to climb slippery poles in the wind and break the ice on the wires," recalls Long, who started as a lineman with AT&T in Detroit, Mich. in 1926 after two years of splitting logs and harvesting winter wheat in Maine and western Canada. He retired from the long Lines Group-Illinois Bell in 1967.

Long started thinking about the Peace Corps a couple of years before his retirement from AT&T. "I'd had my hands in quite a few things," he notes. "I'd been a lumberjack, did farm work, some chicken-raising and construction, and had a flare for designing and remodeling old houses. I also had a green thumb and went into landscaping a little bit on the side to capitalize on that.

"The Peace Corps for me was something to do. I knew I could help and I went over there (to Africa) to render a service," he says. "Sure, you have to sacrifice, but work was what I was looking for and I got it."

His first contact with the Peace Corps was in

October, 1966, when he wrote, indicating that he would be available for service on April 1, 1967, a month after his scheduled retirement. That November, he was asked by the Peace Corps to go almost immediately to Panama.

"I couldn't make it because I wasn't due to retire until March 1," Long recalls. "Then in February, I got a telegram asking me to be at a hotel in Philadelphia on March 1." He went and joined the Peace Corps that very day.

Following two months of intensive training in St. Helena Island, S.C., Long was assigned as a technical advisor for a school construction project in Gabon. After about six months, the Peace Corps programs there were phased out and he was transferred to Sierra Leone. He spent the next 2½ years supervising the construction of two bridges and a school in Gloucester, a suburb of Freetown, the capital city.

He finished his projects at the end of June, 1970, and went to Togo on July 4 as a Peace Corps volunteer adviser for the construction of primary schools and dispensaries. While there, he helped to build 21 classrooms and a large school in Lome, the capital city.

"I really did like Togo," says Long, who maintains friendships with people in the West African country. "It is French-speaking and, well - there's just something special about it."

After 3½ years in Togo, he took a vacation in the United States, and on Jan. 1, 1974, accepted another Peace Corps assignment in Sierra Leone. First he went to the mountain town of Kabala to deal with a roof problem plaguing a new hospital extension.

"It took two months to get the building ready to put the roof on," reports Long. "And while I was there, they took advantage of me and had me design and help build a football pavilion."

Now, "Pa" Long, as he was often called in Sierra Leone, is eagerly looking forward to his new Peace Corps assignment. When asked the secret of his boundless energy and stamina at his age, he replies that he has always enjoyed good health. "I had a strep throat once in 1941," he admits, pointing out, "I've never been a heavy drinker. Maybe that's the answer."

Would he advise other older Americans to think about Peace Corps service? "Definitely!" he exclaims. "They need people with experience and some of the knowledge we have that the young volunteers don't have. And you know," he adds with a twinkle in his eye, "We are looked up to."

OAVP Representatives Urged to Rethink Aging in the 80's

Older Americans are being "stigmatized, stereotyped and scape-goated as subjects of backlash" during a time of fiscal belt-tightening, charged one professor of sociology attending the second annual conference of the Southern Gerontological Society in Atlanta, Ga.

Addressing gerontologists from throughout the South and 200 representatives of ACTION's Older American Volunteer Programs in Region III and IV, Dr. Paula Dressell of Georgia State University's gerontology center in Atlanta said that the backlash can and should be countered through coalitions. "As we enter a period of severe cutbacks and retrenchment in budgeted resources, coalition-building becomes of utmost importance," she said. "...aging people will have to begin building coalitions with non-aging people. The Gray Panthers have recognized this for some time."

The keynote speaker, Robert Binstock of Brandeis University, urged the 600 professionals serving the aging - including representatives of the Foster Grandparent, Senior Companion and Retired Senior Volunteer Programs to "...dispense with myths regarding the aging." He criticized the media for having played the myth which depicts "The aging feeding at the trough of public goods, when, in fact, the aged must be considered a heterogeneous group, ranging from the starving to

the rich. ...We have to stop framing advocacy issues in terms of the young versus the old," he stressed.

Binstock challenged the gerontologists to "take an active role in recasting the problems that are on the agenda... to reshape... to take leadership in looking at fundamental questions ourselves..."

ACTION's Acting Region IV Director Anne Johnson, noted that, "The conference provided participants direct contact with decision-makers in government and the private sector who will be shaping policy for the aging in the 80's."

"It provided exposure to new ideas and perspectives in the delivery of service to the aging; it provided the opportunity to develop new skills and refine existing ones and it provided the opportunity to meet and share ideas, problems and successes with colleagues across the southeast," she said.

Dr. Barbara Payne, professor of gerontology at Georgia State University, said that programs such as the Foster Grandparents, which contribute to the well-being of persons of all ages "are probably the 'wave of the future' as we move to an 'age-irrelevant society.'" She noted that being old doesn't necessarily mean being sick, broke, lonely and a burden, as is the stereotype, and appealed for social, as well as physical structures to support people in their neighborhood "so that we really become neighbors again."

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

April 26 - May 2

The National Volunteer Week Task Force will present an opportunity to see agency films, hear about current program developments and visit with former PCVs and VISTAs (now ACTION staffers) who will be honored during the week.

Film Schedule

Monday, April 27. "Peace Corps Partnership Program"

Tuesday, April 28: "A Touch of Love" (Foster Grandparent Program) "Retired

Senior Volunteer Program: a National Resource"

Wednesday, April 29: A film commemorating the International Year of Disabled Persons - to be announced.

Thursday, April 30: "Carry on Sweet Survivors" (VISTA)

Friday, May 1: "The Toughest Job You'll Ever Love" (Peace Corps)

(Films will begin at 1:00 in room M-522)

Older Americans (from page 2)

Dr. Richard Kinney, chairman of George Washington University Hospital's Department of Physiology in Washington, D.C., spoke to the group on the effects of aging. "Although physiological changes and certain problems do occur with aging," Kinney said, "chronological age is really meaningless in relation to biological age, which can be computed by making enough measurements on the individual and then comparing them to the norm. A 70 year-old man, could, for example, have the heart and lungs of a 50 year-old. It is biological rather than chronological age that should be considered when choosing older people for Peace Corps," Kinney said, adding that "the difference between an average 25 and 60 year-old is no greater than the difference between an active and an inactive person, both 25 years of age. Activity is of vital importance," he said, "and would very likely be perpetuated through Peace Corps service."

"I felt good about the workshop," Garland said. "I think it brought needed attention to the efforts we are making to involve older people in Peace Corps. It also gave people a chance to examine their own assumptions about older persons. Many of the more unfavorable assumptions, I think, are unfounded, and the workshop clarified this fact. I feel the workshop helped a lot of Peace Corps staff to better deal with older volunteers and applicants. This is one more step in a long process to provide the opportunity for Peace Corps service to a wider spectrum of our population."



Odi Long, the oldest Peace Corps volunteer, on Sierra Leone project.

\$240.3 Million Proposed for ACTION PC

President Reagan has requested \$240.3 million to administer ACTION's domestic operations programs and the Peace Corps in fiscal year 1982, a decrease of \$20.7 million from the amended FY 1981 proposals.

Agency programmatic and budgetary priorities for the coming fiscal year will focus on troubled youth, energy conservation, independent living and service-learning efforts.

A total of \$95 million has been requested for Peace Corps for FY 1982, representing a decrease of \$10 million from the FY 1981 request; and \$145.3 million for ACTION's domestic operations programs, a decrease of \$10.4 million from the FY 1981 request.

Increases are sought for the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP). The \$28.7 million proposed RSVP budget represents an increase of \$974,000 over FY 1981 and FGP's request for \$49.7 million is \$1.2 million more than this year's.

The FY 1982 budget request for VISTA is \$20.7 million — \$11.5 million less than the amended FY 1981 level. This figure will provide funding for 2,546 years of volunteer service, down from the 4,030 years projected in FY 1981. The National Center for Service Learning (NCSL) is budgeted at \$1.8 million.

During FY 1982, the Senior Companion Program (SCP) and projects funded through the Office of Voluntary Citizen Participation (OVCP) and ACTION's volunteer demonstration programs will operate at near-FY 1981 levels. The funding request for OVCP and the volunteer demonstration programs is \$3.2 million and for SCP, \$11.1 million, — a reduction of less than \$200,000 each from the current operating level. No decrease in the number of SCP volunteers or projects is anticipated.

Domestic operations support funds have been proposed at \$30.1 million for FY 1982.

Ceremonies in California, Indiana Celebrate Peace Corps' 20th Anniversary

At a Los Angeles ceremony in late February, 20 former Peace Corps volunteers, representing two decades of service accepted a mayoral proclamation in honor of Peace Corps. The ceremony, which took place at City Hall, was one of over 15 events celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Peace Corps.

Among those volunteers was Jacob Feldman, the first person to have signed up for Peace Corps. Now a professor of architectural engineering at California Polytechnical State University in San Luis Obispo, Feldman was a 21-year-old college graduate when he accepted a road surveying assignment in Tanganyika (now Tanzania) as a volunteer. "It was the adventure, as much as the idealism that promoted me to serve," he said.

March 1 marked the beginning of Peace Corps week in Los Angeles, and former volunteers gave presentations in local schools on their experiences in Peace Corps. The week concluded with an international dinner, attended by over 300 RPCVs, which featured food and clothing from the Philippines, Kenya, Colombia and other Peace Corps countries.

Other Southern California cities held events. In San Diego, returned volunteers displayed artifacts from the countries where they had served, in a local art gallery. And on March 23 -- Peace Corps Day in Riverside -- Mayor Ab Brown issued a proclamation in honor of Peace Corps. Later that day, 13 former volunteers presented slide shows and talks in city schools on "A Day in the Life of a Volunteer."



Jacob Feldman (right) receives proclamation from Los Angeles City Councilman David Cunningham.

Notre Dame Holds PC Events

March 23 - 28 -- Peace Corps Week in South Bend, Ind. -- began with a proclamation by Roger Parent, the city's mayor and an RPCV from Thailand, honoring Peace Corps. That week was marked by a Peace Corps/VISTA recruitment campaign in South Bend and a Peace Corps 20th Anniversary celebration on the campus of the University of Notre Dame, staged by the Peace Corps and the University. Guest speakers from Peace Corps included Director Designate Loret Ruppe, who spoke on "The Challenges of the 1980s" and former Directors Richard Celeste, and Sargent Shriver, who delivered the keynote speech.

The week also featured a series of presentations and panel discussions. Warren Wiggers author of President Kennedy's Executive Order establishing the Peace Corps in 1961, spoke on "What We Have Learned From the Peace Corps", and a group of panelists that included Mayor Parent, Chicago Service Center Director Bruce Cohen (RPCV/Tunisia), author Harris Wofford and several Honduras RPCVs, discussed "What the Peace Corps Has Done for Me and for Developing Countries." In addition, the Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, president of Notre Dame, commended the Peace Corps and joined Walter Langford, former PC training director in Chile, and RPCVs from that country on "A Look at Chile, Then and Now."

Youth Service Meets Community Needs in Upstate New York

"The community was receptive to the program from the beginning, but is even more so now," says Kathy Fenlon, project manager for the Oswego County, N.Y. Youth Community Services project (YCS/Oswego). "I sense a strong spirit of community among our citizens as a result of YCS."

YCS/Oswego is the rural component of the original YCS/Syracuse program which was begun in March 1978 to test the concept of a voluntary, community-based youth service program. Volunteers between the ages of 16 and 21 obtain a work-world experience while providing needed services to the community. Volunteers may serve regardless of economic background, but the majority come from low-income families. YCS is administered by ACTION's VISTA and Service Learning Program division (DO/V/SL) with a Department of Labor (DOL) grant.

The original YCS grant was for \$8 million, but in December 1979, DOL designated an additional \$1.3 million to fund the program in Oswego County, a low-income community with a high unemployment rate (13 percent) in New York state. The project was refunded in April 1980 with a \$1.7 million grant through August 1981.

Since YCS came to Oswego, over 500 volunteers in that county have served on some 100 projects, according to Fenlon. Currently, over 300 volunteers are serving in such areas as housing, weatherization, home infant care, tutoring and education, recreation, family crisis intervention and environmental programs. The sponsors and settings are varied—schools, stores, fire departments, community-based organizations, youth groups and housing co-ops.

"The youngsters have become involved in so many meaningful community projects," Fenlon says. "And every original sponsor requested volunteers for the second year, in fact some sponsors requested additional volunteers."

"The schools, in particular have become more involved in the past two years," Fenlon says. "About half the school districts were wary at first and wouldn't sponsor volunteers. But then they saw what the youth were doing, and they were impressed. Now, every school district in Oswego County sponsors YCS volunteers."

"And whereas the schools sponsored mostly educational projects at first, they are now reaching out into the community as well. One school, for example, now sponsors YCS volunteers who work

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YCS volunteers refinish a barn to be used as headquarters for their conservation project.

Staff Spotlight:

SANDY NATHAN



Sandy Nathan, Foster Grandparent program specialist, sees her major role as "providing as much technical knowledge in the field of aging as I can. There are people in the program who have worked extensively with children and youth. I feel my experience with the aged provides a balance."

Nathan, who has been with ACTION for seven months, oversees FGP programs in regions VI, VIII and IX – the Northwest, Southwest and California. Her interest in ACTION developed while she was a staff member at the White House Conference on Aging (WHCoA).

"My job at WHCoA, where I had been working since July 1979, was to see that the needs and concerns of the minority aged were incorporated into the conference," she recalls. "There, I met and talked with Douglas Hill and Al Larsen, who were on detail from the ACTION Office of the Older American Volunteer Programs (OAVP). "I was impressed with ACTION's concepts of self-help and people helping people. They are concepts in tune with my own philosophy. So I applied for and got a job at ACTION."

Working with older people has long been Nathan's "first love. I have a strong affinity and feeling for their needs, which probably stems from the love and admiration I had for my grandparents," she says.

Born and raised in San Diego, Cal., Nathan received a BA in 1970 in sociology from the University of San Diego, and an MA in public administration and gerontology five years later from National University in San Diego. Her concern for the elderly was first put to professional use in 1971, as a counselor with the Consumer Affairs Program in San Diego. "One of my duties was conducting

seminars for senior citizens on consumer advocacy," she says. "I particularly enjoyed that work – advising older citizens of their rights as consumers."

Although her next job was as a youth counselor, she continued to be interested in the aging field, and this led to a position in 1974 with the San Diego Area Office on Aging, working in the fields of transportation, housing and nutrition. Later she worked as a training resource specialist with the Human Services Agency in San Diego.

In 1977, Nathan moved to Washington. "I felt I had fully utilized my potential for work at the grass roots level, and I wanted to try something new," she says. "Besides, I had lived on the West Coast all my life and I wanted to see a different part of the country."

Before joining the WHCoA staff in Washington, Nathan worked at the Community Nutrition Institute, and later at the National Urban Coalition, as a liaison with several federal agencies, HUD, HHS (then HEW) and the Department of Labor. "But still, my overriding interest was in working with the elderly," she emphasizes. "So I was glad to get a position at WHCoA and later at ACTION."

While deriving much satisfaction working at the national level, "I also miss the more personal contact I had working at the grass roots level in California." In order to maintain that contact Nathan is involved in several locally-based efforts, particularly the the Neighborhood Housing Service in Washington, D.C. which deals with low-cost loans and other revitalization services. She is also a member of the National Association of Black Social Workers, the National Caucus of Black Aged and the Gerontological Society.

She is concerned about the future of programs geared to the elderly. "With the tightening of funds, for all social programs, I am afraid the elderly will be the first to suffer," she says. "I don't see how we can possibly continue our current level of programming under present economic conditions. We'll have to closely examine all federal programs for the aged and see where we can consolidate our efforts while keeping them at maximum effectiveness." She would like to see a greater involvement of the private sector "to insure that the gains of the past 10 years aren't lost."

But there is still reason for optimism, Nathan

feels. "Our programs in ACTION with their emphasis on voluntarism as an option for older people are a very good thing. Voluntarism is an excellent way of putting the time and talent of older people to use. I would like to see that concept expanded." She is, of course, "delighted at the First Lady's commitment to FGP. I think it will provide new and well deserved visibility for the program. I remember Mrs. Reagan's interest in FGP in California.

"Besides," she adds, "I feel good when I look at the OAVP staff. I see tremendous teamwork, both here and in the field — a strong sense of mission and commitment to make these programs work. With all of that, we can't help but be successful."

Peace Corps Overseas Staff Sworn In



Washington, D.C. February 18, 1981. Eleven new Peace Corps staff members were sworn in during a special ceremony at agency headquarters. Peace Corps Deputy Director William Sykes swore in the new staff. Shown prior to swearing-in are (left to right, front row) Marnesba Hill, PC country director, Belize; Malcolm Versell, associate PC director, Ivory Coast; Gerri Penno, PC director, Micronesia; Elizabeth Pope, PC medical officer

nurse, Central African Republic; Susan Marmaduke, associate PC director, Yemen; Howard Oper, associate PC director, Morocco; and Beverly Bruce, associate PC director, Honduras. (Back Row) Ross Kraemer, associate PC director for agriculture, Swaziland; and Russell Nyland, associate PC director, Niger. (Not shown in photo) Ed Rowley, associate PC director for agriculture, Swaziland; and Henry Lacey, PC director, Nepal.

Refugee Efforts Evaluated at OVCP Conference

Hundreds of thousands of refugees have settled in the United States over the past several years. Coming from every part of the world, they were escaping political and social persecution and seeking a better life for themselves and their families.

ACTION has been deeply involved in attempts to help the newly-arrived immigrants. With the Office of Voluntary Citizen Participation (OVCP) heading an agency-wide effort, an interagency agreement was reached in March 1980, with the Department of Health and Human Service's Office of Refugee Resettlement (HHS/ORR) that provided for a total of \$791,240 toward refugee resettlement. A second interagency agreement was reached on September 3, 1980, with the Department of State's Bureau of Refugee Programs that provided for \$500,000 to be spent through ACTION programs to support Cuban and Haitian resettlement in Florida.

The HHS/ORR money funded a number of programs, among them a Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP) in Virginia, Texas, Hawaii, Florida and California—all states with large refugee populations and significant resettlement problems. RRP's were set up in those states under the State Offices of Voluntary Citizen Participation (S/OVCP) to give technical assistance, training and general support to volunteers and volunteer groups working with refugees. The RRP's also work with Indochinese Mutual Assistance Agencies (MAAs) to enable them to assume greater resettlement responsibilities.

ACTION/OVCP recently sponsored a refugee resettlement workshop in Houston, Texas, to evaluate the efforts of the past year and to share information. The workshop also addressed critical issues of refugee resettlement and provided a perspective of refugee policy for the coming years. Seventy government and other public and private sector representatives attended, including ACTION/OVCP staff, state program directors, RRP staff, HHS/ORR national and regional personnel and other officials.

Through smaller workshops, meetings, forums and guest speakers, participants covered a wide variety of topics—women refugees, refugee resettlement concepts, special problems and concerns, mini-grants, cross-cultural issues, using available resources, Department of Justice activities, resolving community conflict, and private business involvement.

A highlight of the meeting was a report on the achievements of the five resettlement projects over the past year. California RRP Director Mary Sheehan said the RRP had trained over 90 volunteers to teach English to various community groups. The California RRP staff has also assisted MAAS and participated in local refugee coordinating councils. And in Hawaii, Manilda Dawson said refugee youth groups were helping them coordinate volunteer activities in that state. She added that area high school principals and counselors had offered full cooperation in mobilizing youth volunteers to work on refugee projects.

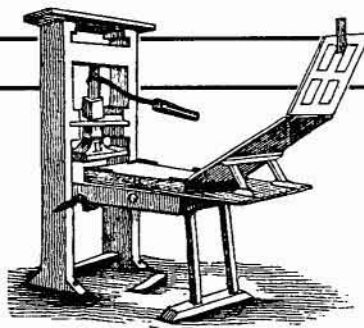
Lee Russell, Texas RRP director, told of her success in setting up six local refugee coordinating councils which have produced a greater understanding and communication between resettlement assistance groups. The Virginia RRP director, Joanne Ramsey, related her involvement in helping to develop a Student Practicum Placement Program, where graduate students participate, working with a refugee resettlement organization.

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Tou Doua Kue of California S/OVCP and Lam Pham of HHS/ORR.

What Others Say About Us



Editor's note: As one part of Peace Corps continuing effort to inform America's young people about the program, the Office of Communications works closely with a variety of youth-oriented publications. Articles on the Peace Corps, placed in these magazines, are designed to reach out to future volunteers—people who were not even alive when President John Kennedy established the Peace Corps 20 years ago. Below we have excerpted an article titled "Peace Corps at 20—Serving a Larger Cause" by Joel Cohen, that appeared in the January 9, 1981 issue of *Scholastic Search*, a publication on American history that goes to virtually all junior high school students in the United States.



In 1961, John F. Kennedy used his inaugural address to inspire Americans. "Ask not what your country can do for you," he said. "Ask what you can do for your country."

Americans responded to Kennedy's challenge. Many resolved simply to become better citizens. And thousands joined the Peace Corps, an organization that President Kennedy started on March 1, 1961. Peace Corps volunteers spend two years helping people of developing nations meet their basic needs.

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Time: One-thirty in the morning of October 14, 1960. Place: Ann Arbor, Michigan, outside the University of Michigan's student center.

About 10,000 students mill about, awaiting the Democratic candidate for President. Near two o'clock, the candidate—U.S. Senator John F. Kennedy—shows up. He climbs the student center's stairs and begins to talk, without notes "How many of you are willing to spend 10 years in Africa or Latin America or Asia working for the United States and working for freedom?" he asks. "How many of you who are going to be doctors are willing to spend your days in Ghana? On your willingness...to contribute part of your life to this country, I think, will depend the answer whether we as a free society can compete."

It was the first time Kennedy had brought up the idea of the Peace Corps in public. Several hundred students accepted Kennedy's challenge. They signed a petition, agreeing to volunteer abroad.

Kennedy was elected President in November. In January, he was sworn in, and in March he set up the Peace Corps.

The first Peace Corps volunteers arrived in the African nation of Ghana in late August, 1961. Ghana, a former British colony, was a young nation, and it was eager for help.

The 51 volunteers were eager to give it. They fanned out to work as teachers in Ghana's secondary schools. In so doing, they fulfilled the Peace Corps' major goal: to supply skilled workers to nations that need them to develop.

An ocean away, in the Latin American nation of Colombia, other Peace Corps volunteers would soon go to work. One of the first U.S. volunteers in Colombia was Ronald C. Atwater, a Californian. Atwater travelled on horseback to a small village high in the mountains. There, he helped set up the community's first newspaper. He organized the building of five schools and planned a community center. Before he left, in 1963, he set up a business for the town—weaving and selling ponchos.

"We all love Senor Ron," one villager said. "He is a good Yankee." The Peace Corps' second goal is to help other nations get to know Americans better. Surely Atwater achieved this goal.

The Peace Corps' third goal—helping Americans understand the ways to others—is perhaps the easiest to accomplish. Volunteers such as Mary McCarty learned that quickly. McCarty served for two years in Oman, an oil-rich nation on the Persian Gulf. She taught English to girls in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Like all Peace Corps volunteers, McCarty lived at the same level as the people she worked with. She got to know their ways well.

During the 20 years of Peace Corps, more than 80,000 volunteers have served in 85 nations. They've helped millions of people struggle against poverty, disease, and hunger.

YCS (from page 7)

in a variety of activities with senior citizens. That school has also opened its doors and facilities to senior citizen groups for meetings and other events.

Joe Bass of DO/V/SL notes: "Many of the volunteers serving in schools are themselves drop-outs. Their work in YCS has given them a whole new perspective on education, often serving as an impetus for them to return to school."

One volunteer put his interest in communications and audio-visual programming to use through YCS. Mark Erskine, a volunteer with the City Council Youth Bureau in Oswego, went out into the community and filmed YCS volunteers at work. He then made a videotape presentation at local schools, explaining the types of services available through YCS. When his service ended, Erskine obtained a job with a wildlife filming company in San Francisco. "Now I am filming in many places," he says, "England and South America for example." Erskine credits YCS with that job. "I never

would have gotten it without them," he says. "They really opened the door."

"There are less dramatic, but nevertheless successful stories," Fenlon says. "One volunteer served in a peer counseling program. After his term, the sponsor hired him to continue his work on their payroll. He now supervises two volunteers and has expanded the project."

All YCS volunteers receive an \$83 per week stipend and a \$400 educational voucher to be paid to any acceptable school or trade institution at the completion of service. "On the day they finish service, at least half the volunteers have plans to either use the voucher at a school, or have a job lined up," Fenlon says.

"Many of these youth would have been idle had it not been for YCS," she says. "And when kids spend some of their stipend in the shops, this is obviously good for the local small businessmen. We are still what would be called a 'depressed area,' but YCS has made life here a little better for everyone."

OVCP (from page 10)

Florida RRP Director David Pasquarelli, said the Independent Foundation will place 30 VISTAs in local refugee assistance agencies in five Florida areas with the largest concentration of Cuban and Haitian refugees. Five additional VISTAs will be assigned to the Voluntary Action Centers (VAC) in each of the five areas to coordinate volunteer efforts and to mobilize community resources. (See Nov. 28 issue of Update).

The Santa Barbara School's Center for Community Education and Citizen Participation was also funded by HHS/ORR through OVCP's Support Services Assistance Program to set up an Indo-Chinese Technical Assistance Project (ITAP). The Project Director, Richela Lau, said that ITAP has provided technical assistance to MAAs in Hawaii, California, Texas and Colorado through 27 workshops. Refugee technical assistance manuals will be published from the information provided during the workshops.

In a keynote address, Leo Cherne, executive

director of the Research Institute of America and chairman of the board of the International Rescue Committee, discussed the history of the refugee situation, particularly as it relates to U.S. Policy. He focused on the atrocities being committed in countries around the world, promoting migration from those countries. Cherne said "Fifty percent die at sea. It is quite unique when people are willing to better their circumstances at that risk, and believe me, they know very vividly what the odds are."

Robert Hernandez, Texas state program director said the conference "helped clarify who is doing what and enabled us to exchange a great deal of information. We saw how federal and state committees are working together...these days, when so many social service monies are being cut, it is particularly important for us to mobilize volunteer assistance through the initiative of state governments, as well as through local organizations."

ACTION UPDATE

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