

KHOTSO July 2011

United States Peace Corps
PO Box 554
5 Bowker Road
Maseru 100, Lesotho
Southern Africa
Phone: +266 22313871
Fax: +266 22310287

In this issue

Page 3

- PCV & Staff Birthdays
- Holidays
- Calendar of events,
- Staff Spotlight

Page 4-5

- Staff Corners

Page 6-7

- PCV Corner

Page 8

- News from around the Peace Corps World

Message from the Country Director



Dear Volunteers,

On June 4th, we welcomed the CHED 11 trainees (pictured above). Since their arrival, they've done an amazing job integrating into their host communities and learning Sesotho. This week they returned from visits to Volunteers' sites and soaked up all of the wisdom their gracious hosts had to offer. I'd like to thank our regular and short-term staff, including several new Language and Cross Culture Facilitators, the Resource Volunteers, the airport greeters, and the host Volunteers for all their hard work so far in preparing these future Volunteers for life and work in Lesotho.

In June, I was able to conduct only one site visit. As she approaches the end of her service, I finally made it to Irena Erdeg's site in TY – sad, since geographically she's one of the closest Volunteers to Maseru! In addition to visiting one of the weaving groups with whom she has worked, I also got to see Irena (CHED 09), along with Leeza Salen (ED 10), teach a life skills class at an English Medium School. Irena and Leeza had focused a lot on the theme of self-confidence and woven that concept into their lessons. During the class I observed, each student was asked to stand up, state their name and share an aspect of the HIV "window period" that they had learned. Most did so with confidence right off the bat. Others had to be prompted a bit, usually by their classmates, to look at the class (not the ground) and speak loudly. It was very cute. Irena and Leeza did a great job!

Last week was the kick-off of the **2011 Annual Vol-**

unteer Survey (AVS). (More info in this *Khotso*.) Your input is extremely valuable in helping us improve our program. For example, results from the 2010 AVS indicated that that between 20 and 40% of respondents (which did not include the CHED 10s) felt that PST had not adequately trained them in the following areas: working with counterparts/

community partners, performing technical aspects of their work, working on and monitoring their project goals and objectives, and conducting a participatory community needs assessment (e.g., PACA). Only 20 percent of respondents said that they could communicate well or very well in Sesotho. When designing the current PST, we took this feedback into account and are attempting to enhance these aspects of training. In another area, more than 50% of respondents indicated that they were minimally or not at all satisfied with feedback on work reports. Staff since have made efforts to provide meaningful and timely feedback on VRFs.

I'd like to acknowledge Jesse Schofield (CHED 10), Greg Viola (CHED 09) and Rusty de Lucia (ED 10), who were the first three Volunteers to submit their survey. (Way to go!) Last year we started off great and finished with an 85% response rate. Let's see if we can do even better this year. **If we receive surveys from 95% of Volunteers by July 29th, all eligible Volunteers (ED10 and CHED 10) will get an additional day of leave to be used by December 31st, 2011.** I know we can count on all of you!

Khotso,
Kathy

Editorial Staff

Managing Editor – Kathy Jacquart Dill, Country Director

Editor – Deepak Pullanikkatil, IT Specialist

Staff Contributors:

Administration – Jim McCormick, Admin Officer & Victoria Mofolo, Financial Assistant

Program and Training:

Education – Clement Lephoto—Associate Peace Corps Director & Malitaba Hlabana—Program Assistant

Community Health & Economic Development - Charles Miller— Associate Peace Corps Director & Selloane Pitikoe—Program Assistant

Training – Masechaba Mapena—Training Manager, Mamokola Matlanyane—Language, Cross Culture and Homestay Coordinator
Letsatsi Mohale—Programming and Training Secretary

Safety & Security – Nthoalo Masiphole

Medical—Dr. Victor Inegbedion

Distribution – Lebohang Ranooe

All other staff and PCVs who contribute

From the Editor

Articles must be received by the 4th Monday of the month to be included in the following month's edition of the Khotso. **When submitting articles, please provide the name of the person making the submission and a contact person for follow-up questions.** The Newsletter will be emailed and a hardcopy made available in the office on or about the 1st of each month. Please make sure that your email address is on file with Peace Corps. Remember that it is your responsibility to read the Khotso Newsletter for updates from Peace Corps Lesotho.

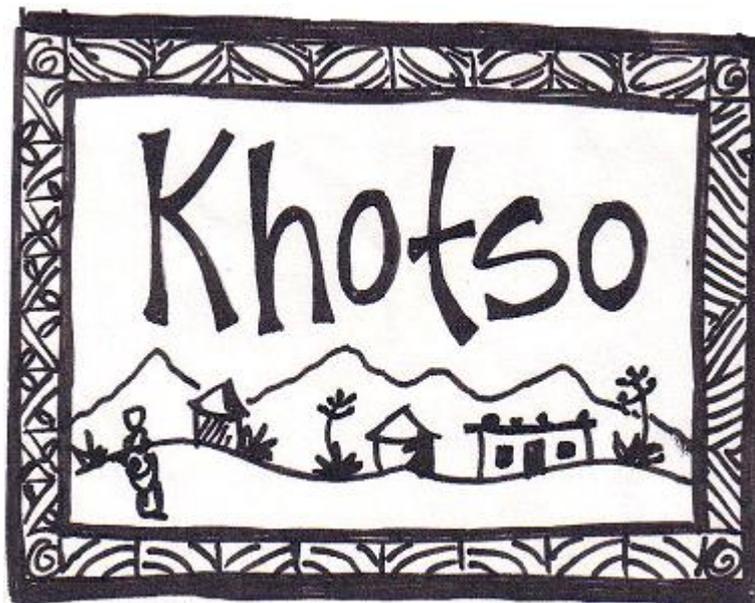
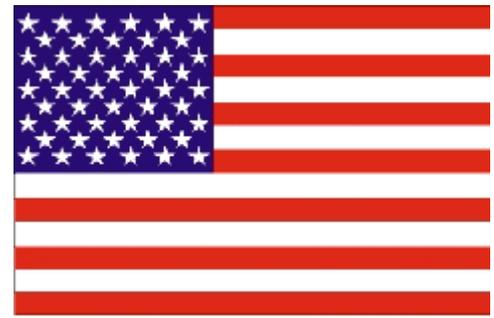
The editorial staff would like feedback from PCVs regarding the content. It is our desire to provide you with information that is useful, helpful, and encouraging. We would appreciate receiving constructive feedback from you.

By submitting articles, you are providing Peace Corps Lesotho with the right to reprint your article in full or part in any publication.

Deepak Pullanikkatil, Editor



Editorial



PCV Birthdays

Birthday greetings go out to the following PCVs. The Peace Corps Lesotho staff sends you greeting and hope that you have a very prosperous year.

July

Harper, Brandi	July 6
Hill, Melissa	July 8
Hughes, Tara	July 10
Howard, Jessalynne	July 21
Wilson, Ashley	July 21

August

Wilhelm, Jess	August 2
Day, Margaret	August 4
Smith, Jasmine	August 4
Berdini, Ariana	August 12
Ebata, Kimiko	August 13
Marlow, Sarah	August 20
Peel, Adam	August 27
Deakin, Matt	August 29

Staff Birthdays**July**

Kathy Jacquart Dill	July 4
Malisema Makhele	July 27
Victoria Mofolo	July 31

August

No birthdays this month.

Peace Corps Lesotho Holidays***July**

July 4— Independence Day (US Holiday)*
July 17— King's Birthday (LS Holiday)*

August

No holidays this month.

*PC Lesotho remains closed on this day.

Calendar of Events and Staff Travel

July 4 – 22	Clement on vacation
July 11	Victoria back from maternity leave
August 7	End of CHED 11 PST
August 19-20	ED COS conference
Aug-Sept	ED Site development

Duty Officer Schedule

July 4 - 10, 2011	FA
July 11 - 17, 2011	GSO
July 18 - 24, 2011	CD
July 25 - 31, 2011	AO
August 1 - 7, 2011	APCD (ED)
August 8 - 14, 2011	APCD (CHED)
August 15 - 21, 2011	TD
August 22 - 28, 2011	HIV Coordinator
Aug. 29 - Sept. 4, 2011	PA ED

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Full name: Deepak Pullanikkatil

Job title: Information Technology Specialist

Background: Born in India, raised in Africa, schooled in Africa, went to India for college and grad schools, worked in India for two years and returned to Africa.

Jobs prior to PC Lesotho: First job was as a software developer for Tata Iron and Steel Company Ltd. in India. Then worked for a Technology company designing I.T. infrastructure for one of its clients.

Family status (married? kids?): Married with a daughter and a son (born June 15, 2011).

Most favorite part of your job: Occasionally finding some incredible challenges. And most people do not know much about what I do, so I can get away with anything.

Least favorite part of your job: Paperwork.

What do you do in your free time?: Listen to music, listen to my wife talking, talk to my wife, play with my daughter, watch movies and travel with family.

If you hosted a dinner party, who would you want to come?: Craig Newmark (he made craigslist).

Advice for PCVs in Lesotho: Always remember that you are a hard to find amazing individual who decided to give two years of your life to help others less fortunate than yourself. Piece of advise: always do the right thing and stay safe.



ADMIN CORNER – By Jim

Today is Friday, June 24th and as we say on the south side of Chicago, “Ke leboha Molimo ke Labahlano!” (Thanks to ‘M’e Lebohlang for the translation).

The office is a “flurry” of activity these days with the PST in full swing and the CHED 09s preparing to depart. I wanted to remind the CHED 09s that if you have reimbursements due you (e.g., for travel, per diem, etc.) between now and the time you leave, it is too late to have them included in your final living allowance payment so please bring me the signed reimbursement form(s) and, if approved, we will pay you in cash. We cannot reimburse you in US Dollars, but we can give you Rand if you prefer that to Maloti. Another item of importance to departing (and all other PCVs) is that Peace Corps and Corps Care have decided to end their relationship regarding RPCV health care. Further details will be forthcoming as to who our new carrier will be, but if you decide you want to continue your coverage beyond the automatic 30 days you are covered (from your official COS date), please get in touch with either Tangie Shepherd (202-692-1538) at PC HQ or you can contact the Office of Medical Services at 800-424-8580x1500 once you return home. Rest assured that you are still covered at no cost to you for 30 days from your COS date.

We recently received some nice feedback from the Anglican Training Center. When we met with the Bishop and the Manager there in December of 2010, they were reluctant to have Peace Corps Volunteers stay there as a result of some very bad behavior by PCVs in previous years. They did give us another chance, however, and just last week the Bishop thanked me for the stellar behavior exhibited by Volunteers in the past several months. I was extremely proud to hear that.

We are one step closer to being approved for our office move. The US Embassy Regional Security Officer sent his final approval cable to the Department of State in DC this past week. Now the approval process moves through a labyrinth of offices in Washington and will hopefully conclude with a final approval in the next few months. As I mentioned in the June Khotso, it isn't likely we will be moving anytime soon but we did clear a major hurdle with the RSO approval.

Outside the VRC are several containers. One is for general garbage (food waste etc.) and the other four are for glass, metal, plastic and paper. Somehow a lot of food waste is winding up in the recyclable containers which results in Ntate Bernard having to separate the general garbage from the recyclables. Needless to say, this is not a pleasant task. Please be aware of which container you are throwing things in when you are coming or going from the VRC.

July 11th brings the return of ‘M’e Victoria from her maternity leave. ‘M’e Malisema and ‘M’e Maggie have done an outstanding job in her absence, but we are all eager to see ‘M’e Victoria back at her desk. That is about it for now. I hope you are all healthy and happy and remember, we are here for you so please reach out to us when you need to. Stay safe...!

EDUCATION CORNER—By Ntate Clement & ‘Me Malitaba

We hope you are all enjoying the much deserved winter break and are indeed doing your best to keep warm! During this time we have spent some time reviewing the recently submitted VRFs and if you haven't yet you should be getting some responses via email. Again thanks for your submissions, with the amount of data received this year we believe our end of year reports will be fantastic.

Over the next few weeks we continue working on the education

project framework in preparation for FY2013 Trainee Request submissions. In the next issue we should be able to share with you how the education project framework looks like thus far and we will entertain some ideas. The one major shift from the current project that we noted is the introduction of ESL Volunteers in primary education. Our plan is pilot this in the next training. The input from the current AA171s will be highly appreciated.

Our schedules for August and September are out and you will note that for the most part ‘m’e ‘Malitaba will be ‘camping’ out in the field. If you live near any of the sites, we will of course consult with you to solicit input in determining the viability of the sites.

Towards the end of July, Joey and Dustin will be helping us clean the storage facility where old books and magazines (including old Newsweek magazines) have been kept. There are also some empty boxes (could be useful for material production workshops). If any of you would like any of these items please let us know ASAP.

CHED CORNER By— Charles & ‘Me Selloane

Hi CHEDers. Warm endings and new beginnings represent this month's CHED Khotso submission.

As CHED 09 wraps up two years of service, say goodbyes and prepare for future chapters we wish the hearty 11 CHED 09s only the warmest endings. Thanks again to the CHED 09 PCVs for your efforts over the last two years. We wish you well in your journeys ahead.

There's still time to write congratulatory or thank you messages for the remaining CHED 09 Volunteers. If you're interested, don't forget to write and drop the messages into their envelopes outside ‘M’e Selloane's office. Remember that you can also email any messages you have for any of the CHED 09 PCVs to myself, ‘M’e Selloane or Ntate Mohale and we'll print the messages and drop them into the respective envelopes. As each of the CHED 09 PCVs complete their service they'll take their envelopes with your inspiring messages.

For CHED 10 and CHED 11, new beginnings are the course of the day. CHED 10 enters their second year of service in Lesotho and CHED 11 is just getting started.

CHED 10 Reconnect:

Thanks to all of you who shared with us your needs for training. We'll be reviewing the information in the next few days and we'll be in touch to let you know what is being planned.

CHED 11 PST:

CHED 11 is well into their fourth week of PST, having just returned from HVV. A very special thank you to all of our HVV hosts. The impact of your time spent with our new arrivals was clearly seen in their HVV presentations a few days ago. Thanks also to all the Volunteers who have helped, and continue to help with training. Your positivity and hard work is very much appreciated by staff and trainees alike.

With five more weeks of training to go we encourage the CHED 11s to hang in there and continue soaking up all the Sesotho, culture and technical skills you can.

Trimester Reports:

We are enjoying reading and responding to your VRFs. If we haven't yet responded to your report, “hakuna matata”, we will get back to you shortly. Thanks to all of you who have submitted your VRFs, and to the remaining nine whom we haven't heard from, we know who you are and where you live and won't be signing leave forms (or COS paperwork) until they have been submitted. J

Gold Star Activities:

Thanks to all Volunteers for your hard work. Below are a few "Gold Star" activities we've pulled from the VRFs received so far. Stay tuned for more "Gold Star" activities in the next edition of The Khotso!

Greg Viola worked with the principal and management committee at Thuso e Tla Tsoa Kae to create and start using a coherent admissions policy focusing on required documentation and a contract regarding parent/guardian responsibility. Additionally during his service Greg has taught his counterparts about the value of, and how to use the Child Status Index, a reporting tool for evaluating the health and welfare of children which is now used in creating personal care plans for the students.

Ed Griffin worked with two counterparts to repair two satellite dishes at his high school, providing high school students with access to current events broadcasts and HIV/AIDS messages.

Chanté Liggins is training the youngest coach in her host organization, Leseli Youth Sports Programme, in computer literacy, enabling him to better serve the organization on the administrative end. Daily typing lessons, website editing, checking email and updating Facebook are all par for this training course.

Kelly Anderson used a creative and fun method of testing how well her students understood the lesson. While being recorded, Kelly's students had to re-enact how to properly install a solar panel.

MEDICAL CORNER By—Dr. Victor & M'e Itumeleng

COS Physical for CHED 09: COS medical evaluations will be completed in July 2011. Most PCVs in this group have already scheduled their physical exams plus dental examinations. If you haven't, please contact the health unit to schedule yours asap.

Mid-service Evaluation for CHED 10: Mid-service medical evaluation will take place in late July/August 2011. Please contact 'M'e Itu, the medical assistance, to schedule your mid-service evaluation as well as a dental appointment for you. **It is your responsibility to contact us to schedule your midservice.**

Condoms. We are getting word that some PCVs do not like the current brand of condoms that we have been issuing, purely on the basis of personal preference. Other PCVs, however, do not seem to have a problem with this particular brand of condom. We intend to procure an alternative brand of condoms as soon as possible, so that PCVs who do not like the current brand can have a choice. At the same time, we shall continue to give out the current brand of condoms because they are of very good quality and we do have a stockpile of them.

Peer Support: If you need to talk to someone or to reach out to other colleague in challenging times, please contact members of the PEER SUPPORT. They are there to be a leaning shoulder in immediate and trying situation.

IT CORNER — By Deepak

Peace Corps Lesotho has just received a refresh of our computer system, including new computers in the VRC. The refresh also gave us a new external Share Point <https://ls.peacecorps.gov/external>, which can be accessed remotely (from any computer that has Internet access) using your Peace Corps log on credentials. Stay tuned as we start putting forms, updates, contact lists and other important information for Volunteers on the site. Volunteers can also use the site to share documents. If you have ideas of ways we can optimize Share Point, please let me know.

TRAINING CORNER By—M'e' Masechaba

Although we are in the middle of the CHED 11 PST, we are already preparing for the arrival of the ED 12 trainees on October 14, 2011. These trainees will enter into nine weeks of rigorous pre-service training (PST), which culminates in the swearing-in ceremony on December 15, 2011.

The participation of currently serving Volunteers adds tremendous value to PST. As such we would like to solicit "letters of interest" from Volunteers who would like to serve as **Resource Volunteers** to assist with training. Selected Volunteers would need to be away from site for a minimum of 1 day to a maximum of 1 week and would work in close collaboration with the staff and trainers to plan and facilitate training sessions. If required to spend the night while at PST, Resource Volunteers will reside with host families in the training villages. In addition, Resource Volunteers will be required to participate in a **Training of Trainers workshop September 19-23.**

In the past, Resource Volunteers have added value to the Trainers/Staff presentations on topics such as the school system in Lesotho, curricula interpretation, scheming, lesson planning, workshops, assessment, classroom management, HIV/AIDS, life skills, gardening, coping with settling-in anxieties and community integration. Additionally, Volunteers have been involved in discussing with PCTs adjustment to the working environment and the life of a Volunteer in Lesotho. The Programming and Training Team encourages PCV participation in PST in any of the above sessions, or other sessions in which you feel PCV input would be beneficial. Please note that there are few, if any, separate Volunteer Committee sessions. Therefore, if you feel that the focus of the committee on which you serve is an area in which you could add value to PST, please include that in your letter of interest.

Letters of interest should indicate the topic area(s) and type(s) of sessions you could assist in co-facilitating and why. They should be directed to the Training Manager (mmapena@ls.peacecorps.gov) and received no later than August 19, 2011. Thanks and we look forward to hearing from you, preferably by email.

SAFETY & SECURITY CORNER—By Ntate Nthoalo**Traveling in Winter in Lesotho**

Winter is upon us, and more snow is expected especially in the mountain areas (such as Thaba-Tseka, Mokhotlong, Semonkong and Ha Lejone to mention the few). Volunteers are reminded to avoid unnecessary travel to or from the mountains during this time of the year and consult with the SSC for information on road conditions especially in the highlands based areas.

Traveling in Other PC Countries

Peace Corps is always striving to ensure the safety and security of Volunteers, not only while they are in the country of service but also when abroad. That said, I would like to remind Volunteers wishing to travel to other countries to consult me about safety and security information (e.g., transportation, restricted or no-go areas) regarding countries they plan to visit. SSCs are in constant communication about situations in their countries that could be helpful for visiting Volunteers. Many countries are now requiring that visiting Volunteers purchase local SIM cards when they arrive in the country. They should then send a message with the phone number to the PC-Lesotho Whereabouts phone (or Duty Phone if after business hours) so that it would be easier to track them in case of emergency while on vacation.

Being Prepared for Emergencies

Although we hope that we will not have to deal with a major emergency, they can happen and it's important to be prepared!

Examples of recent potential emergency situations in Lesotho include heavy snowfall and blocked roads, floods and damaged or destroyed bridges, and water supply outages. In September, Lesotho will be holding local government elections, which although expected to be calm, could cause disruptions. For these reasons, Volunteers should keep money, preferably South African Rand of at least R200, in their houses in case they are required to standfast, consolidate or evacuate. Volunteers should also keep ready an emergency bag containing essential items you might need if you had to spend a few days away from site. Suggested items include: a few bottles of water, 2 changes of clothes, non-perishable food stuffs (e.g. canned beans, fruits or fish), toilet paper, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, medication, candles, flashlight, batteries, matches and your **PASSPORT**. Please review your EAP manual to refresh your memory about what to do in an emergency.

PCV Corner

FROM FRIENDS OF LESOTHO

Welcome 2011-2013 CHED PCVs. . . . from the FOL Board, Committees and our 100's of RPCV members. We all wish you the best during your weeks of training and settling in at your sites. We look forward to hearing about your experiences in coming issues of Khotso and through your Blogs. We relive our PCV experience through hearing about yours. To share your blog link with us, send it to Marty Smith, FOL Website Manager mwsmith13@gmail.com.

We hope you will take advantage of the FOL Complimentary Membership for active PCVs so that we can share our newsletters with you. And, last but not least, we invite you to post a group picture from your swearing-in on the FOL Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfLesotho25th>.

TAP Benefits From History of Giving by Grade 7 Students a World Away from Lesotho

Sandy Puckett was an ED volunteer in Lesotho from 1972 to 1974. Some years after Peace Corps he taught grade school at the Taipei American School in Taiwan. Sandy embraced the PC third goal by sharing his knowledge and love of Lesotho with his students. Before long his students took up the cause of helping support less fortunate children in Lesotho. Sandy's death in 2010 didn't stop the giving. His replacement Kathy Keenan and new students continued fundraising in memory of Sandy.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Amount Raised</u>
June 1999	\$2,500.00
September 2000	\$3,711.13
June 2001	\$4,075.83
May 2002	\$2,573.28
May 2004	\$10,137.25
June 2005	\$3,546.88
April 2006	\$9,290.49
February 2008	\$16,171.79
May 2009	\$6,727.27
May 2010	\$8,990.00
April 2011	\$10,193.00
TOTAL:	\$77,916.92

The 2011 TAP scholarship request is the largest in TAP history. Thanks to the legacy of Sandy FOL is pleased to be able to fund the entire amount requested. We hope by the time you read this article PCPP will have approved your request for 110,000 rand in support of needy students throughout Lesotho.

2011 Annual Volunteer Survey

Dear Peace Corps Volunteer:

I am very pleased to invite you to take part in the 2011 Annual Volunteer Survey. As we celebrate Peace Corps' first fifty years, we are working to make the Peace Corps of the next fifty years ever more effective in advancing community development, world peace, and friendship.

Your voice is essential to our efforts to build a stronger Peace Corps. This survey is your opportunity to share your experiences and recommendations. I have heard from many country directors who have told me how useful the survey results have been to them, as they work to improve training, staff support, and impact.

I encourage you to provide honest, thoughtful responses to the questions. As a returned Volunteer myself, I am familiar with the peaks and valleys of Peace Corps service. I want to hear about your successes and your challenges. Your on-the-ground experience is crucial in developing ever better methods for achieving Peace Corps' three goals.

We rely on the survey results to increase the effectiveness of our projects and to improve the quality of your overseas volunteer experience. The information provided will allow us to make programmatic and managerial changes that will contribute to improvements in the lives of the individuals in the communities where our Volunteers live and work.

The survey begins on June 17 and will be available through August 19, 2011. It should take you approximately one hour to finish the survey. Please let your post know when you have completed and submitted the survey.

In keeping with our goal of becoming a more "green" agency, I strongly encourage you to complete the online version of the survey. Each year, the number of Volunteers completing the survey online increases, reaching an historic high of 89 percent last year. We would like to do even better this year.

I am committed to making Peace Corps' next fifty years even better than the last. As we consider how best to improve our operations, your voice will help us to build a stronger Peace Corps. I urge all Volunteers to complete this survey as soon as possible.

Thank you for your ongoing service as a Peace Corps Volunteer.

Sincerely,
Aaron S. Williams
Director

Instructions for accessing the online 2011 Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS)

From June 17 through August 19, you can access the 2011 Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS) at the following URL:
www.peacecorps.gov/AVS2011

1. The first time you log on, you will receive a computer-generated ID. PLEASE WRITE DOWN AND SAVE YOUR UNIQUE ID.
2. Use this ID if you stop working on the survey before you answer all the questions (or are disconnected) and need to re-enter the system to complete your survey at a later time.
3. If you have problems accessing the online survey, or lose your computer generated ID, send an email to osirp@peacecorps.gov to request help.
4. The online survey asks each Volunteer to provide a secret word or phrase (up to 30 characters with no personal identifiers). The secret word/phrase will be used only when Volunteers have trouble re-entering their partially completed AVS. If prob-

lems arise, you may send your secret word/phrase to OSIRP so that AVS administrators can help you to re-connect and complete the survey.

5. When you finish answering all the survey questions, press SUBMIT to complete your online AVS. Only press SUBMIT if you are absolutely sure you will not need to re-enter the survey.

6. The survey will generate a completion page that confirms you have both completed and submitted the AVS.

7. You can print or copy this confirmation page and email it to your Country Director to confirm that you have completed the survey.

"I believe the main factor in getting our Volunteers to respond is stressing that this is their opportunity to have their voices heard in a safe, anonymous, and candid manner and that Peace Corps truly uses the information to evaluate and improve programming, training, safety and security, health services, and all other aspects of Volunteer support." -John Williams, Country Director PC/Thailand 2002-2011

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Volunteers 2011 Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS)

Why should I complete the AVS?

The AVS offers you an opportunity to share your candid views and experiences through a confidential survey. You will be asked about your Peace Corps training, work activities, safety and security, and support from the post. Your answers, along with those of almost 8,000 other Volunteers, will help the Peace Corps assess service delivery to Volunteers and what may need to be improved.

The 2011 AVS results, without any personal identifiers, will be tabulated and disseminated to country directors and headquarters by the end of October 2011 in order to:

- Inform Peace Corps Director Aaron Williams and senior management at headquarters and at post about Volunteers' recommendations for how to improve the overall Volunteer experience
- Examine and compare Volunteers' assessments of the effectiveness of their post and project-specific training, support and assignment work
- Report both the grouped multiple choice and open-ended responses from all Volunteers at your post to country directors and post staff, as well as to the Office of Global Operations and the Regions
- Compare Volunteers' experiences and views across posts and projects over time
- Plan and prepare future training and program needs, and allocate resources where most needed

Is the 2011 Annual Volunteer Survey anonymous?

Yes. You do not enter either your name or email address when you complete the Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS). When you begin the online AVS, you will receive a randomly generated AVS logon ID for easy return to your survey, if needed (for example, if your internet connection is lost).

In keeping with the Peace Corps' commitment to minimize the agency's impact on the environment, we strongly encourage you to complete the survey online, but if you must complete a paper version, your post will provide you with an unmarked survey and sealable envelope. This will maintain the confidentiality of your responses during the process of gathering the completed paper surveys at post before the surveys are sent back to Peace Corps headquarters.

Who should complete the AVS?

Please participate in the 2011 AVS if you are a currently serving Volunteer and you have been at your site for at least ONE FULL MONTH. If you were recently sworn in, please delay taking the AVS until you have been at your site at least ONE FULL MONTH

(or longer) so that you will be better able to answer the full set of AVS questions. You may complete the AVS as late as August 19th.

Peace Corps Response Volunteers will be eligible to complete a separate Peace Corps Response Survey, which will be available on July 15, 2011.

Please note: Trainees and Volunteers who have not been at their sites at least one month are not eligible to participate in the 2011 Annual Volunteer Survey.

Why is a good survey response rate so important?

When you and most of your fellow Volunteers participate in the AVS, we can:

- be more confident that the results reflect the full range of Volunteers' unique perspectives
- analyze and report project-specific responses without compromising confidentiality

How can I obtain the 2011 AVS results?

You can request the 2011 AVS results from your Country Director on November 18, 2011, after the global and post-specific results are distributed to Peace Corps posts and headquarters. Also, key 2011 AVS findings will be reported in the Peace Corps' 2011 Performance and Accountability Report.

How do I complete the 2011 AVS?

From June 17 through August 19, you and other eligible Volunteers can take the 2011 AVS by logging on to the online survey at a secure site. The URL for the 2011 AVS will be available on June 17, 2011. Please note that it will NOT be the same link used for prior Volunteer Surveys.

When logging on for the first time, you will receive a computer-generated unique ID which you MUST WRITE DOWN AND SAVE. You will need this unique ID if you need to stop and later re-enter to complete your survey.

When you finish the survey and press SUBMIT to complete your online AVS, you will see a completion page. This will confirm that you have both completed and submitted the AVS. You can print or copy this confirmation page and email it to your Country Director to confirm that you have completed the survey.

If you cannot access the online AVS, you may request a paper version of the 2011 AVS from your post along with an unmarked sealable envelope. When you complete the survey, seal it in the envelope and return the unmarked envelope to your post or mail your paper survey directly to the headquarters address on the last page of the survey. If you choose this option, however, you must mail your completed paper survey by August 19th to reach Washington D.C. in time to be part of the 2011 AVS global dataset. To be included, all paper surveys must arrive at Peace Corps headquarters by September 6, 2011.

What do I do if I have problems with the 2011 AVS?

If you encounter questions or problems logging on to the online survey or lose your computer-generated ID, you can send an email to osirp@peacecorps.gov. The OSIRP staff will personally respond to you as quickly as possible to help resolve the problem. Because your name and email address are not associated with your survey, you may need to provide the OSIRP staff with the secret word (up to 30 characters with no personal identifiers) you entered at the beginning of the survey. The secret word will help to ensure that you can re-connect and complete your survey.

When will the 2011 AVS begin and end?

The 2011 AVS begins on June 17, 2011 and ends on August 19, 2011. That will be the last day that Volunteers can access the online survey.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE PEACE CORPS WORLD

Peace Corps Expands Program in Indonesia

Washington, D.C., June 21, 2011 – Twenty-eight Peace Corps volunteers officially began service in Indonesia on June 15, taking up English teaching assignments at schools and madrasahs throughout the province of East Java for the coming two years. There are now 45 Peace Corps volunteers at work in the 17,000 island archipelago nation. This is the second group of volunteers sworn in for service since the Peace Corps program reopened in Indonesia in 2010.

U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia Scot Marciel congratulated the new volunteers who had successfully completed an intensive ten-week training program in Malang. Ambassador Marciel noted that “Peace Corps is the preeminent program of the United States Government at bridging cultures and building a greater understanding at the community level. Peace Corps volunteers live and work within communities for two years. They learn the language. They develop an understanding and appreciation of the culture.”

The ceremony also included the signing of implementing arrangements (project agreements) between Peace Corps and the Ministries of National Education and Religious Affairs which jointly oversee the vast national school system. The arrangements formalize the partnership between the host Ministries and Peace Corps/Indonesia.

Ambassador Marciel was joined by Ibu Rd. Siliwanti, director of the directorate for political affairs and communications at the National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS). Along with other Republic of Indonesia Ministries, BAPPENAS has worked closely with Peace Corps throughout the early stages of its program development. All Peace Corps volunteers are serving in East Java although the plan is to expand the program to another province in 2012.

Since their arrival in April, the volunteers have focused on learning the national language of Bahasa Indonesia and experiencing Indonesian culture through living with host families in villages around Malang. Peace Corps partnered with the University of Muhammadiyah Malang and Wisma Bahasa, a language institute based in Yogyakarta, in order to draw upon local training resources and expertise. Peace Corps volunteer Tim Curtin, of Boca Raton, Fl., spoke in Indonesian to a gathering of 28 host families at the ceremony, “The wonderful generous, patient families that took us into their homes are our family. The connection we have now is unique and unbreakable. It is with the support of all these different families that we have been able to succeed.”

Peace Corps re-established its program in Indonesia in 2010 following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in December 2009.

Peace Corps Director and VSO Chief Executive Officer Discuss New Partnership

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 20, 2011 – Peace Corps Director Aaron S. Williams and Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO) Chief Executive Officer Marg Mayne met in London on June 20, 2011 to discuss strategies on how VSO and Peace Corps volunteers can continue fighting poverty and create sustainable solutions to many of the challenges faced by communities around the world. The meeting was a follow-up to the announcement by President

Barack Obama and Prime Minister David Cameron of a new partnership between two of the world’s leading volunteer organizations during President Obama’s state visit to London in late May.

“This innovative partnership will enhance the impact and effectiveness of both Peace Corps and VSO,” said Director Williams. “Today we discussed how we can most effectively share best practices in programming and training, monitoring and evaluation, and strengthen our united efforts to combat global poverty. We are proud that President Obama and Prime Minister Cameron recognize the contributions our volunteers are making around the world with local communities.”

For more than 50 years, Peace Corps and VSO have been the leading U.K. and U.S. organizations fighting global poverty through service. Collectively, they have 10,000 international volunteers working in 95 countries and a combined network of more than 250,000 returned volunteers. Each organization works in complementary ways, providing opportunities to work together that will enhance our effectiveness in transforming lives across the world.

“This is a major step forward for VSO and our transatlantic friends, Peace Corps,” said VSO Chief Executive Officer Mayne. “We both have a shared commitment, experience and expertise to engaging people in the fight against poverty. Peace Corps and VSO will support each other’s efforts to develop volunteer programs that are more effective in engaging poor communities in shaping their own future. In our meeting today we discussed how to increase the reach of our programmes in areas such as education, health, HIV/AIDS, youth development and gender. Our valued volunteers will continue to work alongside poor communities and local partners on key development priorities, as well as support them in building a lasting legacy of local volunteer networks.”

Peace Corps and VSO have worked together informally for more than a decade. The partnership will also see organizational learning on recruitment, training, and other support functions.

A joint fact sheet on the partnership announcement is available through the White House and the 10 Downing Street website.

About VSO: As a leading international development charity, VSO last year assisted 26 million people in reducing poverty. Since 1958 more than 44,000 volunteers have worked in more than 120 countries. Today there are over 1600 international volunteers working in 42 countries around the world.