Message from the Acting Country Director

Dear Peace Corps Lesotho Volunteers,

Rather than an attempt at words of wisdom from me, I thought I would share with you a little survey you can take for yourself. It’s called the Global Competence Inventory, and appears on page 11 of this Khotso edition. As International Development professionals, there are numerous qualities and characteristics that contribute to our effectiveness, and to our own comfort in the kind of work we are doing. The broad categories are: how we perceive the situation we are in, how we manage relationships with others, and how we manage ourselves. You may find the little survey interesting and helpful.

Eric

HY 14 Volunteers on Swearing In Day
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 e-mailed in the office on or about the 1st of each month, and a hardcopy will be made available upon request. Please make sure that your correct 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.
Khotso

PCV & STAFF BIRTHDAYS

September
7 Eric Goldman/Director of Programming and Training (DPT)
9 Tori Raymond
11 Federico Poitier
14 Majimisi Machai/HIV & AIDS Coordinator
17 Mamotebang Manyanye/Registered Nurse
19 Keegan Mackin
21 Itumeleng Notši
24 Jeanett Mosae
27 Narin Ratanavade

October
3 Janice Desmangles
5 Danielle Mohling
6 Megan Urry
8 Stephanie Sales
11 Clareese Saunders
20 Amber Gellert
26 Kara Howard
27 Will Stock

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND STAFF TRAVEL
September 5 - 7 ED13 Close of Service (COS)
September 15 - 17 HY14 Mid service

DUTY OFFICERS
September 5 - 11, 2014 TM
September 12 - 18, 2014 APCD-ED
September 19 - 25, 2014 PTS-ED
September 26 - October 2, 2014 DPT

STAFF MEMBER OF THE MONTH – ‘M’e ‘Masechaba Mapena

‘M’e Masechaba has once again, with great effectiveness, led Peace Corps Lesotho and Healthy Youth trainees through another Pre-Service training. She has overseen and coordinated the needs and interests of multiple people, including all staff, trainees, guest speakers, off-site visits, village and government officials, and more. She guided the P&T staff and trainees through the new and rigorous Trainee Assessment Portfolio, providing assessment, feedback, and training to a greater extent than ever before. And finally, well before the end of the PST, she was working in the new Education PST villages, and the multiple trainings ahead in September, October and November. A non-stop month, a lot of pressure, and outstanding results”.

ED CORNER by Ntate Clement and ‘M’e “Malitaba

Education News
The next four months will be hectic from this end with the preparations for Ed15 PST, final checks on their sites, reviewing of VRFs and compilation of the annual status reports and of course the COSing of Ed13 training class. We will do our best to continue to respond to your needs.

We wish to thank here PCVs Lisa Bergman, Chelsea Kelleher and Megan Urry for assisting with TDE and TOT. As mentioned before we will rely heavily on many of you to provide further assistance during the course of PST.

We wish to take this moment to wish our outgoing Director of Programming and Training ntae Eric the best as he returns back to the US and at the same time we are glad to welcome ‘m’e Debra Pinkney on board.

VRF:
This is a gentle reminder that the final submission for fiscal year 2014 is September 15. This will give ‘m’e Jimi in particular just enough time to compile the PEP-FAR report (which is due end of September).

CHED and HY CORNER by ‘M’e Selloane & M’e ‘Mamakhetha
Likhomo tseo le manemane a tsona!

VRF Feed back
Thank you very much for your patience in the slow process of feedback provision. It has been quite an effort taking into consideration the activities that have been going on at the time when you really wanted to hear about your feedback. Rea leboha kannete! The deadline for the new VRFs is September 15th 2014. So start working on them now so that you will not be caught up by time!

Site Visits and Site Identification
The month of September we will roll out the site identification process in different areas and districts of Lesotho. If you have any leads, please let us know. We will also be conducting the site visits to the HY 14 group to look at integration issues early. ‘M’e ‘Mamakhetha will be out the whole of the week beginning September 1, 2014. ‘M’e Selloane will be out on September 4th and the week beginning September 8th 2014. HY 14s, let us make
sure that your supervisors, counterparts, host families and your “mansions” are ready to welcome us.

HY 13 Mid service
We miss each other for sure! The Mid service has been scheduled for the week of September 15th – 17th and will be held at Ka Pitseng in TY. Come ready to share your experiences of your 12 months of service in Lesotho and socialize with your fellow HY 13 colleagues!

Gold star activities

Randi Helgesen (aka Litšeoane) HY 13
“Teaching life skills in a high school proves to be challenging at times when there is little opportunity for students to express themselves freely outside of the classroom. I believe that individuals who are able to express themselves through their own passions are better prepared to cope with difficult lessons that life throws at them. After school activities are a great way for students to channel their creative talents and try something new when an activity sparks their interest. Using PACA prioritization tables, I asked students what kind of clubs they would like to see at school. The number one was a dance club. So we started after school with eight of us in a classroom, tables pushed against the back of the room, and we began choreographing dances. We now have 40 students in our dance club, boys and girls, and we practice three times per week. The students have become the leaders of the group as they choreograph their own dances, are capable of running their own practices, and have a captain of the team who takes extra time to teach struggling members how to do the dances. This dance club may seem like a small success. But, the impact of the dance club extends much greater than just the dancing itself. This club is teaching confidence, leadership, and empowering students to channel creative energy into something they can see and feel. The club is sustainable as the students are running it, giving them a sense of pride in themselves, their peers, and their school. They are making memories that will stay with them forever”.

Amy Morgan Mycoff (aka Neo) HY 13
“Upon my arrival at Good Shepherd Centre last August, I realized that while there was an established timetable for the teenage mothers to follow, they rarely did. The sisters who were supposed to be teaching the subjects weren’t present, the partnering organizations that were scheduled to teach would not show up, or there were gaps in the timetable of empty time. This ultimately resulted in the teenage mothers spending most of their time sitting idly. I spoke to some of the girls about the timetable and they admitted that they didn’t really follow it and just did what they wanted to do. When I spoke to my counterpart about it, she said that it was an issue that also concerned her but that at that point in the year it was too late to change. We then decided that at the beginning of January before classes resumed that we would hold a formal meeting with all of the sisters and construct a timetable that made sense and would be enforced.

We held this meeting the second week of January and used the previous timetable as a template. We reorganized certain classes so that the progression would make sense, we took into account the schedules of the sisters so that they would be able to ensure their presence in classes, and we contacted partner organizations to get commitments from them regarding their teaching slots. We also added formal education classes, Math and English, to the timetable in order to increase the passing rate of the girls that take their exams. An agreement was also made that if there is a special circumstance during the week where classes would be interrupted, that there
should be 2 day warning so that arrangements might be made.

Since classes resumed, the teenage mothers and the sisters alike have followed the timetable. This has resulted in the teenage mothers being more engaged in their lessons and progressing quickly through the material. The decrease in downtime has decreased conflicts between the girls and increased the general morale. In the long-term, the more structured schedule will hopefully increase retention for learners in the second year as well as the number of applicants to the center”.

Our new DPT, Debra Pinkney, is arriving in Lesotho on September. She is very much looking forward to being here, and you will love her. Here is a little about her:

Debra Pinkney is a native of the Washington Metropolitan area. She grew up in Maryland, and currently lives in Virginia. She brings over 20 years of professional experience, 14 of which are in public health. Debra initially joined the Peace Corps family as a PCV in Niger from 1998 – 2000, working as a Community Health Agent. Following her service, she joined the Overseas Programming &Training Support (OPATS) in 2001 as the Overseas Staff Training (OST)Coordinator, a Programming & Training Assistant and then as a Training & Curriculum Specialist.

She joined the Office of Global Health and HIV (OGHH) as a Program Specialist-Prevention/Behavior Change in August 2010. In this role Debra has provided programmatic support and technical guidance to Peace Corps posts. She is on the Small Grants Team and the Ideal Council, the interdisciplinary team dedicated to sexual assault education, prevention, and support for Volunteers and staff. Prior to rejoining to Peace Corps, Debra enjoyed working as a Public Health Analyst at RTI International where she conducted research and program evaluation activities for HIV/AIDS and infectious disease interventions that were implemented by various USG agencies.

Debra was also a Peace Corps Fellow at the University of Arizona where she earned an MPH in Health Education & Behavioral Sciences and an MS in Family Studies and Human Development. Debra has also volunteered as an HIV/AIDS Educator for the Whitman Walker Clinic in Washington, DC and for a brief time as a Research Assistant for the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation.

Debra loves to hike and worked as a hiking guide for Canyon Ranch in Arizona. In the last year she has learned to love running and ran her first half marathon (13.1 miles) on May 31. Debra also loves to learn languages and speaks English, French, a little bit of German, Spanish, and Zarma. She is excited to take on her new role as Director of Programming & Training in Lesotho and, of course, looks forward to learning Sesotho.

MEDICAL CORNER BY DR. Olga Wa Kone

Dear Volunteers!

As we all know, there has been an Ebola outbreak in West Africa. Below is the letter from the Africa region director.

August 15, 2014

Dear Peace Corps Volunteers, Trainees and Staff in the Africa Region,

As you probably know, two weeks ago Peace Corps decided to temporarily remove Volunteers and Trainees (V/Ts) from Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia due to the unabated outbreak of Ebola. The decision to remove 340 Volunteers was unprecedented. It was made out of an abundance of caution, and driven by our commitment to your health and safety.

Since the outbreak began in Guinea in March, we have closely monitored the situation in collaboration with leading experts from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Department of State. The Peace Corps has also provided volunteers in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea with guidance on precautions recommended by CDC and other health experts to minimize risks of exposure to the Ebola virus. Ebola is extremely difficult to contract because it is transmitted through direct contact with the bodily fluids of someone who is already showing symptoms. For this reason, we felt it was safe for Volunteers to remain in-country with the precautions we advised.

So what changed that prompted Peace Corps’ decision to temporarily remove all Volunteers and Trainees from the three countries?

First, the magnitude and scope of the Ebola outbreak was unprecedented, and it was continuing to rise significantly in two of the three countries.

Second, the Ebola outbreak was overwhelming the capacity of health care systems in two of the affected countries, which put our Volunteers and Trainees at risk in case of a non-Ebola emergency.

Third, there was a significant increase in concern from V/Ts and family members when the news hit US media that two American health care professionals had become infected with the Ebola virus.

Finally, two Volunteers had incidental contact with a
community member who was complaining of malaria but later died of the Ebola virus. (I am very glad to report that the Volunteers did not contract Ebola, they are healthy and now safely back in the States).

Peace Corps’ decision was endorsed by medical experts from CDC and the Department of State. On the heels of our decision, CDC issued a warning to avoid non-essential travel to the West African nations of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone due to the outbreak. Since then, international flights out of Liberia and Sierra Leone have become increasingly scarce as airlines have curtailed service. Last week, the WHO declared the outbreak “an ‘extraordinary’ event—a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).” This week, the State Department called for an “ordered departure” of eligible family members from Liberia and Sierra Leone due to concerns about lack of adequate medical care, especially for children, as health care facilities struggle with the Ebola outbreak. All of these developments have confirmed the wisdom of our decision to temporarily remove our Volunteers and Trainees from these countries.

Peace Corps will continue to work with CDC and State Department to monitor the Ebola outbreak to determine when it is safe for Volunteers and Trainees to return to post.

Still, we understand that the ongoing Ebola outbreak continues to generate concerns and questions from Peace Corps staff, Volunteers and family members, including:

What is Peace Corps doing in other countries that have not yet been affected?
And, what will we do if there is a case of Ebola in another Peace Corps country?

Most of our posts are involved in collaborative, interagency efforts to develop contingency plans in the event Ebola cases arise, identify needs of the host country to deal with Ebola, assess risks, and follow suspected cases. Many African countries are now taking an array of precautionary measures, including initiating airport screening of arriving passengers, setting up Ebola testing labs, and establishing isolation and treatment facilities for suspected or actual cases. To date, there have been rumors of Ebola cases in a number of countries; however, all of these have been tested and determined to be non-Ebola illnesses, with the exception of Nigeria where there have been nine cases and two deaths. The Nigeria Ebola cases demonstrate both how difficult it is to contract the virus and how it can be contained so it does not affect the general population: that sick passenger flew between three countries on two different flights, but no other passengers on either of those flights has shown signs of infection to date; the other Ebola cases that did occur resulted from individuals that cared for the sick individual, and there have been no other new cases, as the Nigerian authorities have aggressively sought to trace contacts and isolate suspicious cases.

Our message is straightforward, following the advice of the medical experts:

Contracting Ebola is extremely difficult. Transmission of the virus requires direct contact with body fluids from a sick, infected individual. Individuals who are infected but not yet showing any symptoms are not considered contagious. Transmission is not airborne, such as with influenza or the common cold.

If there are no cases of Ebola in your country, it is virtually impossible to contract it.

If Ebola cases do occur in your country, we will do a number of things:

- Peace Corps will continuously monitor the situation and work with the CDC and the U.S. Department of State to provide up-to-date, authoritative information and recommendations to our staff and Volunteers.
- We will continue to encourage our Volunteers and Trainees to take the following precautions that should help prevent infection:
  - Avoid physical contact with any individual with a fever, including those complaining of malaria, or sick people with an unexplained illness.
  - Avoid health facilities that are treating Ebola patients.
  - Avoid eating any bush meat.
  - And, as always, we encourage you to contact your PCMO immediately if you feel sick or unsafe at your site.

We will also move Volunteers – temporarily or permanently – from areas where the population is significantly affected by the Ebola virus.

As we did in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, we will decide to temporarily remove all Volunteers and Trainees from a country in collaboration with CDC and State Department medical experts.

At any time, if a V/T feels uncomfortable in continuing service in a country where an outbreak of Ebola is occurring, we will grant Interrupted Service at their request.

Peace Corps will continue to work closely with all of our posts, and with the CDC and State Department, to monitor the Ebola virus. Our decision-making will be driven by our concern for and commitment to your health and safety. As we did with Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, when an outbreak does reach a certain point, we will act with an abundance of caution.

I recognize the sacrifices that you – Volunteers and staff alike – make to serve in Peace Corps. Please remember:
you are changing the lives of countless Africans in your communities, classrooms and organizations through your service – you are transferring skills, planting ideas and dreams, modeling values, and teaching worldviews. I want to personally thank you for your commitment to service and the high values of the Peace Corps.

I appreciate the anxiety that the Ebola outbreak may cause you and your loved ones back home. I want to assure you that we have your health and safety as our top priorities as we make decisions in the face of this unprecedented, extraordinary outbreak.

Sincerely,

Dick
Dick Day
Regional Director

VOLUNTEER VOICES

The Interview

This month PCV Tori Raymond HY 13 shares her interview with RPCV Thomas Good
PC Lesotho, CHED
2011-2013

1. What are you doing now in the U.S.?

This summer I began a one year fellowship through an organization called Global Health Corps (GHC). GHC places young (30 and under) public health professionals at organizations working toward health equity, with a heavy emphasis on professional development. They operate in 5 countries in Africa as well as 3 cities in the US.

I am working as the Development and Communications Coordinator at Last Mile Health in Boston. Last Mile Health focuses on remote health outreach and development in Liberia. Thus far it has been an incredible experience, and I definitely recommend soon-to-be RPCVs to check it out - applications will probably go up toward the end of the year with a due date in January or February. Feel free to ask me for more information (tommygood@gmail.com)!

2. What is the best thing about being back in the U.S.?

Seeing friends and family. Reconnecting with the people I missed most has been incredible. A lot happened while I was gone, both for me and for my friends and family, but I was pleasantly surprised to discover that we picked up exactly where we left off when I left for Lesotho.

3. What do you miss most about Lesotho?

There are many things I miss about Lesotho, and quite honestly some of the things I feel the most nostalgic for often bothered me while I was there (taxis blasting famu, for one!) I miss my house and the mountains and so much more. But what I miss most of all are the people. My friends and neighbors, my colleagues, PCVs, everyone. The people I met and got to know during my time in Lesotho made my experience as wonderful as it was, and I miss them the most.

4. What was your favorite food in Lesotho?

Fried chicken from Mazizi's in Qacha. Hands down.

5. Do you have any advice for current PCVs in Lesotho?

I'm not big on doling out advice. I think in many ways the experience is what you make of it, and there don't have to be any limits on how positive it can be. Make the most of it and have fun! And take pictures - I wish I did more of that.

6. How do you plan to stay connected to Peace Corps (RPCV groups, reunions, PC response, etc.)?

I have attended a couple of RPCV get togethers in Boston and plan to continue doing so. I will also seek more opportunities to stay involved as time goes on.

7. Is there anything else you'd like to share with PCVs in Lesotho?

There isn't a day that goes by that I don't think about Lesotho. It's incredible that just over three years ago I didn't know much of anything about this tiny country, and now it represents the most important part of my life. Not many people have the chance to live in such an amazing part of the world - we are the lucky ones.

Peer Support Network (PSN)

Parting Words from your Ed’ 13 PSNs

Amanda Frye

All too soon, my Peace Corps Lesotho experience will be coming to a close. What seemed like a very long commitment almost two years ago has flown by in a blink, and I
truly appreciate the person Lesotho has shaped me into. From finding joy in the smallest of triumphs and interactions, to crying buckets of tears over the most mundane tasks, Lesotho has been a roller coaster ride that will be very hard to exit.

I have quite a few people to thank for getting me through this experience, though they all go by one name: family. Whether it's my family back home, my husband in our home here, the family I have created within my compound and community, or my PCV comrades who have become my family, I could not have had the kind of service I have had without them. From loving and listening to me, to confronting and encouraging me, my family has ensured that I will walk away from Lesotho a better person.

Yet as PCV's, we can at times feel let down by our blood and Basotho families, feeling like they just don't get it. And that's where we as volunteers have a duty to support one another. While we don't all always get along, or even like one another, the least we can do is remain professional and courteous of each other. You never know when you will have an impact on someone. So this month, while you're out and about, make your impact positive and remember that your PCV family needs you and your support.

Narin Ratanavade

A big thing PSN has taught me is how effective active listening is in helping others cope. Much of our concerns and frustrations can be worked out by just talking to someone you can trust about it, and knowing you will not be judged. It gives us comfort, a place to vent, and helps us to listen to ourselves to help us come up with solutions to our own problems.

From my experience, no matter what sector you're from or where you live, many of our issues are similar. I encourage every volunteer to look out for one another, to listen to one another. You'll be surprised at how your issues are similar to theirs! And best of all, you may not realize it, but you may be helping the other volunteer out by just reaching out to them with a simple "hello." Many of us feel alone at our site, and it shouldn't feel that way if every volunteer took a bit of time to look out for one another.

Laura M. Johnson

As my time in Peace Corps comes to an end, I've been reflecting on how formative each leg of this journey has been. From PST to arriving in village, the changes of each season, vacations and visits from family, 27 months that seemed as though they'd last forever have melted away. In Gretchen Rubin's book, The Happiness Project, she says, "The days are long, but the years are short." Those words ring truer and truer as August comes to a close and my COS conference approaches.

Before arriving in Lesotho, my uncle, an RPCV, told me that you never know where the day will lead you as a PCV. We can all become "stuck" in routines of course, but there's always the chance that each day will lead you to a new person, a new place or a new favorite book/song/TV show etc. These are the moments I find so addictive about travel—the instant when you discover something so fantastic that you can't imagine how you managed before. A new lifestyle redefines you, or maybe expands how you define yourself. My American self rarely cooked, was an amateur teacher, and often got too busy to call my parents; but here as a PCV, I talk to my family weekly, derive real satisfaction from a successful lesson, and (not to brag) but I can make a mean Mexican meal from scratch! Thus, here are my final words of wisdom— it's easy to wish away the days and to dwell on things we are missing at home, but I challenge you to think about how each day here shapes you into a whole new you. The years are short, and your next favorite thing might be just around the corner.

Diversity

Out of the Box

By Matt Murray HY13

Being a male Volunteer of African descent has made my experience here in Lesotho a very interesting one. For the most part, I have been received pretty well here by the Basotho, which has made me feel very comfortable and has kept me motivated at site. However, being a Volunteer
of African descent can occasionally come with some drawbacks. Growing up in different environments and having traveled to numerous countries throughout my life prior to coming to Lesotho has given me the coping skills to deal with certain socio-cultural adversities.

My parents migrated to New York City from Jamaica in the late 1980’s, and the neighborhood where I spent most of childhood was predominantly Black (African American and West Indian). My family made it a priority that we take at least one trip a year to Jamaica so I could be well connected with my roots and culture. During my childhood, I’d say I had a very strong sense of belonging to my community and who I was ethnically; however, during my pre-teens, the latter was not as strong. When I was 10 years old, my family and I moved to the predominantly White northern suburbs of Atlanta. Besides the usual feelings of insecurity that develop during puberty, I felt like I did not know where I belonged sub-culturally. I had interests and hobbies that where considered typical of African Americans but at I also had interests and hobbies that where considered “White”, and I would get ridiculed by my Black peers for that. Naturally at that age you want to fit in with a certain group so I started giving in to peer pressure, albeit a very short-lived phase for me.

Around that time, my family and I started traveling to numerous places overseas on holidays and this gave me a much broader perspective of the world and we continued to do this up throughout my college days. As mentioned earlier, I’ve felt welcomed in Lesotho since day one. During PST my host family treated me very well and I still talk to the bo-abuti in that family on a regular basis. When I got to site, people were very welcoming in the community. Apart from the hiking boots and backpack, most Basotho knew I was not a Mosotho; my height and facial features also gave me away.

There are some instances when people realize that I don’t speak Sesotho fluently and they can become very impatient and question why I have not learned the language already, something that most white volunteers won’t be pressured with. There have also been some people who have smirked at me for being a black male PCV. They’ll say, “That’s what the Whites do”.

However, I must say that vast majority of people that I have met here have been welcoming and greatly appreciate my work. In particular, when people discover that my family is from Jamaica, we have more of solidarity. Jamaica, like most of southern Africa, was a British colony which has given us some cultural similarities. Also, reggae is very popular here, which has been very refreshing to me.

Being of African descent makes me have even more of passion to help improve the lives of the people here in Lesotho and I look forward to the upcoming year.

The BRO Sub-Committee

By Matt Merritt ED14

The BRO sub-committee exists to organize and execute Boys Respecting Others or BRO camps across Lesotho with a focus on gender equality, men’s health, leadership, and life skills. Through our committee, we hope to build the capacity of PCVs, host country nationals, and local organizations to facilitate BRO camps and educate the male youth of Lesotho. We are both very passionate about working with young men and hope to create a foundation that promotes mentorship, authentic friendships, healthy relationships, and thus develop the participants into the next generation of leaders. It is obvious that across Lesotho, there is an epidemic we are facing: a lack of responsible, educated leaders dedicated to gender equality in their communities. Sexual assault, human trafficking, rape and domestic violence all stem from men’s belief that women are not their physical and mental equals, which results in an imbalance and lack of respect between the two sexes. By positively influencing young men through BRO camps, we will be teaching them how to be gentlemen, role models, mentors, and most importantly, how to be real men with confidence, love, and respect towards their fellow man and woman. If any of you would like to be a part of what the BRO camp sub-committee is trying to accomplish, please message Joseph Downes or Matthew Merritt. BRO love,

Men’s Challenge

Mark your calendars! International’s Men’s Day is on Wednesday, November 19th. In honor of this approaching occasion, the BRO subcommittee of GEL is issuing a Men’s Challenge. This challenge is a chance for PCVs to recognize a Mosotho man who has worked hard to promote gender equality, men’s health, and/or leadership in their community. The winner will be selected, given a certificate, and featured in the December Khotso. In order to nominate someone, please send a brief description and a photo to geneqlesotho@gmail.com by November 12th.
Write On Competition

By Chelsea Kelleher ED13
Khotsong baithaopi!

First off, a big thanks to everyone who participated in this year’s Write On Competition! From submitting essays to being roped into last minute judging- we could not have done it without you! We had about 1,500 essays from students all across Lesotho this year and they were even more creative and insightful than last year. Though we are only into our second year hosting WOC, we already had remarkable improvements and a greater turn out this year. We are hoping to keep it up!

Our team is beginning to plan for next year and we would like your help! We sent out an email to PCVs who participated this year asking for suggestions on how we can improve, and to those who sent us an email back, your responses were well received! We are planning for some big changes to meet the challenges we’ve had as a new program. We are going to be growing our team to include more PCVs and to better partner with outside organizations and schools where PCVs are not currently working. We also want to improve logistical challenges, such as distribution of certificates, and help those facilitating WOC sessions by giving participating PCVs and schools more lesson plans, materials, and suggestions on how to prepare your students. While we have some exciting ideas planned, we certainly want to hear from all of you who have suggestions on how we can better assist you all holding WOC sessions at your sites, how we can further the WOC mission to inspire creativity in our students while further developing their English skills and how we can become more competitive at the international level! Please email your ideas to myoon7891@gmail.com or ckelleher89@gmail.com.

And please check out our facebook page and blog!
www.facebook.com/writeonlesotho
www.writeonlesothoblog.wordpress.com

Rea Leboha!
Write On! Competition Lesotho Team

Reading Suggestion:

The Mountain School, by Greg Alder. Greg was a Peace Corps Volunteer and writes of his experience here as an Education Volunteer. The book is available at the Morija Museum, or through Amazon.

Hotel Jiggetts

Like peeing in a bucket?
How about reading by paraffin lamp?
I'm sure you just love bucket baths, right?

Well, if you like any of the above, then Hotel Jiggetts surely is the place for you to rest your loins!

Hotel Jiggetts, my home, is a traditional Basotho house called a rondaval. It's a hut with a thatched, or straw, roof, that is traditionally used for cooking in Basotho culture.

Hotel Jiggetts has no running water or electricity, but as the proprietor, I've made it as cute and comfy as can be for you! Here's what you can expect during your stay:

Lodging: This one-room hut is about the size of a matchbox, so if you don't like to stretch or breath, this IS definitely the place for you!

Rates: One jar of Trader Joe's Cookie Butter and two boxes of quinoa will suffice for payment. You're never too good to barter!

Meals: Curry veggies. Thai noodles. Banana pancakes. The grub is pretty scrumptious at Hotel Jiggetts. Pick your plate and Chef Jiggetts has your back. Er, stomach.

Things to do: Evening sunsets beat what's on your cable TV any day of the week! Do you know how dramatic it is for the clouds to slowly part from a pink-hued sky? Oh, and don't worry about nightlife because Club Jiggetts has got you covered.

The locals: The family dog, a lion, might pop in every so often to rummage through the trash bin. And spiders visit the premises a lot. They're not harmless unless you get them before they get you:)

Hotel Jiggetts was given 5 out of 5 stars by the Thisaintforeverybody Traveler's Association.

So holler at yours truly if you're ready to book at this very fine establishment.
Serious inquiries only.
## Global Competencies Inventory (GCI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception Management</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Standard Definition</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Excessive Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nonjudgmentalness</strong></td>
<td>Makes snap judgments about situations or people, reluctant to change those conclusions.</td>
<td>Willingness to withhold or suspend negative judgments about situations or people.</td>
<td>Waits to understand the situation or person before making a judgment.</td>
<td>Waits too long before making any judgments, may come across as conflict-averse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inquisitive</strong></td>
<td>Prefers to maintain current habits, traditions, and ways of thinking; exhibits little or no interest in actively exploring other ways or ideas.</td>
<td>Disposition to look at new and different experiences as opportunities for variety, change, and learning.</td>
<td>Open and curious about new things; energetically pursues understanding of new ideas, possibilities, and experiences.</td>
<td>Continually bounces from one new interest to the next without achieving depth or getting traction on any pursuit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tolerance of Ambiguity</strong></td>
<td>Dislikes or avoids ambiguity and uncertainty; reacts negatively (impatiently, angrily, with frustration) when it's unclear what is happening.</td>
<td>Capacity to be comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty.</td>
<td>Tolerates ambiguity and uncertainty well and even welcomes it in almost all situations.</td>
<td>Displays such extreme comfort with ambiguity that he/she never attempts to exert structure or control; may come across as overly passive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cosmopolitanism</strong></td>
<td>Avoids foreign things; very insular when it comes to international events.</td>
<td>Natural interest in and curiosity about foreign countries, cultures, and geography, as well as current world and international events.</td>
<td>Intense interest in traveling abroad and learning about foreign places; strives to stay current on world and international events.</td>
<td>Takes more interest in global affairs than what is happening at home; may flaunt cosmopolitanism in a way that designates others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interest Flexibility</strong></td>
<td>Uncomfortable replacing old and familiar activities with new ones; reads with annoyance when daily routines are disturbed or removed.</td>
<td>Willingness to explore new interests or hobbies and to try things that differ from one's normal routine.</td>
<td>Comfortable replacing familiar activities with different ones in new situations; easily changes daily routines and adapts to new circumstances.</td>
<td>Changes habits and interests so readily that others cannot depend on routines; may be seen as catering to the whims of others rather than pursuing own interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship Interest</strong></td>
<td>Not interested in knowing or learning about people who are different, especially those from other cultures or ethnic groups.</td>
<td>Awareness of and interest in other people, especially those who are different or who come from other cultures.</td>
<td>Interested in learning about and getting to know people who are different, especially those from other cultures or ethnic groups.</td>
<td>Displays more interest in learning about people from other cultures than getting to know the needs and expectations of key stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpersonal Engagement</strong></td>
<td>Puts very little effort into interacting with or developing friendships with people who are different from oneself.</td>
<td>Willingness to take the initiative to meet and engage others in interactions, including strangers from other cultures.</td>
<td>Interested in developing and maintaining friendships with people who are different and engaging them in interesting conversations.</td>
<td>Spends a disproportionate amount of time interacting with people from other cultures while ignoring people from own culture, “goes native”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotional Sensitivity</strong></td>
<td>Little awareness of how others are feeling or what they are thinking; rarely attempts to consider the situations or challenges that others may face.</td>
<td>Capacity to read the emotions and understand the feelings and concerns of others, as well as respond with empathy to the circumstances they face.</td>
<td>Aware of and sensitive to the emotions and feelings of others; highly attentive to how people feel and likely to respond with empathy.</td>
<td>Expresses excessive empathy, may come across as insensitive, intrusive, or overly personal – especially with people that one does not know well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Awareness</strong></td>
<td>Unconcerned about knowing oneself or how one’s own behavior affects others, uninterested in reflecting on or trying to understand one’s own experiences.</td>
<td>Awareness of oneself, own values, beliefs, capabilities, and limitations as well as an understanding of how one’s own beliefs, capabilities, and limitations impact others.</td>
<td>Aware of own values, strengths, limitations, and behaviors along with their impact on others, continually evaluates oneself and one’s impact.</td>
<td>Over-analyzes own behavior to the extent of becoming almost paralyzed and afraid to act, may behave in a stifled or cautious manner rather than naturally and genuinely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Flexibility</strong></td>
<td>Dislikes adjusting own social behavior; has a hard time moving away from usual behavior even though situations may require such adjustments.</td>
<td>Capacity to regulate and adapt one’s behavior to fit in and build positive relationships with others.</td>
<td>Versatile at adapting own behavior to fit into varying social situations and foster a positive social and interpersonal environment.</td>
<td>Operates in such a versatile manner that it can be difficult for others to recognize core values and beliefs, may be seen as chameleon-like or shift.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Optimism</strong></td>
<td>Has difficulty seeing the positive side of people, things, or events; tends to dwell on the negative.</td>
<td>Positive mental outlook towards people and situations generally, and living or working in a foreign culture.</td>
<td>Maintains a highly positive outlook toward people, events, and outcomes.</td>
<td>Conveys such enthusiastic optimism about people and situations that judgment is not viewed as realistic; may not be trusted to deliver results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Confidence</strong></td>
<td>Believes that he/she is unlikely to be successful in own efforts even with study and hard work.</td>
<td>Belief in own ability to succeed by hard work and effort.</td>
<td>Feels able to do anything if one can study it out, work hard, and apply oneself.</td>
<td>Extreme self-reliance may prevent one from being vulnerable or asking for help; may appear arrogant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Identity</strong></td>
<td>Unsure of own beliefs or has weak commitment to them; quick to compromise own values in order to fit in or avoid a conflict.</td>
<td>Ability to maintain own values and beliefs while still being accepting of those who are different.</td>
<td>Aware of core personal values and never violates them, yet open and comfortable around those who have different beliefs and values.</td>
<td>Overly strong self-identity may rigidify, may get expressed as high standards that discourages others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotional Resilience</strong></td>
<td>Finds it difficult to handle psychologically and emotionally challenging situations; takes a long time to recover from such experiences.</td>
<td>Emotional strength and ability to cope well with setbacks, mistakes, or frustrations.</td>
<td>Responds with emotional resilience to potentially challenging and frustrating situations, recovers quickly from difficult or challenging experiences.</td>
<td>Extreme resilience may be taken advantage by others who continue making excessive or abusive demands, continual rebounding may take an inner toll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Stress Tendency</strong></td>
<td>Reads to stressors with heightened anxiety and tension.</td>
<td>Innate disposition to respond with calmness and serenity to the stressors one faces.</td>
<td>Calmly responds to various stressors faced in life.</td>
<td>Excessive calm may come across as being icy or unfriendly; may not show enough empathy to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stress Management</strong></td>
<td>Rarely uses stress reduction strategies or only employs a narrow range of such techniques.</td>
<td>Level of active effort to manage stressors in one’s life.</td>
<td>Actively uses a variety of stress reduction strategies and techniques on a daily basis.</td>
<td>Spends too much time managing stress rather than addressing and eliminating the causes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PCVs' LIFE IN PICTURES

HY 14 trainees at their swearing in ceremony enjoying the singing

(Right) Gerad Thornton getting a visit from the Safety and Security Manager/Ntate Nthoalo

Bo-‘m’ e singing during the Swearing In Ceremony

Robby with children from his neighborhood

Mishelle(Middle) with her host parents