

# KHOTSO

June 2012

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## Message from the Country Director



Kathy and CHED 12 PST Resource Volunteers after a long day at TOT

Dear Volunteers,

It's great to be back from vacation! No, really. A few days ago, I wasn't sure I'd feel that way. On Monday of this week, I was enjoying some tasty Lebanese take-out with Michael and some friends in New York after taking a stroll in Central Park on a gorgeous spring day, and I honestly was kind of dreading facing winter in Lesotho. But alas, when we landed it was warm and sunny and noticeably cleaner here than in NY! And I have to say that although seeing family and friends, attending Michael's son's wedding and eating all of my favorite food (as evidenced by the 7 pounds I gained) was pretty darn great, Lesotho is my home right now and I wouldn't want to be anywhere else. I've even imagined how I will feel next year when it's my turn to "COS". It's going to be hard to leave such a beautiful country with such friendly people and great Volunteers and staff. I hope you cherish your time here. Trust me, it goes by fast!

I don't have much to report since I was gone for the whole month but would like to extend my thanks to the following people:

- ◆ The Resource Volunteers who assisted with TOT in April (see photo). I think they will attest to the amount of work that goes into planning PST and their input was invaluable.
- ◆ The staff who held down the fort during my absence, especially nstate Clement, Charles and Jim, who served as acting CD at different times during the month.

◆ All of you for your cooperation during the election period. As of now, we still await final results but are hopeful that the transition will go smoothly as Lesotho enters the next chapter of its political history.

◆ As you know, 21 CHED12 trainees are scheduled to arrive today. We are excited and look forward to orienting them to life and work in Lesotho over the next couple of months. Thanks in advance to the Volunteers who will assist one way or another with their training.

Please note that the 2012 Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS) will launch on June 18 and end on August 20, 2012. (See flyer at the end of the Khotso.) The annual survey is one of

the most important tools the agency uses to gather critical data to inform performance improvement across the agency. The AVS provides an annual snapshot of Volunteers' views on training, work, and life experiences. It is your opportunity to share your views about Peace Corps service in order to improve the experience of future Volunteers and to deepen the agency's impact in the communities in which Volunteers live and work. The thoughtful responses of Volunteers will be used by headquarters offices and posts to identify global and post-specific trends, successful programs, and areas for improvement.

This year, for the first time, the 2012 AVS will be an exclusively online survey. Last year all but one Volunteer completed the survey. This year we would like 100%. More information to follow.

Finally, to the CHED10s, I hope you had a great COS conference and are enjoying your remaining time in Lesotho. To the CHED11s, can you believe you're almost the most "senior" Volunteers?! You all have done a great job during your first year. To the Education12s, good luck winding up your first term. I look forward to seeing you in a few weeks.

Khotso,  
Kathy

## Editorial Staff

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*Community Health & Economic Development* - Charles Miller— Director of Programming and Training & Selloane Pitikoe—Programming & Training Specialist

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Letsatsi Mohale—Programming and Training Secretary

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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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

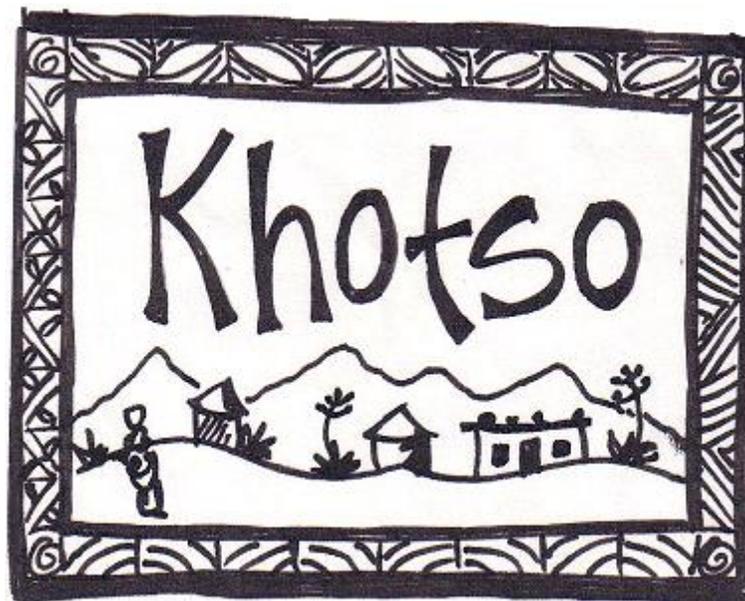
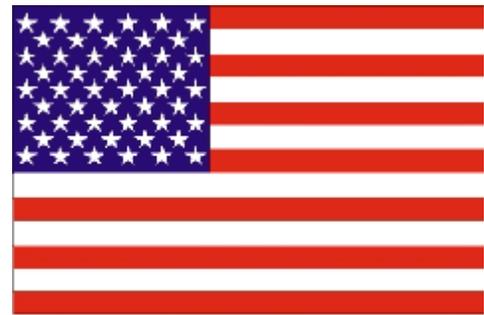
The editorial staff would like feedback from PCVs regarding the content. It is our desire to provide you with information that is useful, helpful, and encouraging. We would appreciate receiving constructive feedback from you.

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 & Staff Birthdays

*Birthday greetings go out to the following Volunteers and staff!*

### June

Feraco, Nancy – 8  
McFarland, Carol – 11  
Kang, Peggy – 16  
Carson, Amy Jo – 17  
Anderman-Hahn, Evan – 21  
Campbell, Hannah – 23

### July

Mast, Nick – 2  
Jacquart, Kathy (CD) – 4  
Hughes, Tara – 10  
Howard, Jessalynne – 21  
Wilson, Ashley – 21  
Makhele, Malisema (PEPFAR Admin Assistant) – 27  
Mofolo, Victoria (Financial Assistant) – 31

## Peace Corps Lesotho Holidays (Office closed these days)

### June

Ascension Day (LS Holiday) – 2

### July

Independence Day (US Holiday) – 4  
King's birthday (LS Holiday) – 17

## Calendar of Events and Staff Travel

June 1	Arrival of CHED12 trainees
June 14 – 15	Nt. Clement on leave
June 17 – 22	ED12 PDM and HIV/AIDS workshop
July 2 – 7	Kathy on leave
July 2 – 20	Nt. Clement on leave
July 19 – 29	Kathy on leave

## Duty Officer Schedule

June 4 – 10	FA
June 11 – 17	GSO
June 18 – 24	CD
June 25 – Jul 1	DMO
July 2 – 8	APCD – ED
July 9 – 15	APCD – CHED
July 16 – 22	Training Manager
July 23 – 29	HIV/AIDS Coord.
July 30 – August 5	PTS – ED

## New staff member



We would like to welcome M'e Mamakhetha Moranye who joined us on May 7, 2012 assuming the role of Program & Training Specialist (PTS) for the CHED program. Before joining Peace Corps, she was a Project Officer at UNICEF under an EU funded project. Before that she worked at the Department of Cooperatives as an Extension Officer.

Mamakhetha holds a degree in Humanities, Postgraduate Diploma in Community Development and is currently pursuing her Master's

Degree in Adult Education (Community Development). She is married with 2 children.

## ADMIN CORNER by Jim

**Heating Allowance:** HOA BATA...!!! If it's this cold in Maseru, I can imagine what it must be like in some of the places you are living. Starting with your May Living Allowance you should be receiving an additional M85.00 per month to help defer some of your additional heating costs. Check your LA statements to make sure it is on there. (It is listed as "Misc Recurring"). It will continue through September. Also, please let us know if your heaters (or any other equipment) are not working properly. We will do our best to address issues as quickly as possible.

**Tutoring Reimbursement:** We have modified the tutoring reimbursement form to add a place for 'M'e Mamokola's (LCHC) signature. Please make sure you are submitting the correct form, which can be found on the share point site under PCV Forms. Also, please remember that what PC will reimburse is a maximum of 20 hours per month at a rate of M10.00 per hour. If you need additional tutoring, please discuss with your APCD.

**Office Move:** We are finally making some progress on the office move. Although our prospective landlord will not be able to vacate the property for a little while longer, he has given us permission to start construction on the perimeter wall, which must be built to State Department specifications. We have hired an architect to supervise the design and construction, which should begin in a week or two. As soon as the landlord and his wife move to their new residence (also under construction), we will be able to start working on the interior of the building. We will keep you posted on the progress.

**COSing Volunteers:** I would like to make the usual appeal to the COSing CHED 10s to dispose of as many of your items as possible before arriving in Maseru to COS. Give them away, sell them, or plan on taking them with you. Please do not leave them in the VRC as they will be thrown away. It seems like no matter how much we preach this, we always have a major clean up of discarded items after each COSing group. Break the pattern CHED 10s! I know you can do it...!!!

As always, please stay safe...!

## EDUCATION CORNER by Nt. Clement & 'Me Malitaba

In June, we will bid farewell to Lisa Dold, our PCRV assigned to Thuso e Tla Tsoa Kae Center in Botha Bothe. Lisa has done a stellar job training teachers at the center, and as a result of collaboration with her supervisor, the school has recently acquired a brand new classroom block fully equipped with electricity and indoor plumbing.

We are gearing up for the upcoming PDM and the HIV/AIDS Ca-



**New classroom built at Thuso e Tla Tsoa Kae Center**

capacity Building Workshop, which we believe will equip you and your counterparts with the necessary tools to fully engage in community development activities, including working with the disadvantaged, the vulnerable and the youth, in general.

Other areas that we hope to focus our attention to during this winter break are: plans for site identification (in some instances we will be asking some of you to help us out when we visit the areas that are close by), further development of the Primary English Assignment Area, Feedback on VRF#2, and continuation of the work kick started by Nathan on analyzing the impact of the Volunteer intervention in schools.

Please note that nate Clement will be on vacation July 2 – 20. 'M'e 'Malitaba will hold down the fort during this period.

## **PCV CORNER**

### **PSN? Another unknown acronym....**

**By Cassie Biron, CHED11, PSN Co-Chair**



Ever miss chatting it up on the tellie? Long gone are the days of unlimited minutes and text messages. We now live in a world where every message and every character counts.

But wait...there is hope. Peace Corps Lesotho has a designated group of your peers whom you can contact when you need someone to talk without worrying about airtime. Praise \*insert deity of your choice\* !

PSN is a Peer Support Network composed of volunteers from all over Lesotho specifically trained to support volunteers and common volunteer issues. We are all here to listen, advise, refer, and provide general support. The eight of us are trained and retrained to talk to our fellow PCVs about their personal problems, explore possible solutions, find and give info, and, where necessary, refer to the PCMO.

PSN is completely confidential, and each encounter with a fellow volunteer will be professional and unbiased; this you can count on. We are accepting individuals with experience and backgrounds in helping people cope and adjust in various environments. We are also elected by our peers as respected volunteers trusted to listen and help other volunteers.

PSN is here to support you on your worst days. When life as a Peace Corps Volunteer is just too much. When the line at the bank brings you to tears. When journaling, yoga, and a care package from home can't make you smile. Overall, PSN is just about support and understanding.

Now, let us meet your PSN members:

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### **From DAR: What is Reinfection and How Common is it?**

**By Jenny Cain, CHED 11, DAR**



A common question I receive in my Life Skills classes is "If a person is HIV positive, is it okay for them to have unprotected sex with another HIV positive person?" The quick answer is "No, you shouldn't", but a detailed description of why is needed so people can really understand the risks of becoming re-infected with HIV.

Re-infection or super infection can happen when a person with HIV is infected with a new or mutated strain of HIV. Medications can also mutate an HIV type, therefore increasing the chances of re-infesting your HIV positive sexual partner. After being infected with a new or mutated strain of HIV, a person's body can weaken and become resistant to treatment. In order to determine the different HIV viruses a person has, special research tests need to be conducted. These tests are not offered for general clinic care in Lesotho.

According to a study that was approved by the ethical review committees of the University of Nairobi and the University of Washington, the rate of HIV super infection may be the same as the rate of initial infection. A 5-year study was conducted in Kenya amongst high risk women to assess the risks of super infection. The study found 20% of the women became super infected within this 5-year time period. This study suggests that any time after the initial infection, a person can be super infected. This was the first detailed analyses of HIV-1 re-infection risk through heterosexual contact and it suggests that super infection can be relatively common.

If scientific jargon and examples of studies won't help your audience understand, the game of co-factor-tug-o-war from our Peace Corps electronic manual of tricks (Life Skills Activity Book PC Georgia-page 173) can aid for a younger crowd. The game works by selecting students to represent co-factors (smoking, having unprotected sex, drug use, etc.) and positive things people can do spiritually, physically, and emotionally. Then the students play tug-o-war to see if the positive life decisions can pull down the co-factors. At the end of the game, it's important to explain that whether you are HIV positive or negative, everybody is faced with the same tug-o-war battle of healthy vs. harmful life decisions. Also, emphasizing abstinence or consistent and correct condom use can never be downplayed when you are providing information on re-infection.

## **NEWS FROM AROUND THE PEACE CORPS WORLD**

### **Peace Corps Volunteers Celebrate Mother's Day; Support Maternal Health Projects Around the World**

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 10, 2012 - In recognition of Mother's Day, Peace Corps volunteers worldwide are engaging in projects to improve maternal health, educate new mothers and support women and children. Volunteers regularly serve in maternity clinics, teach nutrition to new and expecting mother's and provide information to keep families healthy.

Today, 22 percent of all Peace Corps volunteers work in the health/HIV sector. Health volunteers help communities meet basic public health needs through education and awareness, providing access to safe drinking water, distributing bed nets for malaria prevention, teaching sanitation measures and more. Even though Peace Corps volunteers are not medical care providers, they provide the skills and training to help keep communities healthy and safe. Many volunteers participate in health-related projects during the course of their service.

The following are highlights of how Peace Corps volunteers engage in maternal health projects:

#### Ecuador

Health education volunteer Caitlin Leach of Medina, Ohio, provides HIV counseling to more than 200 pregnant women each day as a volunteer in the largest public maternity hospital in Ecuador. Patients visit Leach before and after receiving an HIV test to learn about HIV prevention and transmission during childbirth. Leach also educates patients and their family members about HIV through lively activities and discussions. With the assistance of a licensed psychologist, Leach recently helped create a support group to encourage HIV positive mothers to take medication.

"I have learned countless life lessons from my coworkers in the clinic and the courageous patients whom I help daily," said Leach, a graduate of The Miami University of Ohio who has worked in Ecuador since 2010.

#### Morocco

Environmental education volunteer Jenifer McEnery of Wappingers Falls, N.Y., is working with a group of 14 mothers in her community to form a mothers' committee at a local preschool. The committee members will meet regularly to discuss topics including maternal health, education, community leadership and methods of addressing common challenges related to motherhood. The meetings will also serve as a platform for the mothers to interact with their children's teachers and to share ideas about successful education techniques.

"We're hoping to create a model that can help other communities establish preschools that develop mothers and children together," said McEnery, a graduate of Marist College who has been working in Morocco since 2011. "The new committee will prepare mothers through education to take more active and informed role in their children's health and education, and will help develop these women into role models for their children."

#### Peru

Youth development volunteer Elizabeth Salerno of Sierra Vista, Ariz., is creating and implementing a six-month program for mothers aged 18 to 24 in her Peruvian community. The program, "Life Guidance for Adolescent Mothers," is divided into three themes: woman, mother and spouse, and is composed of lectures, discussions and interactive educational activities. Topics covered during the program series will include personal development, decision making skills, how to set and meet goals

and the importance of communication. Participants will also learn about different income generating activities and will plan and implement maternal health-related educational activities at the local high school.

"The program series has the potential to create a whole new generation of women, mothers, and wives in the community," said Salerno, a graduate of University of Arizona. "The participants will be encouraged to define themselves as women with goals and plans to take control of their futures and the futures of their children. As mothers they will learn to create healthy meals for their families and maintain a safe, supportive home."

#### Swaziland

Community health volunteer Jenn Baker of Newark, Del., is providing support and guidance on healthy maternal lifestyle choices to members of the "Young Mother's Support Group" in her community. The group was started by community members and local health workers to help provide peer support, health information and business development skills for mothers.

"Because the group is community driven and community led, it demonstrates that solutions to perceived obstacles can be found within a community and the individuals that reside there," said Baker, a Juniata College graduate who has been in Swaziland since 2011.

### **Peace Corps Volunteers Host Math Challenge in South Africa**

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 23, 2012 - Peace Corps volunteers Chris Ames of Chicago, Ill., and Genna Cummins of Mount Vernon, Ky., have organized a math competition for students in six South African schools. Modeled after the American "Mathletes" competition, sixth grade students earn points for their school when they correctly solve problems in three different rounds of competition.

"One of the many reasons that math skills are so poor in rural South Africa is the amount of intimidation and anxiety it induces in learners," said Ames, who has been teaching Math in South Africa since July 2011. "In order to make math fun and ease some of these anxieties, Genna and I have introduced Mathletes, which is a type of Math competition already well established in the United States."

Each school sends six sixth grade students to play in three distinct rounds. In the first round, all of the players attempt to answer a multiplication question. The first student to answer the question correctly gains the point. In round two, the students answer questions in five different categories with varying difficulty and point values. In the third round, each team has five minutes to answer to one final problem.

Ames and Cummins have organized two rounds with six schools and hope that teachers will continue to contribute to the challenge. The volunteers have provided the schools with a template to create their own games and a list of topics they should expect to be addressed in each game. They will help teachers write their own math problems to keep the math challenge sustainable.

About Peace Corps/South Africa: More than 1,050 Peace Corps volunteers have served in South Africa since the program was established in 1997. Currently, 183 volunteers serve in South Africa. Volunteers work in the areas of education and health. Volunteers are trained and work in the following languages: isiNdebele, isiZulu, Sepedi, Setswana, siSwati, Northern Sotho, Venda, XiTsongo, Xhosa and Afrikaans.



## 2012 ANNUAL VOLUNTEER SURVEY

Share your views about your  
Peace Corps service!



Help inform Peace Corps at your  
post, headquarters, and around  
the world about your experience.



Please participate in the Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS)  
between June 18 - August 20, 2012.

*The information you and other Volunteers provide will:*

- *Capture Volunteers' opinions of what is working well*
- *Convey Volunteers' current concerns and suggestions for improvement*
- *Identify Peace Corps issues and trends from the Volunteers' perspective*
- *Help Peace Corps improve our ability to build local capacity*

***AVS results will be used only in summary form to protect your confidentiality.***

To access the survey, use the link provided by your post.

