World Roots News

June 2015

We hope this newsletter finds you enjoying the warmth of summer's arrival. Thanks to everyone for their submissions this month. Are you involved in any Third Goal activities you would like to share. Please send your stories to worldrootsnews@gmail.com.
From June 3-7, Phyllis Noble (Nigeria 1965-67) and Kate Schachter (Ghana 2004-07) joined about 498 other RPCVs from around the country at Peace Corps Connect-Berkeley http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/annual-gathering/berkeley-2015/. The closing ceremony included a conversation with Peace Corps Director Carrie Hessler-Radelet, where she announced, among other things, members from the med-evac’d group from Liberia were returning to service on June 8 and offices would be reopened in East Timor and other countries in the next few months. Afterward, our group was awarded the Loret Miller Ruppe Award for Outstanding Community Service (http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/about/awards/#miller). We received this award in 1994 for the International Calendar, and this year were pleased to accept it for our work with the 'we all' posters. After the acceptance speech, Kate was able to respond to Director Hessler-Radelet request to provide two laminated posters to take with her the next day to Samoa, her country of service 32 years ago.
Phyllis arrived early to join Friends of Nigeria in a separate full day of talks and networking, followed by an evening of dining and dancing. Phyllis also continues Bob Klein’s (Ghana I) program of recording the stories of RPCVs for archival at the JFK Library in Boston as part of the RPCV Oral History Project http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/RPCV.aspx. She was able to capture the story of Abdullahi Edward Tomasiewicz, a man who was admin-sep’d from PC/Nigeria in 1967, but went back on his own and spent the rest of his life living in Nigeria. His training group pitched in to buy his airfare from so he could come to this conference.

On Sunday morning, Kate joined about 50 people from 35 member groups for formal update, an intensive World Café idea-sharing, and in the 3rd part of the Purpose-Driven Group series, a program that our group supported with our NPCA grant from 2014 calendar proceeds (http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/resources/member-groups/information-for-member-groups/#purpose).
Microfinance at Work In Latin America

John Schroder is an RPCV and Board member of Working Capital for Community Needs (WCCN). The following is taken from a recent article he wrote for WCCN’s newsletter. You can find the entire article at http://www.wccn.org/meeting-our-mission-through-teamwork-and-partnerships-impact-investing/.

WCCN’s mission is to create opportunities for access to microfinance, services and markets to improve the lives and communities of the working poor in Latin America. WCCN puts our mission into action by providing various forms of financing and technical assistance to thoughtful, hardworking and locally impactful Latin American partners whose mission and actions help the working poor improve their standard of living.

Recently, I had the great pleasure of assisting with a local evaluation and the financial capacity building of WCCN’s partner COOPEFACSA in rural Nicaragua. It was an amazing experience on many levels. I was able to witness firsthand the great breadth and depth of the analysis that WCCN does in order to identify not only proper use of WCCN funds, but also a partner’s willingness and ability to collect and repay those funds to WCCN. The knowledge gained will help me evaluate credit requests as I continue to chair WCCN’s PRI Committee.
The visit made me reflect upon times when I was a Peace Corps Volunteer working in Costa Rica (1996-98) as a Small Business Consultant. I had wondered about the nonprofit development organizations and impact investors that made loans and gave donations to the underserved business communities in which I was working. I was curious as to who these organizations were and how they located the impoverished Costa Ricans they were dedicated to serve. I wondered how they could know where to provide funds, how much to provide, and then how to monitor the repayment and use of those funds. It was puzzling to me and I never fully understood the process and flow of those development dollars.

RPCVs WI-Madison Offer Mini-Grants to Promote Diversity

Across the state, teachers often need just a few extra dollars to paint a world map on the playground, add multicultural books to the library, or initiate a world language project. The RPCVs of WI-Madison offer mini-grants, with a quick turn-around, to K-12 teachers who have ideas for teaching about the diversity and commonality of the world’s peoples. The we all Project was initiated in 2008 by RPCVs who created a set of 15 posters that feature global commonalities of cultures in over 64 countries where volunteers have served [http://rpcvmadison.org/weall](http://rpcvmadison.org/weall). Such commonalities as We All Learn, We All Need Water, and We All Celebrate vibrantly illustrate differences in global cultures and communities for use in world language and social studies classrooms, elementary schools, and libraries and community centers.
September 1, 2015, is the first of four quarterly deadlines to which schools, libraries, or non-profit groups may apply for mini-grants. Poster order forms, curriculum resources, and mini-grant application forms are available on the we all Mini-Grants for Global Diversity web site: http://rpcvmadison.org/weall/grant. Please help pass the word to eligible friends and colleagues.

PC Recruitment at Hispanic-Serving Institutions

Laura Buchs, RPCV and World Roots editor was pleased to learn the University of New Mexico, where she currently works, is a top Peace Corps recruiter among HSIs https://news.unm.edu/news/unm-alumni-ranked-third-among-peace-corps-top-volunteer-producing-hsis. Laura has recently received an invitation from the PC Regional Recruiter to join the recruitment efforts at UNM, which does not have a dedicated campus recruiter. The following is a segment of PC’s press release about HSI recruitment.

The Peace Corps today announced its 2015 rankings of the top volunteer-producing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) nationwide. The University of California, Santa Cruz claimed the top spot among HSIs with 42 undergraduate alumni serving as Peace Corps volunteers. Another University of California school – the University of California, Santa Barbara – took the No. 2 spot with 38
graduates currently serving, and the University of New Mexico held on to the No. 3 spot for the second consecutive year with 29 alumni in service.

This year marks the first time a school in the University of California system has held the top spot in Peace Corps’ rankings of HSIs. The University of California, Santa Cruz also appeared on the agency’s national list of top volunteer-producing colleges and universities this year at No. 13 among large undergraduate schools. California is home to eight of the top ten HSIs in 2015 and produces more Peace Corps volunteers than any other state.

“Hispanic-Serving Institutions are sending a growing number of graduates to the Peace Corps to share their cultural experiences and knowledge with communities abroad,” Peace Corps Director Carrie Hessler-Radelet said. “A diverse volunteer force shows people across all corners of the world what it means to be an American.”

*Peace Corps’ 2015 top volunteer-producing Hispanic-Serving Institutions are:*

1. University of California, Santa Cruz (42 currently serving volunteers)
2. University of California, Santa Barbara (38 currently serving volunteers)
3. University of New Mexico (29 currently serving volunteers)
4. California State University, Long Beach (26 currently serving volunteers)
5. Humboldt State University (25 currently serving volunteers)
5. San Diego State University (25 currently serving volunteers)
7. University of California, Riverside (23 currently serving volunteers)
8. Florida International University (16 currently serving volunteers)
8. California State University, Fullerton (16 currently serving volunteers)
10. California State University, Chico (15 currently serving volunteers)

Tennessee RPCVs have issued a challenge to our group for the [National Bike Federation Summer Bike Challenge](https://www.nationalbikefederation.org/summer-bike-challenge), May 1 - Sep 30. To participate, setup a (free) account at [National Bike Federation](https://www.nationalbikefederation.org/), join Team RPCVMadison, and log your miles. Questions? Contact Kate Schachter, 608-234-1795, or Madeline Uraneck, 608-658-5537.

*Atwood Fest is July 25 & 26, 2015* [http://atwoodfest.org/](http://atwoodfest.org/). Save these dates!
We will be looking for volunteers to sell calendars and posters and talk to Fest attendees about Peace Corps and our Third Goal activities. It's a great way to connect with RPCVs of WI-Madison and let RPCVs in the area, not connected to us yet, know how to become a member and get involved! Contact: txrutter@att.net.