Thank you to everyone who was able to come out to our May Social Event at the Hofbrauhaus in downtown Buffalo! The beer and sausages were fantastic but the company was better. On behalf of the RPCVs of Buffalo & Western New York, we thank you for your patronage and look forward to hosting more events like those as the city and state further open up.

Mark your calendars and save the date for this Thursday, June 10th at 7 PM. Why? Because it is our Annual Meeting and we would like your input, feedback, and ideas. This past year has been a rollercoaster but we were still able to push through social events (albeit virtually), volunteer efforts, and panel discussions. As stated in May’s Newsletter, Andy Smith is stepping down as Chair of the Buffalo RPCV group. In addition to this vacancy, we are also still in need of members of our committees (Finance, Publicity, Events, Website - Click here for more information).

In this newsletter, we discuss helping our Afghan allies, an eyecare project with worldwide potential, joining the Peace Corps after 60, and a new feature from NPCA aptly titled, Inside Peace Corps. Additionally, there’s a new vintage Peace Corps recruitment poster included as well. Have an actual Peace Corps recruitment poster or ad? Send it over and it will be included in the newsletter.

Any happenings, updates, social events, recipes or items of interest can be sent to buffalorpcv@yahoo.com to be included in the newsletter. Thank you for reading and Happy Mother’s Day to all the wonderful mothers out there.

- Brett Claydon
Hey, Buffalo RPCVS: Memberships are due.

Another newsletter, another reminder.

$25. [Online](#) (fastest and easiest!) or via the membership form found at the end of this newsletter. Payments can be made via check, Venmo, or PayPal.

Venmo: @Buffalo-RPCV

PayPal: buffalorpcv@yahoo.com

Upcoming Events & Save the Dates

**United Way of Buffalo’s 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge**

May 3rd - June 19th: Mona’s House [FreeThem Walk](#)

June 10th: [RPCV’s of Buffalo Annual Meeting](#) @ 7PM (Zoom Link - Meeting ID & Passcode below)

June 11th: [Trailblazing Women of WNY: The Monument Project](#)

June 12th: [Buffalo’s BESTival - Local Artisans & Crafters Outdoor Market](#)

June 12th: [Thrift 2 Fight Buffalo Secondhand Clothing Sale to Benefit Social Justice](#)

June 13th - 20th: [IIB’s & Journey’s End A Walk in their Words](#)

June 16th: [FeedMore WNY Coming 2gether for Pets](#)

June 19th: [Buffalo Juneteeth Festival](#)

Aug 4th: Buffalo Peace House Beach Day (Details TBA)

Aug 11th: Buffalo Peace House Beach Day (Details TBA)

**Annual Meeting Details:**

Thursday, June 10th at 7 PM

[https://caboces-org.zoom.us/j/94424902455](https://caboces-org.zoom.us/j/94424902455)

Meeting ID: 944 2490 2455

Passcode: Buffalo
RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS OF BUFFALO & WNY

Annual Meeting

THURSDAY, JUNE 10 AT 7 PM

Save the date and join us virtually for the Annual Meeting this Thursday, June 10th.

Zoom Meeting Information:

https://caboces-org.zoom.us/j/94424902455
Meeting ID: 944 2490 2455
Passcode: Buffalo
They risked everything to support our mission. We cannot abandon them now. Join LIRS in calling on President Biden to protect our Afghan allies.

After two decades of presence, President Biden’s recent announcement of the withdrawal of all troops from Afghanistan captured the world. Gaining rising attention in the United States, particularly among veterans and people of faith, are concerns about the fate of Afghan allies who assisted the U.S. mission.

Since 2002, the U.S. Government has employed Afghan allies to serve alongside U.S. troops, diplomats, and other government employees. Regrettably, these allies and their families soon became the targets of anti-American violence. They continue to be threatened, abducted, and targeted for their allegiance to the U.S. and NATO mission.

As the U.S. armed forces anticipates its final withdrawal in September, we know that we cannot simply abandon them. LIRS has joined several veterans’ groups, resettlement partners, and members of Congress in calling upon the Biden administration to urgently evacuate Afghan allies and their families. We recently delivered a letter to top White House officials calling for the emergency evacuation of Afghan allies, and we are now asking people of conscience to join us.

Send a message to President Biden today! Urge the administration to provide urgent humanitarian protections, including evacuation, for those who have put their lives on the line for our country.

Contact President Biden
Armenian EyeCare Project Surpasses Milestone of 10,000 Patients Screened Using Artificial Intelligence Eye Screening Technology

In cooperation with the World Diabetes Foundation and the Ministry of Health of Armenia, the Armenian EyeCare Project is implementing a nationwide screening program using state-of-the-art AI technology. 350 patients have already received sight-saving treatment as a result of this nationwide initiative.

ARMENIA, November 14, 2019 - On this World Diabetes Day, the Armenian EyeCare Project (AECP), a nonprofit organization dedicated to eliminating preventable blindness in Armenia, announced that it has surpassed the milestone of screening 10,000 patients for diabetic retinopathy (DR) throughout Armenia utilizing the state-of-art EyeArt® AI Eye Screening System (Eyenuk, Inc., Los Angeles, USA). AECP thanks the World Diabetes Foundation (WDF) and the Ministry of Health of Armenia for their support in achieving this milestone.

Founded in 1992, the Armenian EyeCare Project is a nonprofit organization dedicated to eliminating preventable blindness in Armenia and making quality eye care accessible to every Armenian child and adult in the country. During the last two years, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health of Armenia and with support from the WDF, AECP utilized the EyeArt system to screen over 10,000 patients using AI technology. As a result, approximately 1,000 patients were identified as having DR. Approximately 350 of those who had vision-threatening DR received sight-saving treatment soon after the diagnosis. Continue reading here...

If any Buffalo RPCVs know of any PC Countries that would be interested in this project, please contact, John Miao (Eyenuk.com, RPCV Thailand) at johnmiao@sbcglobal.net

*This article and project recommendation comes from John’s friend, our own Tim Hartigan.
A notice from Jonathan Pearson, Advocacy Director at NPCA

Dear Friends of the Peace Corps,

While we were hopeful for a strong Peace Corps funding number today in President Biden’s Fiscal Year 2022 budget, we learned a short while ago that the administration is proposing continued level funding ($410.5 million) for the Peace Corps. Because of this, we are planning to hold off on a major Twitter campaign for the time being.

The bottom line is that this proposed budget doesn’t get the Peace Corps to where it needs to be to implement important reforms. The good news is that the House of Representatives has laid a foundation – proposing $450 million through legislation and an annual Dear Colleague letter – from which we can press forward in the weeks and months ahead.

As we rally support, we hope you’ll be able to help — and we will reach out to you later in this 60th anniversary year for an even stronger social media response to build a better and stronger Peace Corps for a changed world.

Thank you for your patience and we wish you a good and safe holiday weekend. We definitely look forward to taking action with you later this year.

Jonathan Pearson
Returned Peace Corps Volunteer - Micronesia
1987-89
Advocacy Director

**Watch. Discuss. Engage.**

**Many Faces of Peace Corps: 60th Anniversary video** offers a chance to explore the breadth of individual Volunteer experiences over the decades — and to tackle issues relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion in Peace Corps and beyond. The film is produced by **The Museum of the Peace Corps Experience** and the **Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Oral History Project**, both NPCA affiliate groups. [Learn more](#).

NPCA affiliate groups might consider showing the 19-minute video to promote discussion of DEI-related issues faced by PCVs worldwide and strategies for creating a more inclusive Peace Corps. Visit the Affiliate Group News page for [sample discussion questions to start the conversation](#).
Joining the Peace Corps after 60: Older volunteers reflect on experiences

Beth Beasley, Times-News correspondent

When the Peace Corps was established 60 years ago in 1961, most volunteers were young, often fresh from a college graduation.

According to the official Peace Corps website, the average age of recent volunteers is 28, though many are far older, reaching into retirement age.

There are many returned Peace Corps volunteers in Western North Carolina who have joined after 60, including Ana Margarita Cebollero, a native of Puerto Rico who lives in Hendersonville.

Many older volunteers serve after their children have grown — and this was the case with Cebollero. At 65, she served from 2001 to 2003 in a women’s and children’s health clinic in a remote mountain village in Morocco.

“When Kennedy offered the idea of Peace Corps, I had just had my first child,” said Cebollero of the time before she and her husband had considered volunteering. “We were very young, and we had four children.”

The couple held onto the possibility of applying together once their kids were grown, but then her husband passed away prematurely. “So, when my youngest daughter got married, I said ‘OK, now I’m free!’” said Cebollero, who is a licensed mental health counselor with a PhD in psychology.

“I wanted to learn about families — to know about how other people take care of their kids,” she said. Even though Cebollero is a native Spanish speaker, program administrators could not successfully assign her to a Spanish-speaking country.

“I wanted to be able to learn about other people, so being (in Morocco) for me was perfect,” she said. As part of her training, Cebollero and a volunteer partner continued to work on learning Arabic for a month with a host family, then headed to the village where they’d serve, located about an hour from the coast.

Click here to continue reading.
Developments

Peace Corps Response Volunteers Sworn in for Three-Month Domestic Deployment. Last week, 158 Response Volunteers were sworn into service for three-month assignments. Evacuated from 52 Peace Corps countries and proficient in 88 languages, these Response Volunteers are working directly with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), applying their intercultural and language skills to COVID-19 vaccination distribution and education efforts in five states across the United States. Read here for more information.

Staff to Complete Unconscious Bias in the Workplace Training by the End of June. Since April, Peace Corps staff worldwide have been participating in a mandatory training on Unconscious Bias in the Workplace in an effort to establish a shared vocabulary, recognize the biases we all have, learn the tools to help us empathize with others, and construct a common framework on which to further expand the agency’s intercultural competence, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ICDEI) work. Experts at posts and headquarters moderate the group session segment of the training, which includes facilitated small group discussions and integrates Peace Corps staff from around the world. All new staff members will complete this training as a part of their onboarding. As Volunteers return to service, they will undergo a similar, mandatory training prior to departure.

Virtual Service Pilot Accepting Expressions of Interest for Third Phase. We are launching the third phase of the Virtual Service Pilot (VSP) and accepting expressions of interest from any returned Peace Corps Volunteer (RPCV) who is prepared to spend five to 15 hours per week donating their services and engaging with a Host Country Partner in their former country of service. An email sent last week outlines the third phase opportunities for RPCVs from 25 participating host countries. The first two pilots, which included 20 posts and 100 volunteers, have shown that collaboration and service can be impactful over digital platforms and across time zones. Read more about VSP here.

Country Health and Crime Information Updated and Published on Website. Data on the health and crimes against Volunteers for each country where Volunteers are invited to serve has been updated and published on our website. To review this information, select the country you are interested in here, and then select “Health” or “Safety and Security” in the left navigation bar to see data related to that country.
Why the Peace Corps’ Mission Is Needed Now More Than Ever

On its 60th anniversary, a moment of reckoning arrives for the national’s globe-trotting volunteers

By Miranda Moore, Smithsonian Magazine

In March 2020, at the start of Covid-19 lockdowns, as flights were grounded and people around the world sheltered in place, 7,000-odd Peace Corps volunteers serving in 61 nations came home to an uncertain future. Many worried that the Peace Corps might even have to shut down permanently. That hasn’t happened, but the nation’s foremost global volunteer organization has no volunteers in the field for the first time since its founding 60 years ago.

Practicing a uniquely American blend of idealism and realpolitik, the agency was conceived in October 1960, when Senator John F. Kennedy made a 2 a.m. campaign speech at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Kennedy, then running for president, challenged 10,000 students assembled outside the Student Union to use their skills to help people around the globe—and spread American goodwill along the way. One thousand students responded by signing a petition volunteering to serve abroad.

The emphasis on peace was earnest, but the backdrop for the new agency was the Cold War. The Soviet Union, Kennedy noted, “had hundreds of men and women, scientists, physicists, teachers, engineers, doctors, and nurses...prepared to spend their lives abroad in the service of world communism.” Kennedy established the Peace Corps on March 1, 1961, less than two months into his presidency, and the first volunteers headed out in August—to Ghana.

Click here to continue reading.
Vintage Peace Corps Poster of the Month

LESS THAN
3750
CHANCES
LEFT
TO CHANGE
THE
WORLD

Not everyone is cut out to change the world. After all, it takes education, skills and a spare two years. Also a willingness to work. Hard. This year 3,750 Americans will join the Peace Corps to do just that. They will do things like build roads, plant forests and crops, teach English, develop small businesses, train community health workers, or even coach basketball. However, what they will be doing isn’t half as important as the fact that they’ll be changing a little piece of the world… for the better.

And when they return, these 3,750 Americans will find that experience doing hard work will have another benefit. It’s exactly what their next employers are looking for.

So, give the Peace Corps your next two years. And while you’re out changing the world, you’ll also be making a place in it for yourself.
Do you have an announcement or item of interest to RPCVs?

All area RPCVs, Peace Corps supporters or interested persons are invited to submit event announcements, news items or other items which may be of interest to the Western New York RPCV community.

You may request for the information to be placed in the newsletter or as a separate email. Items submitted may be subject to editing and/or editorial discretion.

Submit to: buffalorpcv@yahoo.com

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Visit Our Website!
RETURNED PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS OF
BUFFALO, NEW YORK
2021 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

RPCV/Buffalo membership is open to all returned Peace Corps Volunteers, active and friends of Peace Corps. Please complete the following and return with your membership dues (25.00 annually) payable to RPCV/Buffalo:

RPCV/Buffalo
c/o Jeri Titus
P.O.Box 650
Buffalo, NY 14205

Please check

Renewing Member _____ New Member _____

Are you a member of the National Peace Corps Association? Yes _____ No _____

I. Personal Information:

Name: (first) ____________________________ (last) ____________________________
Address: _____________________________________________________________(apt)
_____
City:_________________________________________________________________
State: ____________________________  Zip: ____________________________
Telephone: ___________________________  Cell: ____________________________
E-Mail: ______________________________

I. Peace Corps Service Information (if applicable):

Country(ies) of Service:
____________________________________________________________

Dates of Service:
____________________________________________________________

Primary Service Role:
____________________________________________________________