



*Life is calling.*  
How far will you go?



# FACT SHEET

## The Peace Corps

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## OVERVIEW

The Peace Corps is an independent U.S. government agency that provides Volunteers to countries requesting assistance around the world. The agency traces its roots and mission to 1960, when then-Senator John F. Kennedy challenged students at the University of Michigan to serve their country in the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries.

While times have changed, the agency's mission—to promote world peace and friendship—has not. The three goals of the Peace Corps are as relevant today as they were nearly 50 years ago:

1. To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women.
2. To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.
3. To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

## HISTORY

Officially established:	March 1, 1961
Volunteers to date:	195,000
Countries served to date:	139

## THE PEACE CORPS TODAY

Peace Corps Director:	Aaron S. Williams (Dominican Republic, 1967-70)
Countries currently served:	74
Volunteers and trainees:	Approximately 7,500
Gender:	60% female, 40% male
Marital status:	94% single, 6% married
Minorities:	15% of Volunteers
Age:	Average of 27 years old
Volunteers over 50:	5% of Volunteers
Education:	94% have at least an undergraduate degree

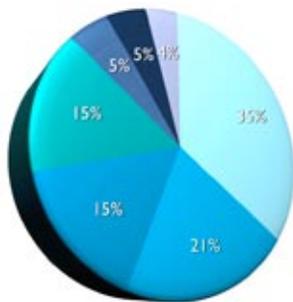


## PEACE CORPS SERVICE

Volunteers work with local governments, communities, schools, and entrepreneurs to address changing and complex needs in education, health and HIV/AIDS, business, information technology, agriculture, and the environment.

### *Peace Corps Program Sectors:*

● Education:	35%
● Health and HIV/AIDS:	21%
● Environment:	15%
● Business Development:	15%
● Agriculture:	5%
● Youth Development:	5%
● Other:	4%



- Competitive applicants will have a demonstrated ability to learn a language, leadership experience, and a commitment to community service. One in three applicants is accepted into the program.
- Volunteers receive a living allowance that covers housing, food, and incidentals, enabling them to live in a manner similar to people in their local communities.
- Volunteer safety and security is the Peace Corps' highest priority. The agency devotes significant resources to provide Volunteers with the training, support, and information they need to stay healthy and safe.

## WHERE VOLUNTEERS SERVE

The Peace Corps provides technical assistance to countries that request it.

### *Percentage of total Volunteer job requests by host countries in 2008:*

<b>Africa:</b>	39%
<b>Latin America:</b>	22%
<b>Eastern Europe/Central Asia:</b>	20%
<b>Asia:</b>	7%
<b>North Africa/Middle East:</b>	4%
<b>Pacific Islands:</b>	4%
<b>The Caribbean:</b>	4%

## BUDGET

Fiscal Year 2009                      \$340 million

Fiscal Year 2010\*                    \$373.44 million

\* President's request. Awaiting Congressional approval.

## TO BE A VOLUNTEER

- Length of service is 27 months, which includes an average of three months of in-country training and 24 months of Volunteer service.
- Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Over the past year, Peace Corps received over 13,000 applications, a 16 percent increase over the previous year. This is the largest boost in applications over the last five years.
- The application process averages 9–12 months. The minimum age for Peace Corps service is 18; there is no upper age limit. Volunteers must be U.S. citizens.

## RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Peace Corps returned to Rwanda after a 15 year absence. Thirty-two Volunteers were sworn-in on April 15, 2009.
- In May 2009, returned Volunteer Joe Acaba (Dominican Republic, 1994–96) visited Peace Corps headquarters in Washington following his mission to the International Space Station aboard the space shuttle *Discovery*.
- Nearly 200 Volunteers and staff gave President Obama a warm send off after his recent trip to Ghana in July 2009.

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