Voices From the Field: Albany SPH Master’s International

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RPCV Kenya ‘12-’14
The Peace Corps traces its roots to 1960, when then Sen. 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.

- Officially established: March 1, 1961
- Americans who have served: 215,000+
- Host countries served to date: 139

Over 50 years of promoting World Peace and Friendship
Goals of Peace Corps

- To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women

- To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served

- To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans

Life is calling. How far will you go?
Where is Peace Corps now?

- Yellow = Current
- Blue = Former
Masters International

- Established in 1987
- Currently working with 80 academic institutions
- Combines graduate work with volunteer abroad experience

SUNY - University at Albany — School of Public Health

http://www.albany.edu/wsp/ph/vmhp/mi.html

Program Type: Master’s International
Department: School of Public Health
Degrees Awarded: Public Health (MPH)
Admissions Deadlines: Rolling; With final deadline for MPH applicants on April 1
Admissions Cycle: Once per year
Program Start: Summer
Program Founded: July, 2008

Benefits
9-12 credit hours for Peace Corps service.

Description
The course work will consist of a minimum of 36 credit hours (2 online courses plus 3 semesters of academic study) and a 9-12 credit hour internship satisfied by the Peace Corps experience.

Requirements
Applicants must have a bachelor’s degree or equivalent from a recognized college/university and have at least a 3.0 GPA to be considered for admission. Applicants will apply to the Peace Corps and the MPH program simultaneously. In addition to the SOPHAS application, MI applicants must submit undergraduate transcripts, GRE/MSAT scores, three references from persons familiar with applicant’s academic qualifications, a personal statement, and a TOEFL score for international students. For more information, please visit our admissions website.

For inquiries about Master’s International, call 855.855.1961 x1812.

http://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/graduate/mastersint/
Kenya

- Population: 45 million
- Program Dates: 1964-present
- Number of Volunteers: 100
- Total Volunteers to Date: 5,155
- Program Sectors:
  - Education, Health, Community Economic Development
- Languages Spoken:
  - Kiswahili, Kenyan Sign Language, Kalenjin, Kikuyu, Luo and Luyha
The Republic of Kenya

- Borders Tanzania, Uganda, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia
- Capital City: Nairobi
- Gained Independence December 12, 1963
- National Languages: Kiswahili, English, KSL
My Site - Chebukakaka, Western Kenya
Peace Corps Kenya
Public Health Volunteer

- Partner Organization: Our Lady of Peace Chebukaka Dispensary
- Worked in Kiswahili, English and Kibukusu
- Main Projects Focused on:
  - HIV/AIDS education and prevention
  - Malaria Prevention
  - Jiggers Eradication Campaign
  - Water and Sanitation
  - Women’s Education/Empowerment
Peace Corps Partnership Program
Jiggers Eradication Campaign

- Worked with Chebukaka Community Health Workers to write a grant and receive funding (25% comes from community)

- Worked with Ahadi Kenya Trust, the national jiggers campaign, to train 30 staff and community health workers in proper jiggers treatment

- Treated over 1000 village members for jiggers
Jiggers Treatment

Medication Step- after the affected area is washed and nails are clipped, the patient has to soak the areas in potassium permanganate for 15 min/3Xday/2weeks.

Oiling Step- Because the medication dries the skin, applying oil prevents cracking and helps to suffocate any remaining jiggers.
Prevention/Project Completion
Malaria Projects

- Worked as coordinator for Kenya with the Stomp Out Malaria Initiative
- Collaborated with partners such as the PMI and PSI
- Completed 88 hours of highly specialized training in malaria epidemiology, prevention, transmission and treatment in Thies, Senegal
- Trained 40 Peace Corps Volunteers in malaria prevention and potential volunteer activities. The results were 40 completed projects that reached over 60,000 rural community members.
Malaria Education

- Taught at local schools on malaria prevention and treatment
- Trained Peace Corps Volunteers on malaria projects they could do in their communities
Bed Net Hanging Campaign
SPH International Night - Malaria Day 2014

- Malaria Prevention, Education, and Treatment Event funded by the School of Public Health

- Purchased and Sold 600 bed nets and WaterGuard

- Funding Created sustainable farming project still going on in Chebukaka
Water and Sanitation Projects
Building Latrines

- Chebukaka Girls Primary School
- 450 girls/15 teachers
- Grant funding received through Appropriate Projects: Water Charity
Water and Sanitation Projects
Borehole Excavation

- Chebukaka Boy’s Primary School-located in Chebukaka village, in Western Province, Kenya
- Attended by over 600 boys, with 15 teachers
- Previously, students were walking over 4km each morning (6am), and evening (5pm) to fill 5L gerry cans of water for the school
Water and Sanitation Projects
Borehole Excavation

- Project funded by Niskayuna Reformed Church congregation
- Created a reliable source of clean drinking water that prevents students from missing lessons
Camp GLOW 2013
Girls Leading Our World

- Week long camp held during term break
- Focus on Women’s Empowerment
  - Health, communication skills, career fair, teamwork, goal setting, etc.
- Volunteer Counselor and Camp “Nurse”
Other Events

HIV/AIDS Education/Prevention

Mother Bear Project

Darien Book Aid Project

Boys Leadership Camp
Personal Growth

- Peace Corps provides you with unique opportunities
- Host family immersion, cultural practices, etc.
Traits Needed or Eventually Learned

- Flexibility - different culture means a different normal ex: Americans value time, less stringent in rural Kenya

- Self-Motivation - unstructured environment lends to a need for this

- Self-Confidence - you are now in a position of authority, own it

- Adaptability - your projects will not always go as you thought, it will be okay

- Learn from others as much or more than you teach them

- Appreciate where you are, what you are doing, and remember to take note, everything is transient
Appreciating Your Surroundings
Travel Experiences
What you receive is more than what you give

- It is one of the beautiful compensations of this life that no one can sincerely try to help another without helping himself.
  --Ralph Waldo Emerson
New Family

- Chebukaka Community Health Workers
- Peace Corps Public Health ‘12-14
- Our Lady of Peace Chebukaka Community
"You will never be completely at home again, because part of your heart will always be elsewhere. That is the price you pay for the richness of loving and knowing people in more than one place."