



Around the World

Peace Corps and Ohio University | Spring '07



OU Peace Corps Volunteer Discusses Experience in Honduras

Alexis Fisher graduated in June of 2006 from Ohio University with a degree in journalism. She is currently a special education and youth development Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras.

When Peace Corps volunteers arrive in their country of service, they undergo three months of training, which covers language skills; safety and security; and information needed to stay healthy and safe. "I had a great experience with the training Peace Corps offers. The three-month long process is incredibly thorough, with an emphasis on language and project-specific training. Most everyone in my group moved up several levels in

Spanish. The project training is a combination of theory and practice. We spent the first half of training in a classroom with current Peace Corps volunteers, listening to their experiences and the second half was spent in communities getting hands-on experience.

"I work primarily with four organizations: a local high school, the Honduran equivalent of the District's Board of Education, and two non-governmental organizations. I have been at my site for a little less than three months, so I am just getting started. Right now, I am doing a lot with English education, because that's what everyone wants. Students here understand the im-

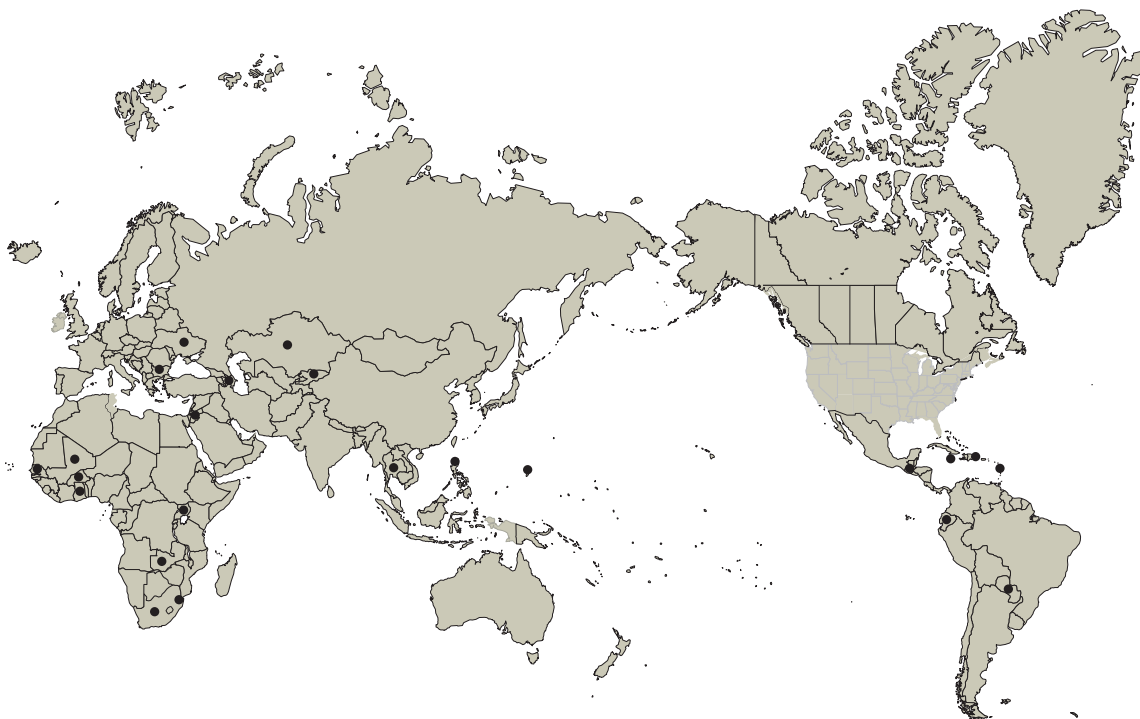
portance of learning the language. When I teach English, I work with teachers, instead of students to make my projects more sustainable. I'm also facilitating parenting classes and working with students living in poverty. Although I am teaching a lot of English, the vast majority of my work is done in Spanish.

"I live alone in a neighborhood about 10 minutes away from the center of town. My house is small – only three rooms, but clean and sturdy. Two perks of living in the city are electricity and running water.

continued on back

Since 1961, 684 Former OU Students Have Served in the Peace Corps and 39 Former OU Students Are Currently Serving in the Peace Corps

The following map highlights the countries of former OU students currently serving as Peace Corps volunteers around the world:



Events at OU:

Spring 2007 Peace Corps Information Sessions:

All information sessions are at 6 pm, located in the Alden Library, Friends of the Library Room

- Thursday, February 15
- Thursday, March 1
- Tuesday, April 3
- Thursday, April 26
- Thursday, May 17

Peace Corps visits Ohio University Winter Career Fair: Monday, February 5, 10 am - 3 pm, Convocation Center

For more information or to schedule and interview, contact Joshua O'Donnell at 740-593-0290 or via email: peacecorps@ohio.edu.

OU Peace Corps office hours: Monday through Thursday, 3 pm - 5 pm

Learn More About the Peace Corps and How to Apply

The idea of promoting peace and friendship throughout the world is what inspired then Senator John F. Kennedy to start the Peace Corps. In 1960, he approached the students at the University of Michigan with the idea of serving their country in the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries.

Since 1961, more than 187,000 Peace Corps volunteers have served in 139 countries around the world. Countries request volunteers with specific skill sets from the Peace Corps and the Peace Corps then finds volunteers with those skills. Volunteers make a 27-month commitment to serve in those countries.

Peace Corps has a variety of volunteer opportunities for individuals in the areas of: Education; Youth and Community Development; Health and HIV/AIDS Education; Agriculture Education; Environmental Education; Business Consulting; and IT Consulting.

Safety and security of volunteers is top priority when considering placement in foreign countries. Upon arrival in a foreign country, volunteers undergo three months of training and live with a host family during that time. After training, volunteers are sent to their posts and set up with a place to live and a monthly stipend for the

next two years that covers housing, food, transportation, and incidentals.

There are many benefits to joining the Peace Corps, with the opportunity to help where help is truly needed and the opportunity for intercultural exchange being foremost. While serving in a foreign country, volunteers may defer payments on many student loans. For those with a Perkins loan, a percentage of the principal and interest may be cancelled for each year served in the Peace Corps. Through Peace Corps' Masters International program, academic credit can be granted for Peace Corps service and training, and also may satisfy field work or practicum requirements. The Peace Corps Fellows program provides volunteers who have completed service with scholarships or reduced tuition in a master's degree program at programs housed in more than 30 colleges and universities.

There are also other financial benefits while volunteering in the Peace Corps. Transportation to and from the country of service is covered. Medical and dental care is provided for volunteers. The monthly stipend (which varies in amount from country to country) enables them to live in a manner similar to others in their community.

After completing 27 months of service in the Peace Corps, volunteers receive just over \$6,000 toward their transition back into the U.S. The Peace Corps provides job placement support, and returned Peace Corps volunteers receive enhanced hiring status for federal jobs for one year following Peace Corps service. Those who are employed by the federal government can receive credit toward their retirement for years of Peace Corps service.

volunteer in Honduras continued

The outskirts of town and surrounding communities don't always have running water, but most places in my town have electricity," says Fisher.

She says the cultural differences are numerous and varied in Honduras. "I can honestly say that I've learned something new every day of my Peace Corps experience. I am constantly acquiring new information and evolving in my beliefs. Peace Corps isn't for everyone. It requires flexibility, self-motivation, and resilience. There are good and bad experiences, but no matter what, you can expect to grow in unimaginable ways throughout the process," says Fisher.



Peace Corps

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