



Work that Matters
*Engaging the World
after Knox College*

April 12–13, 2013

Knox College Peace Corps Preparatory Program



Peace Corps Volunteer Mike Dooley '09 in Paraguay.

PEACE CORPS PREPARATORY PROGRAM

Knox College is the pilot site—and the first college or university in the country—with an official Peace Corps Preparatory Program. Launched in 2008, the program features a curriculum designed to prepare students to serve in the Peace Corps or in international service. Participants pursue coursework in international studies, education, and foreign language study, as well as a community service project or opportunity to study abroad.

The Peace Corps Preparatory Program serves to advance the goals of the Peace Corps under its charter: 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; and to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans. Since 1961, more than 187,000 Peace Corps Volunteers have helped promote a better understanding between Americans and the people of the 139 countries where volunteers have served.

Knox College has a long tradition of sending graduates to the Peace Corps. Historically, more than 180 Knox alumni have served in the Peace Corps, and, in the 1960s, Knox



Peace Corps Volunteer Hannah Gdalmann '09 in Guatemala.

had one of the highest percentages of graduates in the Peace Corps of any college in the nation. Currently, 10 Knox alumni are in the field. The high percentage of Knox alumni serving in the Peace Corps was among the criteria used by *The Washington Monthly* magazine when it recently recognized Knox as one of the nation's top 25 liberal arts colleges, and ranked Knox 10th in the nation for its Peace Corps Preparatory Program.



Robin Ragan
Director, Peace Corps Preparatory Program

Robin Ragan is associate professor of modern languages (Spanish) and director of the Stellyes Center for Global Studies. She joined the faculty at Knox in 2000 and has directed study abroad programs in Barcelona, Buenos Aires, and Guatemala.

Friday, April 12

Keynote Address

STORYTELLING: A KEY TO PEACEBUILDING LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

Jody K. Olsen,
Former Acting Director of the Peace Corps

Opening Remarks by President Teresa Amott

7:00 p.m.

Kresge Recital Hall, Ford Center for the Fine Arts



Jody Olsen, now a visiting professor at the University of Maryland School of Social Work, started in the Peace Corps as a volunteer in Tunisia, where she taught English and developed community health programs. She moved up the ranks to country director, then to regional director, and, in 1989, to chief of staff, a position she held for three years. In 2002, Olsen was tapped by the president to be deputy director of the Peace Corps and, ultimately, served as acting director in 2009.

Outside of the Peace Corps, she has served as senior vice president at the Academy for Educational Development, executive director of the Council for International Exchange of Scholars, and president of the University of Maryland Alumni Association.

A Utah native, Olsen received her bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Utah, a master's degree in social work (with a specialization in community organization) from the University of Maryland, and a Ph.D. from Maryland's College of Education.

Saturday, April 13

All sessions held in Ferris Lounge, Carithers Hall in Seymour Union unless otherwise noted.

10:00 a.m. PLAY FOR PEACE WORKSHOP: THE POWER OF PEACEFUL PLAY

This global learning community is dedicated to bringing children, youth, and organizations together using cooperative play to create laughter, compassion, and peace. Schools and communities have recognized this as an important tool to address bullying, violence, or conflict, and promote positive participation in their efforts. This session introduces Play for Peace, its evolution in Central Illinois, and applications within the Peace Corps. The workshop will engage participants in the joy of play! The workshop will be facilitated by Sharon Mills, director of Play for Peace-Illinois, with contributions from Jared Reynolds, Peace Corps volunteer in youth development in Tamegroute, Morocco.

(Registration is required. Space is limited. To register, visit www.knox.edu/peacebuilding.)

12:00 p.m. LUNCH BREAK

You may leave campus to dine at one of Galesburg's many restaurants or, if you prefer to stay on campus, be sure to try the Gizmo, located in Seymour Union.

12:45 p.m. THE KNOX MISSION AND PEACE CORPS PREP: EDUCATING FOR PEACE

Knox alumni and returned Peace Corps volunteers discuss their experiences abroad, featuring Mike Dooley '09, Hannah Gdalmann '09, Luke Karner '09, and Jeff Wozencraft '10.

1:30 p.m. SERVICE AND COMMUNITY CLOSE TO HOME

Knox alumni serving in AmeriCorps talk about their experiences, featuring Laura Blue '12, Anna Dvorak '12, Tanya Novotnak '11, and Diana Preshad '12.

2:15 p.m. COFFEE BREAK

2:30 p.m. A COMMUNITY APPROACH TO PEACE

Current KnoxCorps students present their work with the Galesburg community, featuring Elizabeth Cockrell '12, Human Links Foundation Fellow serving the Sustainable Business Center; Emma Poland '12, Knox County Health Department Fellow serving the Knox County Health Department; and Max Potthoff '14, serving the Cyclists of Galesburg and sustainability assignments.

3:30 p.m. PEACE CORPS AND CAREER PATHS

Returned Peace Corps volunteers living in Western Illinois discuss how the Peace Corps influenced their careers after service, featuring Karen Mauldin-Curtis, Peace Corps Fellows program manager in community development at Western Illinois University; Sheldon Schafer, Green Party candidate for Congress, astronomy instructor at Bradley University; and Cecile Arquette, associate professor of teacher education at Bradley University.

Presenters



Sharon Mills Serves in Illinois

Sharon Mills is the director of the Applied Social Research Unit, Illinois State University, where she manages research, evaluation, and training projects that aid program, organization, and community planning and development. Sharon serves as director of Play for Peace-Illinois, est. in 2007, and the DeWitt County Community Mental Health Board. She earned an M.S. in

industrial/organizational psychology from Illinois State University, Normal, and a B.A. in psychology and communication from Marian University in Indianapolis, Indiana.



Jeff Wozencraft '10 Served in Cape Verde, Western Africa

From 2010–2012, Jeff worked as a youth group development worker in Cape Verde with the Peace Corps. Jeff was assigned to a government youth center in a small Cape Verdean city where he taught basic computer classes, managed a garden, and advocated for composting. He also co-founded an NGO for marine turtle protection. Jeff majored in Spanish and economics

at Knox and currently works as the administrative coordinator at the YOURS project in Chicago.



Hannah Gdalkan '09 Served in Aldea Campur, Alta Verapaz, Guatemala

From 2010–2012, Hannah served as a youth promoter in the Peace Corps. Hannah worked directly with the Guatemalan Ministry of Education, local teachers, community leaders, and students to implement a Life Skills program aimed to improve the lives of indigenous youth. She organized local women's groups and facilitated a community infrastructure project, which provided 38 women with cement water basins, or pilas, to promote hygienic water usage in the village. She also partnered with this village and an American non-profit to plan, finance, and build a three-classroom

“eco-school” out of recycled plastic bottles and inorganic trash. Hannah currently lives and works in Chicago doing education planning work for the Society of American Archivists and crushing grapes/waiting tables at City Winery Chicago.

Presenters



Luke Karner '09 **Served in San Francisco del Valle, Honduras**

Luke served in the Peace Corps from 2009–2011 as a youth development volunteer. While in Honduras, he mainly worked with a local primary school and health center. Luke spent the majority of his time aiding local teachers on reading and writing strategies and teaching techniques, organizing HIV/AIDS education and awareness programs, and providing adult education courses. He is currently teaches U.S. history and coaches freshmen wrestling coach at Waukegan High School District #60 in Waukegan, Illinois.



Mike Dooley '09 **Served in Paraguay**

Mike served from 2010–2012 as an Early Elementary Education volunteer in the Peace Corps. He worked with Paraguayan teachers to develop more participatory strategies in the classroom and helped one school start its first book loaning system. He also taught English and family planning at the local high school. Mike now works as a high school and middle school Spanish teacher in Naperville, Illinois.



Laura Blue '12 **Serves in Chicago**

Laura works as a migrant and seasonal farmworker outreach assistant. She is an AmeriCorps member with Community Health Partnership of Illinois (CHP). This non-profit organization serves migrant and seasonal farmworkers at medical and dental clinics across Northern Illinois. Laura provides administrative, as well as direct, support to each clinic's outreach program. She will attend the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health in the fall.

Presenters



Anna Dvorak '12 **Serves in Madison, Wisconsin**

Anna serves in the AmeriCorps through the organization Partners in After School Success (PASS). She works mainly with middle school youth at Vera Court Neighborhood Center (VCNC), a non-profit in Madison. Her daily tasks include in-school tutoring and classroom help at Blackhawk Middle School, as well as planning and facilitating a variety of after-school programming at

VCNC, including Rise (a homework help program), Girl Neighborhood Power (a girl's empowerment program for 3rd-8th graders), and a weekly art club for elementary schoolers.



Diana Preshad '12 **Serves in Chicago, Illinois**

Diana works with City Year as a tutor and mentor in the Stagg School of Excellence in the Englewood community on the south side of the city. City Year is a non-profit AmeriCorps educational program that places corps members in underachieving schools to work with 6th-9th graders, specifically focusing on attendance, behavior, and course performance to increase retention

rates. Diana's responsibilities include one-on-one tutoring in and out of the classroom, managing the after-school program, and leading service projects.



Tanya Novotnak '11 **Served in Madison, Wisconsin**

Tanya served in AmeriCorps working with Common Wealth Development. At Common Wealth, she was a part of the Youth Programs staff, as well as a member of the Partners for After School Success in Dane County. Tanya taught employment skills and financial literacy to disadvantaged high school and middle school students, mentored students, and worked with other staff to

develop curriculum. She currently works as a behavior therapist for children with Autism and will leave in June to serve in the Peace Corps, teaching English in Benin, West Africa.

Presenters



Elizabeth Cockrell '12 **Serves in Galesburg, Illinois**

Elizabeth serves as a Galesburg HumanLinks Foundation Fellow working at the Sustainable Business Center through KnoxCorps. She has coordinated a series of sustainability events and has increased their online presence through social media and website maintenance. Elizabeth's main project is working with Galesburg area farmers to organize a food hub enabling

small farmers to aggregate their produce and sell to large buyers, such as colleges and restaurants.



Emma Poland '12 **Serves in Galesburg, Illinois**

Emma is a Knox County Health Department Fellow and serves at the county's health department in Galesburg through KnoxCorps. As the Knox County Site Specialist of the We Choose Health grant, Emma works to promote policies that create smoke-free public places.



Max Potthoff '14 **Serves in Galesburg, Illinois**

Max serves in KnoxCorps, working with the Cyclists of Galesburg and on sustainability assignments. His work is to connect the cycling community at Knox with the cycling community of Galesburg. From organizing rides to hosting workshops at Knox's campus bike shop, Mike's position centers on bringing together stakeholders in community development and sustainability.

Presenters



Karen Mauldin-Curtis **Served in Dominican Republic**

Karen served in the Dominican Republic with the Peace Corps. She currently manages the Peace Corps Fellows Program in Community Development at Western Illinois University. Karen oversees all aspects of the program, including design and supervision of training activities, internship site placement and support, development of program partnerships, and management of grant funds.



Sheldon Schafer **Served in India**

From 1970–1972, Sheldon volunteered in the Peace Corps facilitating science teacher workshops. He taught modern methods of hands-on inquiry-based teaching using simple science laboratory apparatuses and other materials available in the local bazaar. Sheldon followed up workshops with visits to teachers in their schools.

Today, he is the director of education and planetarium curator at the Peoria Riverfront Museum. He is also the curator of Peoria's Community Solar System model, which is the most complete large-scale model of the Solar System in the world (in the Guinness Book of Records 1993–1998). Sheldon married his wife, Mary Ann, in India after their first years of service.



Cecile M. Arquette **Served in Ndikinimeki, Cameroon**

Cecile taught English through the Peace Corps from 1987–1989. She stayed in the Peace Corps to serve as a technical trainer in Zaire/Rwanda in 1991, Senegal in 1993 and 1996, and Cameroon in 1995. Cecile lives in Peoria, Illinois, and is an associate professor in Bradley University's teacher education department, where she specializes in literacy and ELL methods classes. She was

recently awarded a Fulbright grant to teach in Valparaiso, Chile, from March through August 2014.

Eleanor Stellyes Center for Global Studies

The Peace Corps Preparatory Program is part of the Eleanor Stellyes Center for Global Studies at Knox College, which coordinates more than 30 study-abroad and off-campus programs in the United States and 19 countries around the world. The Stellyes Center also provides financial support for student and faculty study and research overseas.

Students benefit from the expertise offered by the Center's staff and individual program coordinators, while the center's office, in the historic Old Knox County Jail, houses a wide range of reference materials related to off-campus study.

Beyond providing direct support for students and faculty engaged in international programs, the Stellyes Center is a valuable resource for all on campus and in the community by sponsoring distinguished guest speakers and scholars-in-residence with international perspectives.



Eleanor Stellyes Largent '36

Eleanor Williamson Stellyes Largent studied at Knox College from 1932 to 1934, then completed her bachelor's degree at the University of Chicago. In 1959, she and her husband bought the Century Spring Company, an international firm that sold stock springs to Disneyland, General Motors, Bethlehem Steel, and Boeing Aircraft. She found herself increasingly abroad, and as her circles of business expanded, so did her cultural consciousness.

For many years, Mrs. Largent's gifts provided scholarships and internships for Knox students studying overseas. Prior to her death in 2010, she made a generous estate commitment to endow the Eleanor Stellyes Center for Global Studies. In making her gift, she emphasized "the importance of American students being better informed about international business, foreign relations, and global competition."



Peace Corps Volunteer Shruti Patel '11 in Grenada.

**For more information, visit
www.knox.edu/peacebuilding.**



This event is supported by the U.S. Institute of Peace Public Education for Peacebuilding Support initiative and the Eleanor Stellyes Center for Global Studies.

The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this program are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Institute of Peace.

On the cover: Peace Corps Volunteer Elyse Callahan '10 in Zambia.