

ICP Executive Director Visits Mexico

By Ugo Iteogu

ICP's Executive Director, Susan Stroud, and the Dean of the Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University, Robert Hollister, traveled to Mexico in mid-January to speak about the Talloires Network's role in strengthening the civic roles and social responsibilities of higher education institutions. The trip also provided them the opportunity to learn about the civic engagement activities of Mexico's higher education institutions. Susan serves as a Senior Fellow at the Tisch College, and ICP is the secretariat for the Talloires Network.

While in Mexico, Stroud and Hollister visited programs managed by the University of Veracruz and the Veracruz state Ministry of Education that operate in rural areas near Xalapa. University students and graduates serve in multi-disciplinary brigades, living for one or more years in remote and poor indigenous communities where they work on a number of issues ranging from health and nutrition to computer instruction. In communities where there are no secondary schools, distance-learning courses are developed and implemented through the brigades and their local community centers. These centers also provide on-line higher education programs. University students also staff the Vasconcelos program, the Minister of Education and the Governor of Veracruz's initiative to provide computer access and instruction to students, teachers and members of the community through mobile units that are fully equipped with computer labs. These brigades and mobile units are innovative models that take university education to local communities. While in Xalapa, Stroud and Hollister met with the Rector of the University of Veracruz, Dr. Raul Arias, and the former Rector and present Minister of Education in Veracruz, Dr Victor Arredondo.

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A Domestic Response: Peace Corps and Hurricane Katrina

By Bryan Seck

It has been 18 months since Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast region. Immediately following the disaster, the Crisis Corps signed an agreement with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that provided volunteer assistance with the Katrina recovery effort. The Crisis Corps is a division of the Peace Corps that recruits Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) with specialized skills for three to six months for high impact assignments around the world. The Katrina recovery effort marked the first domestic assignment of Peace Corps volunteers in the history of the organization.



Photo courtesy of http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=resources_former.crisis Corps

Crisis Corps volunteers assigned to the Katrina recovery effort served 30-day assignments (with an optional extension to 60 days) in Disaster Recovery Centers that worked with people in need of FEMA assistance. Mary Angelini, Director of the Crisis Corps, and returned Peace Corps Volunteer Jamaica Corker spoke to ICP about their involvement with the recovery effort.

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Talloires Network Update: Launching the Global Project on Literacy

In collaboration with Open University in the UK, ICP coordinated the launch of the Talloires Network Global Project on literacy. All Talloires members will contribute to the project by designing or expanding literacy programs according to their local context. The network will also participate in global campaigns, such as UNESCO's Education for All.

The project broadly defines literacy, going beyond language to include political, financial, and technological literacy. Literacy is conceptualized as equipping citizens with the tools they need to participate in their communities.

ICP has identified a number of model projects that will be posted to the Talloires Network website, <http://www.tufts.edu/talloiresnetwork/>, in coming weeks.

New Commonwealth Corps Set to Increase Youth Engagement in Massachusetts

By Bryan Seck

With his first act of legislation as Governor of Massachusetts, Deval Patrick announced the creation of a state-wide Commonwealth Corps. Patrick stated that the Corps will “challenge 250 Massachusetts citizens in the first year to give...a year of service, full or part time, and to help rebuild and revitalize our statewide community.”

Corps members can range from teenagers to mid-career professionals to retirees. The Massachusetts Service Alliance, a NGO that focuses on volunteering, will be the Corps’ administrative center. Volunteers will first register with the Corps and will then be assigned to a specific project. Patrick said that “by mentoring, staffing after school programs or shelters, (and) helping to clean up parks and neighborhoods, members can help transform communities and inspire others to take action to promote the common good.”

The Commonwealth Corps has budgeted 3 million dollars for this fiscal year and plans to build enough capacity to support 1,000 volunteers within the first five years. Part of the motivation for the program came from a legislative report released in December 2004 stating there had been a \$5 million reduction in state funding for volunteer programs. Patrick’s spokeswoman, Cynthia Roy, noted that “civic engagement has been the cornerstone of the campaign and his (Patrick’s) major impetus for running for public office.”

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RESOURCES

National Survey on Service-Learning and Transitioning to Adulthood

The final report from the National Survey on Service-Learning and Transitioning to Adulthood commissioned by the National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC) is now available for download. This national survey indicates that service-learning participants carry the benefits of their participation into adulthood, demonstrated through positive impacts on their civic engagement, pursuit of higher education, career development and personal relationships. The survey is available for download at http://www.nylc.org/happening_newsarticle.cfm?oid=5453.

Free Service-Learning Disaster Preparedness/Community Safety Resource

The Institute for Global Education and Service-Learning is pleased to announce the release of the Learn & Serve America - Youth Organized for Disaster Action (Y.O.D.A.) - Best Practices CD. The resources provided were developed from programs in elementary, middle and high schools in urban, rural and suburban settings. Each Y.O.D.A. Best Practices CD contains a Best Practices Guide, interdisciplinary websites, service-learning checklists, evaluation tools and more. Free copies of this CD are available at <http://www.igesl.org>.

Youth Service Proposal for Northern Ireland

Robin Taylor, an intern at ICP and graduate student at American University, has authored “Service for Peace: Youth Service as a Component of the Northern Ireland Peace Process.” The paper proposes youth service programs as an important mechanism building bridges in this deeply divided society. Drawing upon scholarly works and documented best practices, “Service for Peace” provides a framework for developing and sustaining a community-based program. It can be downloaded from ICP’s website:

<http://www.icicp.org/index.php?tg=articles&topics=379>

New Effective Practice Resources Available at the Corporation for National and Community Service

The following new effective practices, both from Hands on Network, are available to assist with planning and implementing service projects: “Mapping Your Volunteer Project” and “Deciding On The ‘Right’ Volunteer Project For Your Program.” To learn more visit:

<http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/epicenter/index.php>

Richard Curtain Speaks at ICP

Richard Curtain delivered a brownbag lecture on Poverty Reduction Strategic Processes (PRSPs) at ICP after attending a World Bank/UNPFA conference on young people and PRSPs. Richard also spoke about his work with UNICEF in East Asia and his analysis of how information and communication technology can generate employment opportunities for young people living in low to middle income countries. To learn more about Richard Curtain and his work visit <http://www.curtain-consulting.net.au>.

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In Mexico City, Hollister and Stroud met with officials from universities and the national Ministry of Education. They attended a meeting organized by Ana de Gortari of the National University of Mexico (UNAM) that convened representatives from higher education institutions across Mexico, including the University of Yucatan, Monterrey Technological Institute and the Union of Latin American Universities, among others. They also met with Dr. James Martuscelli, Director of Planning and Coordinator of the President of UNAM. Such venues provided Stroud and Hollister the opportunity to share their work and ideas about the Talloires network with prominent and influential educators throughout Mexico.

For more information about the Talloires Network, please visit <http://www.tufts.edu/talloiresnetwork/dec.shtml>.

Richard Curtain Analyses Youth Emphasis of Poverty Reduction Strategy Processes Papers

By Bryan Seck

Richard Curtain is a public policy consultant specializing in evidence-based policy analysis. He attended a World Bank/UNPFA conference on young people and Poverty Reduction Strategic Processes (PRSPs). PRSP papers are written by developing nations as a requirement for debt relief. The papers contain the following four parts: consultation, diagnostics, design/cost analysis, and evaluation/monitoring. Richard presented an analysis of 55 PRSP papers to determine the extent to which young people were consulted and involved in action plans targeting poverty reduction.

Richard's analysis found that only 50% of the PRSP papers reviewed consulted youth about poverty reduction strategies, of which few mentioned how many youths were consulted or how they were consulted. This finding reflects many countries' practices of not involving young people in the planning and decision making processes of national youth service policies.

Another finding highlighted poor countries with youth bulges (proportion of 15 to 24 year olds in comparison to the adult population), and then compared their mention of young people in the PRSP papers. The size of a country's youth bulge is an important

factor in determining the likelihood of national conflict. Yet many countries with large youth

bulges do not address young people's issues in their action plans, thus diminishing the country's opportunity to mitigate conflict. Countries with the largest youth bulges but no reference to youth in their PRSP papers were Nigeria, Pakistan and Nepal.

Young people comprise a significant portion of developing countries' populations. Reducing poverty is inexorably linked to strategies dealing with young people's issues. As of yet, few countries acknowledge the importance of developing such strategies in their PRSP papers. A more comprehensive understanding of young people and their socio-economic conditions must be achieved if developing countries hope to reduce poverty effectively.

For further information regarding PRSPs please visit, www.worldbank.org/prsp.

Service News

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Produced by Innovations in Civic Participation

ICP News and Happenings

By Ugo Iteogu

ICP Welcomes New Staff

ICP welcomes returned Peace Corps volunteer Rose McGovern as the new Program Assistant. In her new position, Rose will assist in the development and implementation of ICP's projects and serve as the office manager and the main contact for the ICP office. A graduate of the University of Vermont, Rose taught English as a Peace Corps volunteer in Bangladesh after receiving her degree. While in the Peace Corps, she developed a teaching methodology course for Bangladeshi teachers. Rose also has experience working on youth and education development projects with international non-profit organizations, such as Relief International.

ICP also welcomes Mary Rose Conroy and Bryan Seck as its new interns for the spring

of 2007. Mary Rose is a 2006 graduate of Providence College in Providence, Rhode Island, where she served as a volunteer coordinator at a community center. She is currently pursuing a Master of Public Policy degree at American University, and interned on Capitol Hill last semester. A graduate of the University of Kansas, Bryan is a returned Peace Corps volunteer who taught English in Kazakhstan. In the Peace Corps, Bryan also helped build a community library, participated as an instructor in the training of new volunteers, and co-edited the Peace Corps *Vesti* newsletter. Bryan and Mary Rose bring both experience and commitment to ICP, and the staff is very pleased to have them for the spring semester. ICP is also pleased that Robin Taylor will be returning to intern with ICP during the spring semester.

Service News Headlines

UN Chronicle Features Articles on Volunteerism

In its latest issue, the UN Chronicle, a magazine for information about, and debate around, the United Nations System, published four pieces on volunteerism. Featured topics are the concept of volunteerism for development, UNV's contribution, volunteerism and the UN system, volunteering and the non-profit sector, and a first person case study of two UNV volunteers.

The Chronicle can be accessed at www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2006/issue4/0406cont.html.

Presidential Proclamation on the Fifth Anniversary of the USA Freedom Corps

President George W. Bush has proclaimed January 29, 2007 as the 5th Anniversary of USA Freedom Corps (USFC). USA Freedom Corps was created in 2002 to honor the many acts of service following September 11th. As

a White House office, the USFC is charged with building a culture of service, citizenship and responsibility. The USFC promotes and expands volunteer service in the US by partnering with national service programs, working to strengthen the non-profit sector, recognizing volunteers, and helping to connect individuals with volunteer opportunities.

To learn more, visit <http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov>.

Tsunami Volunteer profiled in the Epoch Times

United Nations Volunteer Frederike Meijer of the Netherlands was recently profiled for the work he is doing in Indonesia's Aceh Province. The article by Ben Hurley highlights both Meijer, the work of the United Nations Volunteers, and the reconstruction and recovery in Aceh.

To read the full article, please visit <http://en.epochtimes.com/news/7-1-3/50003.html>.

ISSUE # 40
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Upcoming Events

NASCC Corps Forum; February 11-14; Washington, DC. For more information, please visit

<http://www.nascc.org/Forum.htm>

International Conference on Character Development through Service and Experiential Learning March 12-13, 2007; Singapore. For more information please visit

<http://www.iccdtsel.nie.edu.sg/>

Inter-American Summit on Conflict Resolution Education March 14-17, 2007; Cleveland, Ohio. For more information please visit

http://www.educadem.oas.org/english/cpo_eventos.asp

Global Service Forum; 28 March 2007; Albuquerque, New Mexico. For more information please visit www.nylc.org/conference

The 18th Annual National Service Learning Conference; 28-31 March 2007; Albuquerque, New Mexico. For more information please visit <https://programs.regweb.com/metro/NYLC2007/registration>

Act! Speak! Build! Week; Habitat for Humanity's international student initiated week of advocacy April 16-22, 2007 For more information and to register, please visit <http://www.habitat.org/youthprograms/actspeakbuild/>

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A Global Service Institute Initiative

Produced by Innovations in Civic Participation

ISSUE # 40
FEBRUARY 2007

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The Commonwealth Corps has the potential to significantly increase civic engagement participation among young people in Massachusetts. If successful, it could be used as a model of youth civic engagement for additional states and organizations to emulate. Patrick stated that, "Every single one of us has a stake in each others' dreams and struggles, and in stronger communities. To that end, this administration will play a role in encouraging civic engagement."

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Mary Angelini said that the decision to mobilize RPCVs for the recovery effort stemmed from three factors: the agency's desire to make a valuable contribution to the national response, the Crisis Corps administration's knowledge that RPCVs could adjust to difficult situations, and the number of messages Peace Corps received from RPCVs asking how they could help.

In the days following the disaster, Crisis Corps sent emails to qualified RPCVs requesting 30 days of service in the Gulf Region. One of the volunteers to answer the call was Jamaica Corker. Jamaica served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Guinea, West Africa from 2001-2003. There, she worked in a rural health center, assisting with pre-natal exams and teaching hygiene and nutrition classes. Jamaica noted that since volunteers lacked basic amenities during their service, "they were an "ideal group to recruit disaster relief workers from." Four days after she agreed to serve, she arrived in Orlando, Florida for FEMA training.



Photo courtesy of http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=resources_former.crisiscorps

Jamaica and her group were assigned to Gulfport, Mississippi, where they worked at the Disaster Recovery Center as Applicant Service Specialists. On paper, Jamaica's job was to enter the relevant information of victims into the system for FEMA assistance and then to send the victims to the appropriate agency. In reality, Jamaica said that they functioned more as "social workers." She worked with victims to find housing, medical supplies, food and water. The Disaster Recovery Center in Gulfport, staffed primarily by Crisis Corps volunteers, was recognized as the best center in the area. Jamaica noted that, "The Gulfport DRC was used as a training site for local hires because it worked so well."

In all, 272 Crisis Corps Volunteers served in the recovery effort. The last Crisis Corps Volunteers finished their service on December 31, 2005.

Service News Worldwide is produced by Innovations in Civic Participation. This monthly newsletter is intended to be a resource for current news and events related to service, country information, and relevant publications and internet resources, in addition to in-depth discussions of different types of service and the issues that accompany them.

Comments and/or suggestions are welcomed, and we strongly encourage contributions for future issues.

Please direct enquiries to info@icicp.org