



**Peace Corps Connect – Washington, DC
Affiliate Group Network (AGN)**

September 22, 2016

Lutheran Church of the Reformation
212 East Capitol Street NE Washington, DC 20003

1. Call to Order – *Maricarmen Smith-Martinez, Affiliate Group Network Coordinator (AGN-C)*

Welcome and introduction: The Meeting was called to order at 12:03 PM ET by Maricarmen Smith-Martinez.

2. Member Group Voting Delegates – *Maricarmen Smith-Martinez, AGN-C*

Establish Eligible Voters List:

Mary Novotny (AARPCV), Gloria Levin (Amigos de Bolivia y Peru), Theresa Salus (Amigos de Honduras), Louise McMaster (Arkadaslar–Friends of Turkey), Doane Perry (Boston Area RPCVs), Frank Yates (Central Missouri RPCVs), Tom DeMeo (Columbia River PCA), Nicola Dino (Committee for a Museum of the Peace Corps Experience), Leo Cecchini (Ethiopia & Eritrea RPCVs), Tony Agnello (Friends of Afghanistan), Patricia Mertz (Friends of Cote d'Ivoire), Tad Baldwin (Friends of Ecuador), Beth Shearer (Friends of Fiji), Frank Yates (Friends of Ghana), Meg Rice (Friends of Guatemala), Lillian Mattiaccio (Friends of Guinea), Sarah Morrison (Friends of Liberia), Thaine Allison (Friends of Malaysia), Elaine Lim (Friends of Micronesia), Tim Resch (Friends of Morocco), Shane Meckler (Friends of Mozambique), Dan Donaghue (Friends of Nepal), Millard Mott (Friends of Pakistan USA), John von Reyn (Friends of Swaziland), Briana Lambert (GSA RPCV Employee Association), Kirsty Morgan (Kansas City Area PCA), Manuel Colon (LGBT RPCVs), Kendra Lesar (Louisiana PCA), Michelle Short (Minnesota RPCVs), Margaret Riley (North Carolina PCA), Lie Njie (Northern California PCA), Jean Parcher (Northern Virginia RPCVs), Sarah McMeans (Peace Corps Alumni Foundation for Philippine Development), Jackie Spurlock (Peace Corps Iran Association), Melaney Monreal Starling (RPCVs @ State), Katherine Braga (RPCVs & Friends at USDA), Dan Fox (RPCVs at the Department of Transportation), Jeffrey Levine (RPCVs at USAID), Jeb Eddy (RPCVs for Environmental Action), Lauren Dorosz (RPCVs of Colorado), Caroline Mackenzie (RPCVs of Hawaii), Allyn Writesel (RPCVs of Northeastern New York), Gregory Zell (RPCVs of South Florida; Friends of Nigeria), Chris Robinson (RPCVs of Washington, DC; Friends of Jamaica), Kim Herman (SEAPAX; Friends of the Dominican Republic), Jeanne Paul (Southeast Michigan RPCVs), Elizabeth Isele (St. Louis PCA), Angela Harris (Tennessee RPCVs)

Non-Voting Attendees:

Amanda Silva (Friends of Indonesia), Barbara Busch (Peace Corps Community for the Support of Refugees), BJ Whetstine (Peace Corps Office of Third Goal and Returned Volunteer Services), Brittany Sickler (SBA RPCVs), Camillia Freeland-Taylor (Peace Corps Zambia), Colleen Conroy (Peace Corps Community for the Support of Refugees), Corey Taylor (RPCV of Washington, DC), Cynthia Barua, Don Hinman (RPCVs & Friends at USDA), Ellen Arnstein (RPCVs for Environmental Action), Erin Eddy (RPCVs @ State), Jack Newman (Friends of Mozambique), Jennifer Seaver, Jeremy Wustner-Brown (GSA RPCV Employee Association), Kathleen MacLeod (Peace Corps Iran Association), Kenneth Lim (Friends of Jamaica), Nic Granum (RPCVs & Friends at USDA), Pat Reilly (Friends of Liberia), Phyllis Shelty (Amigos de Honduras), Ruth Ficek Stepien (Kansas City Area PCA), Sandi

Giver (NPCA Advocacy Fellow, RPCV Support Network), Stephen Dienstfrey (Peace Corps Alumni Foundation for Philippine Development), Steve Cristofar (Northern Virginia RPCVs), Sue Senecah (RPCVs of Northeastern New York), Suzanne Marks (Atlanta Area RPCVs), Vida Bourbour (Peace Corps Iran Association), Wendy Owens (Peace Corps to Politics)

Approval of 2015 minutes: The motion to approve the minutes of the 2015 Affiliate Group Network Annual Meeting was made by Gregory Zell and was seconded and carried.

3. Affiliate Group Network Introductions – *Various*

Participants introduced themselves and the affiliate group(s) they represented.

The AGN-C also introduced Member-Elected Directors and other NPCA Board Directors present:

- Randy Adams – Mid-Atlantic and Nationwide
- Sue Senecah – Northeast
- Angie Harris – Southern Tier
- Marjorie Harrison – Asia and the Pacific
- Linda Stingl – Europe, North, and East Africa
- Janet Greig – Board-elected Director

Not Present (elected 2016): Juliana Essen – West; Mary Owen – Upper Midwest; Patrick Fine – West, Central, and Southern Africa; and Katie Long – The Americas

4. NPCA Welcome and Update – *Glenn Blumhorst, NPCA President*

President Glenn Blumhorst spoke to the group about the critical role of the Affiliate Groups in a grassroots organization like NPCA. He expressed his gratitude to all present for their leadership and for the impact their groups demonstrate in communities here at home and around the globe.

He emphasized that the quality of collaboration between NPCA and Peace Corps is at an all-time high, guided by the current memorandum of understanding (MOU) governing this relationship.

The President highlighted organizational updates in the NPCA Strategic Plan and outlined new opportunities available to members and Affiliate Groups:

- Strategic Plan
- Development Impact, primarily through the Community Fund
- Opportunities to Benefit Affiliate Groups
- New Community Builder Platform – SilkStart

7. World Café Sessions: Initiatives and Opportunities to Bolster Groups – *Various*

To provide an opportunity for group leaders to learn directly about recent initiatives, projects, and campaigns, the group divided into smaller segments that focused on announcements about specific topics:

- **Community Fund:** Amanda Silva, NPCA Community Fund and Partnerships Coordinator

- **Refugee Support:** Valerie Kurka, Ad Hoc Committee for the Support of Refugees and Migrants
- **Building an RPCV Support Network:** Sandi Giver, NPCA RPCV Support Network Fellow
- **LGBT RPCVs:** Manuel Colón, National Coordinator
- **Peace Corps Office of Third Goal and Returned Volunteer Services:** BJ Whetstine, Director
- **Community Exhibits and Education:** Nicola Dino, Committee for the Museum of the Peace Corps Experience, and Ira Black, 70 South Gallery

8. Roundtables: Brainstorming and Sharing of Best Practices – Various

To provide an opportunity for affiliate group leaders to learn collaborate with other groups and share lessons learned, challenges, and best practices in a facilitated discussion:

- **Membership growth and retention:** Jackie Spurlock, Peace Corps Iran Association
- **Leadership recruitment and engagement:** Elizabeth Isele, St. Louis Peace Corps Association President
- **Fundraising purposefully:** Chris Robinson, RPCVs of Washington, DC President
- **Data/information management:** Ella Dowell, Northern California Peace Corps Association
- **Engaging communications strategies/marketing:** Corey Taylor, RPCVs of Washington, DC

Following the discussions, facilitators from each group shared a roundtable summary, including lessons learned from affiliate group experiences or interesting ideas from the discussion.

9. Affiliate Group Opportunity – Beth Ellen Holimon

Guest speaker, Beth Ellen Holimon, President of Dining for Women (DFW), introduced an opportunity for affiliate groups to partner with the organization. She presented DFW as a global giving circle dedicated to transforming lives and eradicating poverty among women and girls in the developing world. Through member education and engagement, as well as the power of collective giving, DFW funds grassroots organizations that empower women and girls and promote gender equity. With over 400 chapters, women and men convene around a monthly project. As a global giving circle, the organization acts as a grant maker to small grassroots led initiatives that are focused on significant impact. The DFW President welcomed affiliate groups to join forces for mutual benefit in purpose-driven fundraising.

9. Capacity-Building Series Planning – Maricarmen Smith-Martinez, AGN-C

The AGN-C provided an overview of several tools for continued engagement of the AGN, intended to build on the energy of the AGNAM and continue an ongoing dialogue. She underscored a fundamental shift toward increased group collaboration, with projects such as the Ebola Relief Fund, an initiative of Friends of Guinea, Friends of Liberia, and Friends of Sierra Leone. She also described the Purpose-driven Group Webinar series, offering a forum for facilitated and topic-driven discussions among the AGN leadership to be carried forth throughout the year. Additionally, she highlighted the NPCA Resource Library, offering groups toolkits and samples or templates shared by other affiliate groups for collaborative learning.

The AGN-C reiterated the change in the AGNAM from the previous year, outlining that the placement of the meeting had been shifted from the end of the conference to the beginning, which provided group leaders the opportunity to connect and engage throughout the entire conference weekend.

The AGN-C introduced the concept of the AGN Advisory Committee, which advises NPCA staff and Board on a variety of issues, such as policy and procedure to improve support for struggling groups. She announced that a survey invitation would follow the meeting to recruit volunteers to serve on the 2016-2017 Advisory Committee.

9. Conclusion – *Maricarmen Smith-Martinez, AGN-C*

The AGN-C thanked NPCA Vice President Anne Baker for her support of the AGN and the AGN Annual Meeting participants.

10. Adjournment – *Maricarmen Smith-Martinez, AGN-C*

The meeting was adjourned by Maricarmen Smith-Martinez at 4:02 pm.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Peace Corps Connect 2016 conference hosts (RPCVs of Washington DC and Northern Virginia RPCVs) – as well as all facilitators, note takers, volunteers, and NPCA Staff and Board.

World Café Discussions – Initiatives and Opportunities to Bolster your Group	
<p>NPCA Community Fund</p> <p>Amanda Silva <i>NPCA Community Fund and Partnerships Coordinator</i></p>	<p>Programs and Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPCA is expanding Community Fund Campaigns on its website platform to incorporate Affiliate Groups and Capacity Building • Affiliate Groups without 501c3 status may apply for NPCA to act as a Fiscal Sponsor for donations to their group • Like the Ebola Relief Fund, affiliate groups can work with NPCA for major causes, or apply for combined grants that benefit both the affiliate group and the community • Providing an easy one-pager about the Community Fund for better understand of the information and easier dissemination <p>Group Needs and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups with other ideas, questions or comments should contact Amanda.
<p>Refugee Support</p> <p>Valerie Kurka <i>Ad Hoc Committee for the Support of Refugees and Migrants</i></p>	<p>Programs and Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the spring of 2016, amid the waves of refugees and migrants around the globe, NPCA used its annual leadership summit to examine how the Peace Corps community can respond. In March 2016, the NPCA established the Ad Hoc Committee for the Support of Refugees and Asylees. Through this committee, we aim to engage the broader RPCV community with support for refugees and asylees. It is doing so with the firm conviction that RPCVs, by virtue of their training and experience, have the cross-cultural skills, adaptability and commitment to make a significant contribution in this area. • The committee has agreed to work in three broad areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ direct assistance for refugees overseas, ○ support for US-based resettlement of refugees and asylees, and ○ advocacy on behalf of refugees and asylees at the national, state and local levels. • The committee aims to contribute through association and partnerships with several national and international groups already at work in these areas and through learning from the several NPCA members and affiliates who are already engaged in these efforts. • Camille Wathne from Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) presented a volunteer guide and model that HIAS developed for Returned Peace Corps Volunteers to use in order to more effectively engage with refugees. <p>Group Needs and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For more information, email info@pcc4refugees.org.
<p>Building an RPCV Support Network</p> <p>Sandi Giver <i>NPCA Community Fund and Partnerships Coordinator</i></p>	<p>RPCV Support Networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentors/Leadership and Direct Service Providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Volunteer Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Difficulty firing people who may want status without having capacity or desire to put in the work ▪ Creating a probation period where feedback/vetting is possible: Mentors/service providers could be damaging to individual/view of program ▪ Setting expectation of time/effort management ▪ Needing to find people who share values: Succession or legacy of posts that have closed (See about partnering with other closed posts or other organizations that have a similar mission/area of interest)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must retain institutional knowledge, record history and save ▪ Mentorship issues: (1) Matching people in the larger picture→ move to affiliate groups and (2) admin challenges with national level ▪ Attitude/Effort: Burn out, possibly unmotivated, flaky or undependable (make commitments, yet don't follow through) ▪ Time commitments: Older/retired individuals have more time available and younger/entry level to mid-career individuals have more inhibitive life commitments ▪ Generational differences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older generation may intimidate younger people or appear to control group • Younger generation may not feel like they are being heard therefore overruled, or they may not understand benefits of a paid membership, may not understand the benefits, or may not have the funds to pay • Potential Support Seekers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Target Audiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medical evacuations: Current PCVs and RPCVs may need rides for appointments or simply someone to listen ▪ Post-specific evacuation (i.e., Ebola evacuees) ▪ Family of fallen Volunteers ○ Support Types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Before service: Better prepare individuals for possible issues (evacuation) ▪ After COS: Group readjustment sessions ▪ Encourage use of vouchers for readjustment/check-in ▪ Loved Ones to Loved Ones (Parents to Parents) support ○ M&E: Track efficacy through quick three-question survey. • Communication Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Target communication strategies to the populations and where they are ○ Clarify what is available and the benefits of utilizing them ○ Use social media to offer services/information ○ Spotlight an affiliate group in a blog/email with a link to their specific page ○ Utilize word of mouth since people are oversaturated with Peace Corps related emails ○ Reach out to PC when there is a fallen Volunteer and offer to connect with the family ○ Be sure to utilize search engine optimization so that google will pick up the website • Deliverables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One-pagers of available options (such as mentoring program) ○ Toolkit for non-RPCV therapists ○ Resources for loved ones of RPCV victims ○ Inclusion of information into COS manual or in Volunteer lounges at post ○ Downside is that NPCA info may get lost in COS paperwork • To Explore <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarify roles of PCHQ and NPCA ○ Frame affiliate groups to PCHQ as a method to bolster Third Goal within communities
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<p>LGBT RPCVs</p> <p>Manuel Colon <i>National Coordinator</i></p>	<p>Programs and Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating 25 years in 2016, born out of Peace Corps's 30th anniversary celebration • Implemented a successful membership drive campaign in March that increased members with NPCA affiliation by 300% • As an incentive, created Peace Corps pins with American and Rainbow flags for members <p>Group Needs and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most operations are digital. The group operates “everywhere and nowhere” simultaneously. • Leadership encourages all affiliate groups to reach out for any LGBTQ relates issues (Pride events/activities, application questions or support, etc.) • Collects Stories by Country. They are always looking for RPCVs to share their experiences. • Happy to collaborate with other groups to assist in gathering local LGBT RPCVs in affiliate group areas. • Leadership encourages all affiliate groups to consider naming a liaison from the affiliate group to reach out to LGBT RPCVs and maintain a connection.
<p>Peace Corps Office of Third Goal/Returned Volunteer Services (OTGRVS)</p> <p>BJ Whetstine <i>Peace Corps, Director of 3G/RVS</i></p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Gloria Levin <i>President of Amigos de Bolivia y Peru</i></p>	<p>Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OTGRVS was established in 2012 to assist RPCVs’ transition to life after PC (e.g., an active career center) and to promote RPCVs’ Third Goal activities. In conjunction with PCC-2016, RPCV career center conducting a four-day event, with over 500 RPCVs and 80 prospective employers registered. Last year, PC’s online RPCV career link posted over 5,000 jobs • Third Goal Kits (including maps, a PC flag and other promotional materials) available to assist RPCVs in making public presentations, such as for recruitment efforts or cross cultural education. RPCVs should inform OTGRVS via online questionnaire of intended activities to promote PC and educate the public about other cultures • PC has a new website that offers resources for RPCVs, PCVs, friends/family, and educators • OTGRVS supports the Speaker’s Match program, providing requesters with prospective RPCV speakers. Most requests are for K-12 classrooms, followed by girl groups (such as Girl Scout troops), and Dining for Women also is requesting RPCV speakers • Affiliate groups have concerns about inability to identify currently serving PCVs for recruitment (especially at COS). PC does have contact information on a large number of PCVs/RPCVs; however, statute prohibits the sharing of this information/identity. OTGRVS emails all PCVs 3 months before COS to inform of existence of and resources from NPCA and affiliate groups and sends a reminder post completion of service • OTGRVS is permitted to email information directly to RPCVs but cannot provide those names or contact information to anyone else. One indirect way of assisting affiliate groups to reach RPCVs is Third Goal’s offer to distribute one email per year for a requesting affiliate group that designates the parameters of the search (e.g., country of service, dates of service or zip codes, etc.). However, purpose of PC-issued email cannot involve soliciting funds nor advocating for legislation (if intended to promote an event, it must be free of charge). Format for email could be to direct RPCV to the affiliate group’s website for event details • Although an earlier “waiver” of the privacy rule allowed COS-ing PCVs to waive privacy rights (allowing data to be provided to NPCA), the provision was terminated in 2011 • Encouraged two-way information sharing between PC and affiliate groups. Groups should encourage RPCVs to periodically update profiles on the PC portal, where they can also

	<p>volunteer to register for public speaking or recruiting engagements and report on activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All encouraged to attend the PC story-telling event at the Kennedy Center on 9/23. <p>Group Needs and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group leader stated that PC staff had informed affiliate group that holding a potluck event would be prohibited because it is tantamount to “charging a fee.” BJ disputed this interpretation and urged us to take such questions to Third Goal instead of other PC staff unrelated to returned volunteer services/ Third Goal• In response to a question about whether affiliate groups could be informed of returned (as “undeliverable”) emails, BJ explained that would violate the statutory prohibition (found in appropriation language) about sharing information
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Roundtables – Brainstorming and Sharing of Best Practices

Membership growth and retention

Facilitator:
Jackie Spurlock
Peace Corps
Iran Association

Notes:
Sue Senecah
NPCA Board
Director:
Northeast Region

Affiliate Group Challenges

- Aging out of some group RPCV pools (Iran, Afghanistan)
- Attracting range of ages
- Attracting freshly returned RPCVs
- Generating and retaining group board members/officers
- Attracting university students who may not feel any loyalty to the geographic area
- Determining scale: when to collapse or expand (agency groups, regional groups, country of service groups, interest groups)

Considerations, Ideas, and Best Practices

- Friends of Jamaica
 - Focus on a mission to attract donors
 - Provide micro-grants of \$50-500
 - Partner with non-RPCV organizations on projects
 - Poll RPCVs about what would increase attractiveness of group
 - Open the decision making process and make it transparent
- GSA RPCVs
 - Provide professional development activities (very popular)
 - Provide country updates
 - Hold Happy Hours
 - Hold an annual picnic
 - Support a book club
 - Garden together to donate produce
 - Look for and create opportunities to celebrate and tell stories
 - Hold an annual ski trip
 - Do events around the region
 - Hold webinars on various topics
- Northern Virginia RPCVs
 - New group (a few years old); 150 on email and 50 active members
 - Sell calendars as a group activity
 - Charge dues (\$15)
 - Send email to potentials provided by OTGRVS, but not as easy as it sounds
- Peace Corps Iran Association
 - From NPCA list of 600, validated and sent email to 300, used free software programs to research returned emails
 - Reunion in 2011, 300 people came, led to group's formation in 2012
 - Free membership; no dues charged. Open to all; not restricted to RPCVs
 - Members agree to share info with others
 - Regular mailings; 1) monthly board report, 2) newsletter 2X/year (electronic & hard copy) brings in new members
 - Use NPCA database and member networks to promote group/raise awareness
 - Engage in activities meaningful to members
 - Fundraising via biannual conference (produced \$16,000 bank balance)
 - Spend group funds on (1) outreach; (2) advocacy, (e.g., partnering with other organizations, group letter to politicians); and (3) legacy project; oral histories that become an anthology

	<p>book of memoirs</p> <p>General Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take advantage of funding via PC Partnerships Projects to provide accountability and monitoring • Schedule happy hours and activities to build social relationships through which projects evolve • Hold send-off and welcome-back events • Provide professional as well as social activities, (e.g., resume writing, how to network) • Create a product to sell • Hold cooking classes for other RPCVs and the public • Assume a 50% drop off by folks who say they'll come to a free meeting • Start small; it takes time to achieve multiple points of engagement • Determine a singular focus that appeals to younger or several age groups, not general interest, (e.g., NE NY RPCVs fundraisers for Ebola and Fistula) • Participate in the Festival of Nations in your city • Use map at meetings to pin/identify countries of service • Invite new RPCVs to present/talk with group • Invite new RPCVs to a small dinner party with established group members
<p>Leadership recruitment and engagement</p> <p><i>Facilitator:</i> Elizabeth Isele St. Louis Peace Corps Association President</p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Amanda Silva NPCA Community Fund and Partnerships Coordinator</p>	<p>Discussion Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the biggest challenge for group leadership? <p>Group Leader Discussions and Best Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting reasonable expectations for the board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "I expect these standards..." ○ "What's your expectation?" ○ "How can I help you?" • Defining ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Responsibility and ownership for board tasks ○ Cater to individual theme ○ President responsible for following up with board members ○ Creating good titles • By-laws need to hold everyone accountable • Difficulty with succession • How to make board leadership/meetings fun? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Board meetings in bars or rotate hosting for each board meeting ○ Generational issues, what appeals to everyone? ○ General meetings → NoVA RPCVs includes a speaker at each general meeting • Board size (and meeting frequency) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NorCal PCA – 13 (monthly, 1.5 hours), Michigan – 12 (monthly, 3-5pm Sundays), Kansas City – 4-5 (every 5-6 weeks), Mozambique – 7, SE Louisiana PCA – 9, GSA – 7, Iran – 9, St. Louis – 6, Indonesia – new, Committee for PC Experience – 4, Swaziland – 6, Philippines – 6-8, E&E RPCVs – 9. <p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early/previous leadership do not want to give up positions • Membership and fundraising

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconciling young and older members • Continuity and consistency for leadership and meetings • Need proper status for fundraising/paying out of pocket
<p>Fundraising purposefully</p> <p><i>Facilitator:</i> Chris Robinson RPCV/W President</p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Janet Greig NPCA Board Director</p>	<p>Discussion Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do people give? What makes them want to give? <p>Group Leader Discussions and Best Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A successful fundraising strategy is diversified and focuses on its supporters more than its cause. People give for the same reasons they volunteer: Because they enjoy it. When brainstorming a strategy, emphasize supporter morale and use it to identify the most dedicated participants. Hold social events whenever possible. While these events may not net much funding, they bring out the most ardent supporters, who may then be willing to join committees and approach wealthy donors or corporate sponsors. • Goal must be clear, motivating; the campaign must be positive – the message positive. Each ask must be positive, different from other asks the organization has put forward. Strategy must be worked out ahead of time and in place by the campaign start. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Team clearly defined and in place and ready to go ○ Team must be involved early on with development of message and strategy. Only then will you have the ‘buy-in’ needed for success; democratizing the process at every stage. ○ Prepare folks for person-to-person asks. ○ Technology: Use Google Docs to track success and keep list of folks to be approached. • Example: RPCV/W raised funds for the Ceremony at Arlington Cemetery and Parade of Flags Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Peace Corps. They needed \$30,000 for to obtain permits, rent space at Arlington, print of 5,000 programs, equip volunteer staff, secure police escorts, etc. Since the walk did not have a specific ‘socially acceptable goal (seen more as self-congratulatory than to benefit and good cause), the ask needed lots of work. To work from this perspective, message needs to be very much from the heart. Different messages needed for different potential donors – individuals, corporate sponsors, etc. Event programs/print media also provide opportunities to raise funds from corporate sponsors: sell ‘tributes’ celebrating the work of others. RPCV/W came up with four components for its diversified strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One-on-one letter: Boiler plate provided to team, though all were free to craft to their own message. ○ Sponsors: Reached out to corporations and NGOs for sponsorships, especially those who hire RPCVs. ○ Events: Held informal get-togethers, themed events, dinners, Bingo nights. In-person events kept up morale and brought new volunteers into campaign. They held one monthly for 13 months to recognize first 13 countries of service. Lots of ideas on the internet for fundraising events (i.e., geography trivia, etc.) ○ Advertising: Sold tributes in the programs. • Partnerships. Consider partnerships instead of fundraising. If an educational institution in your area has a program that caters to RPCVs, consider reaching out to them for a sponsorship agreement, in which they donate and you honor their generosity accordingly by running a “thank you” in your communications or featuring their representative at an event. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local Rotary Clubs, Red Cross, student groups, civic associations. Familiarize yourself with other service-based entities and be on the lookout for join fundraising opportunities. • Cause-related. Some groups fundraised for Vanuatu cyclone recovery, others to raise funds for

	<p>A Towering Task. Having events to raise funds for these kinds of purposes works well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey your members very year to find out what they are interested in. Use giftrocket.com to incentivize survey completion (e.g., If you complete the survey, you'll be entered into a drawing and get a \$25 gift certificate.)
<p>Data/information management</p> <p><i>Facilitator:</i> Ella McDowell NorCalPCA</p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Wendy Owens RPCVs of Washington, DC Leadership</p>	<p>Platform Overview – SilkStart</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All-in-one comprehensive tools for website, database, events, and membership management Platform for groups to create sites with easy to use software and web page builders Groups would still use their own/existing domain name (website URL) Good for desktop browsers and responsive for mobile Events – Group can create events and group can opt for member-driven event options Communication – Includes templates for emails/newsletters (like Constant Contact) Advocacy website and NPCA links Provides centralized database, linked to NPCA, so RPCVs can streamline the data they need to update and reduce the number of accounts they need to create in different systems Current downsides: No custom fields yet and no way to split into segments within a group for region or service years, etc. Ongoing support from NPCA for using Silk Start NPCA will provide training and configuration for affiliate groups websites <p>Group Leader Discussions and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Platform seems more appropriate for regional groups than country of service groups? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beneficial for all group types: Friends of Malawi uses this software What are the costs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing costs still under determination, but starting point is \$250 to launch and \$300 a year. NPCA working to find ways to lower costs for small affiliate groups, possibly as low as \$180 per year How much technical experience is necessary? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some, but not much, platform is intuitive and user-friendly It is easy to transfer/migrate to the new platform from an existing site? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can copy and paste, but no one-click migration solution
<p>Engaging communications strategies</p> <p><i>Facilitator:</i> Corey Taylor, RPCVs of Washington, DC</p>	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Using social media effectively across generations 2) Developing communications to increase and incentivize memberships (reason to join) <p>Best Practices (<i>Specific comments of interest to use as examples</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage the full spectrum of members: Recently vs. not-so-recently returned. Minority RPCVs: African-Americans, Latino-Americans, LGBT RPCVs, families of Fallen PCVs, etc. This could mean utilizing multiple media sources, both digital and print (i.e. Facebook, email and print newsletter). Provide a mix of activities that appeal/involve all age ranges (i.e. mix happy hours with outdoor activities and Sunday afternoon potlucks). Personal communications are the most effective way to spread the word and increase engagement. Proactively ask members to invite other RPCVs (recently returned or not). Use regional recruiters as a resource: Recruiters may keep in touch with volunteers during service. Although recruiters can't share information directly, they can pass along RPCV affiliate group contact information. Some groups, like Wisconsin, sends care packages to PCVs during

their service (which you can bet makes a good impression) and certainly makes them more excited to join when they get back.

- **Don't overextend yourself on communications channels:** Just because there's some new hip social media channel out there doesn't mean that a group needs to join it. It's better to keep up pages/profiles that you can manage and maintain consistently than have inactive accounts, as it could make potential members think the group is defunct. Treat social media platforms like "puppies;" only invest in sites that you have time to take care of properly.
 - *Facebook Events.* Try to get as many people in the affiliate group as possible to join the Facebook group, utilize Facebook events for free advertising and easy reminders (i.e. RPCV group X invited you to Potluck this weekend, let them know if you'll attend). With email-overload, sometimes notification reminders can be more effective.
 - *Twitter.* RPCV/W does not have that much interaction, but if groups do tweet, make sure to maximize exposure by recognizing partner organizations for community service or social events and calling out NPCA for greater reach
 - *LinkedIn.* Provides some excellent "stalking tools" for marketing. Search "Peace Corps" within your city/region and see who comes up. An outreach coordinator can direct message recently returned volunteers in the job search.
 - *Digital Content.* The more often it's updated, the better. If it's not possible to update a website on a regular basis, consider removing time-bound information (i.e. photo from Thanksgiving potluck two years ago). Consider using member blog posts for email distribution (i.e. "What it was like as a PCV in Afghanistan" or "How I learned to make tortillas in El Salvador"). It gets folks to share stories and gives members an outlet to share their experiences with interested people. RPCV/W manages a website, Facebook page and group, LinkedIn page and group, Twitter account, and a weekly newsletter. It's a lot of material to cover on a regular basis, and they have multiple contributors. Most groups would be well served with a website and Facebook group, using a newsletter/email list for communications.
- **Consider partnering with other regional RPCV groups for events.** Always good to mix people up a little, hear new stories, and realize how big the RPCV community is. Maybe invite others who are passionate about the same country or type of service to expand your reach and complete third goal activities.

Other tidbits:

- **Who's your audience?** Is it just volunteers? Or so much more?
- **What do they want?** Is it job prospects? A social community to share their time? Achieving Third Goal related acts? Remembering their departed son or daughter by following their call to service? Mentors?
- **How do they best communicate?** Social media, email, print newsletters?
- **Don't simply persuade RPCVs (especially younger ones) to become members!** Show them how joining your affiliate group will help them accomplish their personal goals and needs.
- Generational differences should never be a barrier to social media and outreach!
- "Facebook Page" and "Facebook Group" difference:
 - Page is one directional and allows the moderator to make announcements
 - Groups are interactive and members are able to post.
- For country of service or cause-related groups spread out across the country, engage members through video chats, hosting events on the same day and posting photos/blogs afterwards.