

How the Rotary network can help evacuated Peace Corps Volunteers

For the safety and well-being of volunteers and their host communities, Peace Corps, one of Rotary's partners, made the difficult decision to evacuate all 7000+ volunteers from their host countries back to the United States last month. Following the suspension of Peace Corps Volunteer activities in response to COVID-19, the affiliate group [Partnering for Peace \(PFP\)](#) is taking action.

PFP is a group of Rotary members and returned Peace Corps Volunteers who are committed to developing the partnership between Rotary and the Peace Corps at the grassroots level. PFP is helping connect recently returned Peace Corps Volunteers with local Rotary and Rotaract clubs to help the volunteers to readjust to their home community or tie up loose ends from a recently evacuated host community.

The Rotary network has thousands of Rotary and Rotaract clubs globally, with many members who are also Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs). While the novel coronavirus crisis has forced clubs to suspend in-person meetings, many are having virtual meetings and would like to hear from an evacuated Volunteer about their service abroad.

Below are some ways volunteers might collaborate with a Rotary/Rotaract club:

- **Help readjust** into their home community. Returning back home after being immersed in new customs and cultures can be very difficult. Clubs can introduce volunteers to meaningful ways they can support or lead local community development efforts using the skills they refined through their Peace Corps training and service.
- **Share** about their country of service, their experience serving alongside the local community, and their work with Peace Corps. Rotary members are internationally-minded and interested in what Volunteers are doing, so they can provide a sympathetic ear and will be inspired by volunteers' time abroad.
- **Tie up loose ends** by empowering clubs near the community where volunteers served to build a relationship with their host community and continue addressing community needs. Sharing about their work with local clubs can inspire US-based club to support the projects the volunteers may not have been able to finish.
- **Share community development expertise** on a Rotary project. Volunteers' training and in-country experience in community development, knowledge about engaging stakeholders, and experience preparing project proposals, budgets and monitoring and evaluation metrics can help clubs better plan and implement their projects.
- **Inspire prospective Peace Corps Volunteers.** Rotary members hold the same values as Peace Corps Volunteers. Share about the numerous service opportunities, from short-term assignments to multi-year optional, available through Peace Corps, once operations resume when the emergency is over.

If interested, volunteers can reach out to a Rotary/Rotaract club using the [Club Finder Tool](#), and then reach out to PFP at info@partneringforpeace.org for a personal introduction. Rotary clubs can reach out to PFP to help introduce the Volunteer to the club's leadership via email or phone, so they will receive a warm greeting from the Rotary/Rotaract club. The Volunteer and the Rotary member can decide next steps based on the Volunteer's needs and the club's ability to function while the emergency is taking place.

PFP is here to help! For more information contact Steve Werner, President of PFP, at steve@stevewernerconsulting.com or (303) 809-8986.