

# Volunteers for Prosperity

*Experience Changing the World.*



## Annual Report 2006



“Today, I would like to announce a new USA Freedom Corps initiative called Volunteers for Prosperity, which will give America’s highly skilled professionals new opportunities to serve abroad. The program will enlist American doctors and nurses and teachers and engineers and economists and computer specialists and others to work on specific development initiatives, including those that I have discussed today. These volunteers will serve in the countries of their choice, for however long their project takes. Like generations before us, this generation of citizens will show the world the energy and idealism of the United States of America.”

President George W. Bush  
May 21, 2003

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# ABOUT VOLUNTEERS FOR PROSPERITY

**V**olunteers for Prosperity (VfP) is an interagency initiative established by President Bush's Executive Order 13317 on September 25, 2003, to encourage international voluntary service by highly skilled Americans supporting major U.S. efforts to promote health and prosperity around the world. Working under the direction of U.S. nonprofits and companies, volunteers are deployed to developing countries on flexible, short-term assignments ranging from a few weeks to several months to a year or more.

The Office of Volunteers for Prosperity at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the federal government's interagency coordinator of the initiative, is building a network of partner organizations that implement volunteer activities supporting the U.S. global health and prosperity agenda. The office hosts a website that helps to match individual volunteers with opportunities for service with appropriate VfP partner organizations.

Partner organizations can receive special consideration in applications for federal grants awarded by the departments of State, Commerce, Health and Human Services, and USAID in six critical development initiatives. These include the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR); Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI); Digital Freedom Initiative (DFI); Water for the Poor Initiative<sup>1</sup>; African Global Competiveness Initiative<sup>2</sup>; and Millennium Challenge Account (MCA).

The U.S. global health and prosperity agenda focuses on helping developing countries advance in the following areas: democratic governance, economic growth, education, HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention, clean water, agricultural development, information and communications technology, trade and investment, natural resources management, and women and youth empowerment.

<sup>1</sup>Water for the Poor, a three-year initiative, successfully concluded in 2006.

<sup>2</sup>Formerly Trade for African Development and Enterprise (TRADE).

## WHO CAN PARTNER WITH VFP?

**T**he Office of Volunteers for Prosperity at USAID actively identifies and recruits organizations that meet the following criteria:

- are organized under the laws of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or any other territory of the United States, and have headquarters in the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or any other territory of the United States.
- conduct or anticipate conducting overseas activities consistent with the general purposes of the federally supported initiatives upon which VfP focuses.
- sponsor or indicate willingness to sponsor highly skilled U.S. professionals who wish to work on specific U.S. development initiatives supported by VfP.

# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



CURE International

The accomplishments of the past year are chiefly attributable to the ongoing dedication and commitment of our partners...and to the talented Americans they deployed to help others in need around the world.



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September 25, 2006, marked the third anniversary of President Bush's Executive Order establishing the Volunteers for Prosperity (VfP) initiative. Fiscal year (FY) 2006 was also the year during which a fundamental goal of the executive order—effective promotion of international voluntary service by America's skilled professionals—was realized. Indeed, more American volunteers are demonstrating the “energy and idealism of the United States of America.”

While the Office of Volunteers for Prosperity (VfP Office) at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is responsible for directing the initiative, the accomplishments of the past year are chiefly attributable to the ongoing dedication and commitment of our partners, leading U.S. companies and nonprofits, and the talented Americans they deployed to help others in need around the world. Developments such as the following point to important progress:

- Over 21,000 skilled Americans went abroad on flexible, short-term assignments to ensure that tens of thousands of people receive life-saving healthcare, access to clean water, improved education and valuable small business training, and other support to promote global health and prosperity.

- The VfP Office's 220 partners reported having over 30,000 service opportunities.
- The same partner network reported that nearly 285,000 prospective volunteers are listed in their databases.

During the past year, the VfP Office focused on expanding roles for partners and volunteers. These efforts included the following:

- Developed an online portal to facilitate the public's financial support of volunteer-led projects sponsored by VfP partners. The portal was designed to enable VfP partners to generate additional resources for engaging skilled Americans as volunteers, and to provide other Americans with an opportunity to become involved in international voluntary service through donations.
- Pursued new opportunities for VfP partners and volunteers in support of the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) and the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Both initiatives are critical to the nation's global health and prosperity agenda.
- Co-sponsored the Third Annual International Roundtable on Service and Volunteering. Through this spon-



These are not just stories of people in the developing world who were in need, they are also stories of Americans who generously gave of their talent and energy.



sorship, the VFP Office helped raise the importance of skilled volunteerism in global disaster response and management.

- Became a “Leadership Organization” for the President’s Volunteer Service Award (PVSA), making it easier for VFP partners to recognize the work of their volunteers. Partners may now nominate volunteers for PVSA’s through the VFP Office.
- Generated broader public interest in Volunteers for Prosperity and international voluntary service by producing a brief video featuring firsthand accounts of VFP volunteers and their work.
- Enhanced the VFP website with stories about VFP partners and their volunteers, as well as a global map showing volunteer destinations.

The coming year will see the VFP Office develop and pursue similarly creative approaches for further expanding the roles of leading U.S. companies and nonprofits as well as talented American professionals in international voluntary service.

This annual report provides data on the progress of both the initiative and the VFP Office. It also provides a glimpse into lives changed during the past year

through brief stories about VFP partners and volunteers. These are not just stories of people in the developing world who were in need, they are also stories of Americans who generously gave of their talent and energy.

In bringing the work of 2006 to a close, the VFP Office wishes to express appreciation for the ongoing support of the USA Freedom Corps, the White House’s coordinating council for all federal volunteer programs; the leadership of USAID, the sponsoring federal agency; and the supporting federal departments of State, Commerce, and Health and Human Services.

Finally, the VFP Office wishes to express its gratitude to the hundreds of U.S. companies and nonprofits that support the initiative, and to the tens of thousands of Americans who have given so freely of their time and expertise in service to so many more around the world.

Jack Hawkins  
Director  
Office of Volunteers for Prosperity  
U.S. Agency for International  
Development

# AMERICAN PROFESSIONALS RESPONDING TO THE PRESIDENT'S CALL TO SERVICE

FY 2006 saw dramatic gains in key measures of volunteer participation, suggesting that America's professionals have been answering President Bush's call to serve their neighbors and communities around the world.

- The pool of highly skilled American professionals available through VfP partners surged fivefold, from 54,000 in FY 2005 to nearly 285,000 in FY 2006.
- During FY 2006, VfP partners reported deploying over 21,000 volunteers, an increase of 75 percent over the FY 2005 total of 12,000.
- Between FY 2005 and FY 2006, the number of volunteer opportunities reported by VfP

partners jumped more than threefold, from 9,000 to just over 30,000.

Although the number of VfP partners for FY 2006 (220) remained the same as in FY 2005, the VfP Office worked to recruit prominent U.S. companies interested in making international service a focus of corporate volunteer programs. Results of these efforts will appear in next year's report.

VfP partners received \$17 million in federal grants during FY 2006. Grant totals in FY 2007 may rise as awards are made through the New Partners Initiative (see page 18), which was established in FY 2006.

## VFP PARTNER BENEFITS

The Volunteers for Prosperity initiative provides a number of good reasons for interested companies and non-profits to become partners. Not only does VfP offer incentives that encourage involvement with its work, it also assists partners in organizing, promoting, and honoring the efforts of volunteers within their organizations. Among the advantages of partnership:

- VfP serves as an effective clearinghouse for international volunteer opportunities through its network of partner organizations.
- The VfP website is a resource that
  - matches prospective volunteers with appropriate partner organizations
  - gives volunteers and other interested parties exposure to partners' international development and volunteer activities
  - shares volunteer success stories that show how American professionals are helping to better the lives of people all around the world
  - provides links to information about partner organizations
- The initiative promotes recognition of service by VfP partners' volunteers. Through a simple certification process, organizations can nominate their volunteers for the President's Volunteer Service Award ([www.presidentialserviceawards.gov](http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov)).
- The VfP Office offers strategic counsel to organizations seeking to develop or expand their international voluntary service programs.
- VfP partners can receive special consideration in the federal grants process.

# VOLUNTEER STORY

“I accomplished all I possibly could have hoped for and more.”

**M**ichael Costello, a research technologist at Washington State University, spent two weeks in El Salvador as a volunteer with Winrock International (see page 24). Costello helped small-scale cheesemakers learn techniques that would enable them to become more competitive in the lucrative gourmet cheese market, which in El Salvador is dominated by imports.

Through Winrock’s Farmer-to-Farmer Program, volunteer Michael Costello, recipient of the Bronze President’s Volunteer Service Award, shared his knowledge of cheesemaking technologies with Salvadorans. High efficiency, quality, and export standards have been large obstacles for small manufacturers. Additionally, more marketable cheese varieties are needed to fill critical niche markets and make the sales needed to sustain and grow cheesemaking enterprises.

Costello worked with ANPROLAC, an association of 35 dairies. He introduced safe, modern cheesemaking processes, including the use of commercial cultures to replace unpasteurized milk. Twenty cheesemakers learned to produce commercial-grade mozzarella. Consistency is vital to successfully reproducing traditional cheeses as specialty foods and building markets for these high-value products. Improved production processes and quality

are moving Salvadoran cheesemakers closer to meeting requirements for exports to financially rewarding U.S. and other large markets.

One cheesemaker Costello trained, Josefa Moran (see photo), subsequently traveled to the United States to learn more about cheesemaking technologies at an annual course offered by Washington State University. Now she works with ANPROLAC member companies to share her knowledge of quality standards and formulas for different cheese varieties. Her family’s cheesemaking business—once in danger of closing—is now expanding, and recently opened a new store in downtown Sonsonate.

Of his assignment in El Salvador, Costello said, “I accomplished all I possibly could have hoped for and more. We not only reproduced acceptable Salvadoran cheese using safe, modern methods, but surpassed anything currently available. We also introduced a new cheese, Mexican-style *queso fresco*, and taught cheesemakers how to manufacture restaurant-grade mozzarella.”



Josefa Moran (right) makes mozzarella cheese with the help of Winrock volunteer Mike Costello.

# NEW CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

## Broadening Involvement in International Volunteering

In the latter part of FY 2006, the VFP Office collaborated with GlobalGiving—an internet-based service for international philanthropy—to launch [www.globalgiving.com/vfp.html](http://www.globalgiving.com/vfp.html). The website enables VFP partner organizations to raise resources online by providing a centralized list of donation options in support of volunteer-led projects.

By teaming with GlobalGiving and making use of its internet-based technology, VFP is empowering people and organizations to donate to particular VFP partners and volunteer-led projects, thereby increasing resources to expand volunteering opportunities. The site also helps donors learn more about VFP partners and projects supported by VFP volunteers.

Participating VFP partners represent a cross-section of the VFP network, and GlobalGiving has vetted its volunteer-led projects according to its rigorous due diligence process. GlobalGiving also provides website security, all processing associated with donations, and tax receipts to donors.

## Contributing to the Expansion of International Volunteerism and Service

In early 2006, the VFP Office became a founding participant in a Brookings Institution initiative to promote greater international voluntary service among governments, corporations, and nonprofits. An important



Degenhardt Foundation

Library club members read to young children in Hoi An, Vietnam, during Global Youth Service Days, April 21–23, 2006 (see page 11).

goal of the initiative is to sharply increase the number of Americans performing volunteer service overseas and to help them and their sponsoring organizations be more effective. The initiative has a special focus on international voluntary service by “baby boomers” approaching retirement.

## Becoming a Leadership Organization for the President’s Volunteer Service Award

In summer 2006, the VFP Office at USAID became an official Leadership Organization for the PVSA. The VFP Office teamed with the Points of Light Foundation to establish [www.presidentialserviceawards.gov/s/volunteersprosperity](http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov/s/volunteersprosperity). The website provides VFP partners with a central location to register to

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# VOLUNTEER STORY

**“No other vacation I’ve taken has created such a euphoric sensation. We still talk daily about our experience in Guatemala.”**

**D**r. Lindsey Inouye, a radiologist from Tucson, Arizona, took his family on a vacation to Guatemala in January 2006. Through *Cross-Cultural Solutions* (see page 22), Dr. Inouye donated two weeks of his services as a physician to the needy at Guatemala’s National Cancer Center.

Dr. Inouye observed that the poverty in Guatemala City is profound. Yet, he says, “the human spirit is alive and well.” Dr. Inouye’s physician friend, Dr. Eva Duarte, who runs the hospice service in the National Cancer Center, elaborated: “We may be a third-world country, but we don’t have third-world minds.” With help from a number of vendors, Dr. Duarte and her colleagues plan to develop a topnotch facility to detect cancer earlier, treat the disease before it progresses to deadly states, and provide palliative care for those who suffer.

Dr. Inouye helped by interviewing Mayan patients, discussing surgical oncology with hospice MDs, presenting tumor embolization techniques, and discussing future projects with hospital administrators.

Despite his lack of Spanish and uncertainty over what his work would be, Dr. Inouye said the program staff provided all the basics and made his family feel very welcome. “We were given assignments promptly and encouraged to extend ourselves as much as possible to maximize our experience.”

Dr. Inouye said he thinks cultural exchange and international service are important because they provide the basis for understanding and empathy between people. “With that link, anything is possible,” he said, adding that Cross-Cultural Solutions created an excellent opportunity

to experience local culture. “No other vacation I’ve taken has created such a euphoric sensation. It’s been a month since we returned, and we still talk daily about our experience in Guatemala.”

Dr. Inouye’s family members took part in other volunteer activities during the two weeks he worked at the cancer center. Dr. Inouye plans to return to Guatemala soon with U.S.-trained colleagues to continue the important work of improving local cancer treatments. “We look forward to exchanging technologies/techniques with them.” “Guatemala,” he says, “will always hold a special place in our hearts.”



Dr. Lindsey Inouye (middle) with Guatemalan physicians in the National Cancer Center in Guatemala City.

# NEW CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

become certifying organizations for the award. As certifying organizations, VFP partners can nominate their volunteers to receive the PVSA. The secure website also enables certifying organizations to request awards, track and certify volunteer hours, keep track of awards given, and perform other functions.

## Encouraging Involvement of America's Professionals in International Voluntary Service

The best spokespersons for VFP are the skilled American volunteers who, through VFP partner organizations, have served in developing countries to better the lives of so many. A new video produced by the VFP Office follows volunteers into the field and highlights their perspectives on international voluntary service and its impact. Volunteers share stories of service within local communities and describe how that experience transformed their lives.

To further interest in international voluntary service opportunities, prospective volunteers can easily find their geographic areas of preference overseas via a global map that has been added to the VFP website indicating countries served by VFP partners. The map, available at [www.volunteersforprosperity.gov](http://www.volunteersforprosperity.gov), highlights the following regions: Africa; Asia, Middle East, and Near East; Central Europe, Russia, and the Former Soviet Union; and Latin America and the Caribbean.



Dave Henry, VT2 Studios

While visiting the town of Sendafa, Engineering Ministries International's Henry Watts (featured in the VFP video) shares an Ethiopian meal with local partners. Watts was inspecting a site where American architects volunteered their design skills to build a local community center, school, and orphanage.

# VOLUNTEER STORY

“I now know this is something I want to be a part of in any way I can.”

A few years ago, pediatric oncology nurse Jen Martin could never have imagined herself working in Africa to establish infection control programs. But that is exactly where her volunteer journey led her in June 2006. Uganda is enduring a social and economic crisis—the arrival of a generation of orphaned children. HIV/AIDS has devastated the country over the last 20 years. Families have been left with little support, and often depend upon the oldest child for the care of the younger children and for economic survival.

An infection control coordinator at Connecticut Children’s Medical Center, Martin volunteered last summer through CURE International (see page 22) in two countries in Africa. She shared her healthcare expertise with CURE’s hospitals in Kenya and Uganda to set up infection control programs at two hospitals in only 18 days.

Martin focused on developing solutions to improve safety and reduce risk by focusing on five areas: clean hands, clean practices, clean products, clean environment, and clean equipment. Before addressing these issues, Martin spent the first few days observing the practices and setup of each hospital. She then identified specific problem areas. The next stage was to propose solutions for the problems and educate the staff in proper infection control practices. Martin was very impressed with the staff’s eagerness to learn. She developed several infection control policies for the hospitals and left the nurses with copies of the policies as well as copies of all educational presentation materials.

Martin plans to send a list of recommendations based on her research findings to the hospitals she visited. She also hopes to benchmark the CURE hospitals’ infection rates with those at the Connecticut Children’s Medical Center.

Not only did the local hospital staff benefit from her volunteer service, but Martin herself felt blessed by it, both personally and professionally. The extra challenges she faced working in a developing country really caused her to expand and adapt her skills. Reflecting on her volunteer experiences in Kenya and Uganda, Martin said “I now know this is something I want to be a part of in any way I can.”



CURE International

Jen Martin with a patient at the CURE Hospital in Kenya.

## Supporting Key Presidential Initiatives

The Vfp Office has been working with the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) to identify organizations and American professionals interested in providing technical assistance through volunteer service. As volunteers, highly skilled Americans (such as engineers, educators, and healthcare professionals) can assist in the review of proposals submitted to the MCC. The Millennium Challenge Account (see page 21) is a U.S. initiative to provide development assistance to countries that rule justly, invest in their people, and encourage economic freedom.

The Vfp Office has also been supporting the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) (see page 18) by promoting involvement of American healthcare and other professionals in the implementation of the New Partners Initiative. This initiative provides grants to partners that had not before been involved with U.S. Government grant programs.

## Partnering with the Private Sector to Enhance the Role of Volunteers During Global Disasters

On June 20, 2006, the Vfp Office and the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Points of Light Foundation co-convened the Third Annual International Roundtable on Service and Volunteering at the Microsoft Corporate

Headquarters in Redmond, Washington. There were over 150 participants at the event, titled "Strengthening Volunteer Models and Private Sector Collaboration in Global Disaster Readiness, Response, and Rebuilding." Participants represented a wide range of organizations active in international service, including corporations, nonprofits, and the public sector. This conference has become the largest annual gathering of international volunteer service leaders in the United States.

Panel discussions focused on important elements of disaster response and featured speakers from government, leading U.S. companies, and NGOs. Speakers included David Eisner, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service; Robert Goodwin, president and CEO of the Points of Light Foundation; and Mark Ward, senior deputy administrator for USAID's Bureau for Asia and the Near East.

## Honoring Volunteers with the President's Volunteer Service Award

Vfp partners recognized over 700 volunteers with the PVSA during FY 2006. Volunteers were honored for their exemplary contributions of time and talent. The work of several volunteers is highlighted below.

Twenty-five American professionals working through the Michigan-based aid organization Partners Worldwide earned PVSAs in 2006.

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# VOLUNTEER STORY

“We are excited and continually motivated by the stewardship of the library shown by the young library club.”

**K**aren Chun has many years experience as a teacher and librarian. She has volunteered in Vietnam for 10 weeks during each of the last three summers with the nonprofit Degenhardt Foundation (see page 22). Last year, with the help of fellow teacher and librarian Susan Smith, Chun raised funds to develop a library in Hoi An. They also created a club to attract the interest of local children in reading books from the library.

As a volunteer in Vietnam for the past several summers, Chun noticed the avid interest shown by the young people of Hoi An in the local youth center’s relatively few books. Any new book was rapidly read and passed around. Unfortunately, most of the books left by volunteers were in English, and the young people only read Vietnamese. On her return home to Hawaii, Chun and another librarian, Sue Smith, were determined to change the situation. With the help of students in Hawaii and Disney Company grants, they were able to raise funds to begin a library.

When they returned to Vietnam, Karen and Susan helped form a library club with children from the Hoi An Orphanage and Hoi An Street Center. The library club members helped prepare activities and ready the book collection for the January 2006 opening of the Degenhardt Library, the first free public library in Hoi An.

The library is open six days a week until 7 p.m. with assistance from the library club. Chun and Smith provided training in book maintenance, simple circulation and book-care procedures, and storytelling. Library club members hosted a storytelling festival during Global Youth Service Day in April 2006. Each member read to the younger children of the community—including the poor and the boat children of Hoi An—so that they would feel comfortable coming to the library.

From the apparent enthusiasm of the 75 youthful participants, the event was judged a success. Chun said, “Susan and I are excited and continually motivated by the stewardship of the library shown by the young library club.”



Degenhardt Foundation

Karen Chun and Susan Smith (second and third from right) and members of the library club take part in ribbon-cutting ceremony for the opening of the Degenhardt Library in Hoi An, Vietnam.

# VFP IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**“Each of these award winners fully represents what President Bush describes as the ‘energy and idealism of the United States.’ They wholeheartedly responded to the call to service that President Bush has asked every American to make during his or her lifetime.”**

Jack Hawkins  
VFP Office Director

Jack Hawkins, director of the VFP Office, presented the awards to these distinguished volunteers at the Partners Worldwide International Business Conference in Muskegon, Michigan, in May. Business executives and other professionals earned awards for service in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

The second highest level recognition—the Gold award for 500 or more hours of volunteer service



Health Volunteers Overseas

Health Volunteers Overseas volunteer Dr. Neil Kay interprets a dental x-ray at an orthodontic site in Vietnam.

—went to Ted Boers of Rockford, Michigan, and to Dennis and Jeni Hoekstra, of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

- *Ted Boers* is the founder of Datacomp, a company that serves the inspection needs of banks and insurance companies. Over the past two years, he has been a strong advocate of civic education as the foundation for business development in Haiti. Boers currently spends much of his time promoting a large free trade zone development project in the northwest of Haiti. The purpose is to encourage members of the Haitian diaspora to return to the country to foster business development.
- *Jeni Hoekstra* was a school teacher and board member for several Christian organizations, while *Dennis Hoekstra* worked in administrative positions at Calvin College and as president of Trinity Christian College in Chicago. After retiring, the Hoekstras became volunteers for Partners Worldwide. They have worked abroad to develop businesses, computer training centers, and leadership training workshops. Due to their efforts, thousands of computers were recycled for use in developing nations, and hundreds of organizations and businesses were created that inspire and improve the lives of thousands. As a testament to their selfless endeavors, in 2004, the Hoekstras received the President’s Call to Service Award for a lifetime achievement of more than 4,000 hours of volunteer service. They have now exceeded that mark by more than 1,000 additional hours of service.

Eighteen American professionals working through the Washington, D.C.-based, nonprofit

aid organization, Health Volunteers Overseas (HVO), earned the President's Call to Service Award in recognition of 4,000 hours of international voluntary service, the equivalent of two years of full-time service. Doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals earned the prestigious award for service in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Jack Hawkins presented the awards September 30 at HVO's 20th anniversary celebration. Three recipients were Judith Canfield-Henry, Dr. Neil Kay, and Lois Krug.

- Currently retired from a long and distinguished career in academia, *Judith Canfield-Henry*, of Red Lodge, Montana, has served overseas on 10 assignments. She has developed numerous teaching manuals and other educational materials during her many periods of service. In describing her international voluntary service, the former chair of the Physical Therapy Department at Chapman University said, "I always learn so much in terms of cultural sensitivity, using creativity to treat without devices readily available at home, and the renewal of the understanding that all humans are striving for the same things—to provide for our families, a better life for our children, and respect from our fellow humans."
- *Dr. Neil Kay*, a dentist in private practice from Aurora, Illinois, was selected for his outstanding work in orthodontic training in Vietnam and Uganda. Dr. Kay was instrumental in establishing a three-year curriculum to teach dentists working as orthodontists in government positions. He also coordinated a joint instructional unit with oral surgeons on jaw surgery.



Health Volunteers Overseas

VfP Office Director Jack Hawkins (middle) presented Volunteer Service awards September 30 at the Health Volunteers Overseas 20th anniversary celebration. Recipients include, from left to right, Dr. Mattilou Catchpole, Dr. Jill Derstine, Lois Krug, Dr. Marie O'Toole, and Dr. David Spiegel.

- *Lois Krug*, a staff certified registered nurse anesthetist from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, has served on 16 overseas assignments with HVO since 1993. She was involved in a two-year nurse anesthesia program designed by HVO to train Belizean nurses in safe and effective anesthesia care. The program was recognized by the American Society for Association Executives as an outstanding and innovative skills training project in 2002.

Several American professionals mobilized by the Washington, D.C.-based International Executive Service Corps (IESC) received the PVSA for their volunteer service in Africa.

- *Betty S. Herriman*, of Florence, Kentucky, received the Gold PVSA for her volunteer work helping micro and small businesses (MSE) cope with the impact of HIV/AIDS on individuals, families, and communities

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# VFP IN THE SPOTLIGHT

in Zambia and South Africa. In addition to evaluating the assets of businesses, she assisted in identifying services to help them deal with HIV/AIDS. She created training manuals and participant workbooks and conducted train-the-trainer sessions. During her assignments, Herriman and local staff trained a network of small business trainers to provide BizAIDS services to Zambian and South African MSEs. IESC's BizAIDS program objectives mesh well with the goals of many HIV/AIDS programs, particularly the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which reaches out to at-risk communities with accurate information and practical, sustainable business survival tools.

- *Lado Kenyi*, of Columbia, Maryland, a research scholar at the University of Maryland at College Park, and who fled his home in Juba, Sudan in 1984 during the Sudanese civil war, received the Silver PVSA for an analysis of the state of information and communication technology (ICT) in southern Sudanese government ministries. He became a volunteer with IESC through the Sudanese North American Diaspora Database. During the six weeks he was in country in 2006, Kenyi found the ICT training facilities to be of high quality in the ministries in Juba and Rumbek.

Winrock International (see page 24) honored several of its volunteers with the PVSA during 2006 including the following:

- *Martin Connaughton* received the Gold PVSA for service that included two weeks in El Tablón, a community in northeastern, El Salvador. During that assignment, Connaughton, CEO of Wilderness Flowers Ltd., in Santa Fe,



Lado Kenyi received the Silver President's Volunteer Service Award for his service in Sudan with the International Executive Service Corps/Geekcorps.

New Mexico, helped small farmers design and build a low-cost greenhouse prototype and introduced them to drip irrigation and vegetable production techniques. Once limited by the six-month rainy season, poor farmers focused on growing maize, beans, coffee, and *henequén* (a fiber produced from agave cactus). Farmers didn't have experience growing high-value, high-demand vegetables for market or knowledge of agricultural advancements. "Growers we worked with in El Tablón were very responsive to our suggestions. Because of their entrepreneurial vision and hard work, we were able to build a 120 square meter greenhouse in two days," Connaughton said. Farmers cleared the land and supplied local materials for the basic structure, which cost about \$450 to complete—a very affordable alternative to the \$4,000 greenhouses previously introduced that were just half the size.

For more information about the PVSA, visit [www.presidentialserviceawards.gov](http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov).

# VOLUNTEER STORY

“The people are so warm, friendly, and appreciative of the help. Here are people who are struggling to survive, yet they were always eager to prepare lunch for our team with what little they had. It was quite a reality check.”

**P**ete Virag has over 20 years' experience in technology solutions focused on field data collection. He is currently a technology initiatives group leader for Weston Solutions, Inc., an employee-owned environment, redevelopment, and construction firm. Virag took time off from his job to lead implementation of a data collection and reporting system in Honduras for a pilot project sponsored by Water For People (see page 23). Water For People is a nonprofit organization that supports safe drinking water and sanitation projects in developing countries.

The goal of the volunteer assignment was to evaluate Water For People's past projects to ensure that the water and sanitation systems put in place years ago were still functioning as planned and continuing to provide Hondurans with safe drinking water.

Virag said, “The Water For People monitoring project is no different from the work we do for our clients on a daily basis. We go into the field, collect data electronically on tablet PCs or PDAs, take digital photos, associate photos with the data, and synchronize data to a central database.” The innovative program incorporates state-of-the-art geospatial technologies to accurately map the location of every Water For People installation.

After developing the research methodology, Virag went to Honduras in late August for a field test. Virag and a team of volunteers and staff spent two weeks visiting 33 project sites supported by Water For People.

The results of the pilot study were encouraging. Nearly all of the water systems installed over the past 10 years with the support of Water For People were still functioning. And members of site communities were engaged in ensuring ongoing operations.

Virag thoroughly enjoyed his involvement in the project and having the opportunity to visit rural Honduras. “It's an incredibly majestic country,” he said. “And the people are so warm, friendly, and appreciative of the help. Here are people who are struggling to survive, yet they were always eager to prepare lunch for our team with what little they had. It was quite a reality check.”



Kate Fogelberg, Water For People ©2006

Water For People volunteer Pete Virag, right, works with a local high school student in La Comunidad, Honduras, to collect field data using a handheld GPS receiver and tablet PC. The system uses state-of-the-art geospatial technologies to map and track data.

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

For the past three years, VFP has been realizing the president's vision: increasing numbers of American professionals continue to answer the call to service by providing clean water to the poor, improving education, promoting economic growth, and stemming the spread of HIV/AIDS, among other activities. We are proud of the achievements of 2006 and previous years, and we look forward in the coming year to furthering efforts to expand

international voluntary service in support of the nation's global health and prosperity agenda.

As we continue to strengthen relationships with existing VFP partners, develop new relationships with interested U.S. nonprofits and companies, and ensure public recognition of greater numbers of volunteers serving abroad, the VFP Office's plans for the future include the following:

- In collaboration with USAID staff, the VFP Office is seeking to develop a global disaster response management program that will actively engage leading U.S. companies and their employees in partnership with the U.S. Government.
- To further the goals of the Digital Freedom Initiative, the VFP Office will assist in recruiting American professionals to teach, train, and inspire a new generation of information and communications technology professionals in Africa.
- The VFP Office will add a search engine to its website that links to a database of announcements for specific international voluntary opportunities. This will complement the website's existing search capability and make it easier for skilled Americans to volunteer overseas.
- To enhance international voluntary service, the VFP Office plans to facilitate an information exchange forum for its partners and volunteers.



Global Service Corps volunteer Jan Taylor works on a sustainable agriculture project in Tanzania.

Global Service Corps

# VOLUNTEER STORY

“My life will never be the same. I learned so much more from them than I could ever give.”

**F**or 10 years, Jan Shannon worked in public relations and fundraising for private nonprofits. She also spent many years as a writer, editor, and author. Now retired and living in New Jersey, Shannon volunteered with Global Volunteers (see page 23) for the first time in 2005 and was deployed to Mexico. In 2006, she spent three weeks in Ghana as an English teacher, also with Global Volunteers.

Shannon taught English in a primary school in the village of Akrade, just north of the equator and an hour-and-a-half drive from Accra, Ghana’s capital. Shannon says that everyone in Ghana speaks at least one African tribal language at home, but that English is taught in school. By sixth grade, she said, students are supposed to be fluent in English.

Smart and energetic, the kids love to give the “substitute teacher” a hard time, but the children were attentive and curious when Shannon found a subject that really held their interest.

Though the people in Shannon’s village were poor, she was impressed with what they had been able to do without all the things Westerners consider necessities, such as electricity and running water.

The most difficult part of the experience for Shannon was leaving. “I cried, along with my students, when my departure time arrived. I still miss my kids’ joie de vivre, the dignity with which the adults conduct their lives, and the beauty of the village,” she said.

But her students won’t be abandoned. Every other month, Global Volunteers sends a new team to Akrade, and future volunteers will continue the work Shannon began.

Summing up her feelings, Shannon said, “The students will be the winners, because what they learn from us about the English language—and the world beyond their village and their country—will affect their futures. As for me, my life will never be the same. I learned so much more from them than I could ever give.”



Jan Shannon with students in Akrade, Ghana.

Global Volunteers

# VFP AND THE U.S. GLOBAL HEALTH AND PROSPERITY AGENDA

Six presidential initiatives comprise the U.S. global health and prosperity agenda supported by VFP:

- President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)
- Digital Freedom Initiative (DFI)
- Water for the Poor Initiative
- African Global Competitiveness Initiative (AGCI)
- Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)
- Millennium Challenge Account (MCA)

VFP partners support many volunteer activities linked to these initiatives. The executive order creating VFP provides partners with special consideration when applying for grants under the initiatives, if their proposals define roles for utilizing skilled American volunteers. While

this does not guarantee success in obtaining federal grants, it can make VFP partners more competitive.

The following section offers both a summary of the six initiatives and highlights of recent developments.

## President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

Established in 2003 by President Bush, PEPFAR is managed by the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, and implemented in collaboration with the Department of State, Department of Health and Human Services, and USAID. This effort supports and strengthens the HIV/AIDS-fighting strategies of 15 heavily afflicted countries in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean. The president has committed \$15 billion over five years to support treatment for 2 million HIV-infected people, prevention for 7 million new infections, and care for 10 million HIV-infected individuals and AIDS orphans. By December 2005, just two years after PEPFAR was established, more than 400,000 sub-Saharan Africans were receiving the treatment they needed.

To assist PEPFAR's implementation, President Bush launched the New Partners Initiative (NPI) on World AIDS Day, December 1, 2005. NPI created a grants program for faith-based and community organizations that are fighting HIV/AIDS but that had no prior access to federal grants. By identifying and supporting the local organizations that provide much of the healthcare in the developing world, this initiative



Cross-Cultural Solutions

A medical volunteer with Cross-Cultural Solutions cares for a baby with HIV/AIDS at a health clinic in Arusha, Tanzania.















