

Meridian Professional Exchanges

Bringing the world together



October 2011

“The Spirit of Volunteerism - Honoring 50 Years of the Peace Corps” — A Multi-Regional Project



Above: The 50 IVLP participants photographed with Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Ann Stock and Peace Corps Director Aaron Williams during a welcome reception at the U.S. Department of State.



Left: The newly arrived participants of the Peace Corps multi-regional project enjoy the sights of the nation’s capital.

From September 24 through October 15, 50 participants took part in “The Spirit of Volunteerism - Honoring 50 Years of the Peace Corps.” The visitors learned about volunteerism in the U.S., recruiting and training volunteers, civic responsibility, and the concept of social entrepreneurship. While in Washington, DC the group took part

Inside this issue: Meridian’s IVLP highlights and recent personnel announcements from the Professional Exchanges Division (PED).

Table of Contents:

“The Spirit of Volunteerism”	1
“The Spirit of Volunteerism” (continued)	2
New Staff Announcements	3
Resources Information Office	4
Contact Information	4

Multi-Regional Project on “The Spirit of Volunteerism - Honoring 50 Years of the Peace Corps” *(continued)*

in a self-assessment workshop at the Peace Corps Headquarters, participated in a panel discussion with representatives of some of the country’s leading service organizations, and planted 56 trees in Oxon Run Park in Anacostia.

After wrapping up their DC program, the participants split into two travel groups, visiting Boston, MA and Seattle, WA. Simultaneous programs were next conducted for groups of 4-6 in Boulder, CO; Bozeman, MT; Greensboro, NC; Pensacola, FL; Riverside, CA; Salt Lake City, UT; San Antonio, TX; Santa Fe, NM; Pittsburgh, PA; and Rochester, NY. The visits to these 12 cities focused on corporate social responsibility, the reasons that people are motivated to volunteer, and service activities. The visitors reconvened in Chicago, IL for the final evaluation and a call to action.

In the spirit of the program, the visitors engaged in service activities in ten different cities during the second program week. Some members of the group collaborated with Pittsburgh-based Global Links to pack medical supplies for needy people around the world, other members participated in a fundraiser by cooking Brunswick Stew alongside local volunteers at the Tabernacle United Methodist Church in Greensboro, several others spent time at the Rochester zoo with children from Mary’s Place, a home for refugee youths, while still others cleaned up the beaches of Pensacola with Project GreenShores.

We invite you to interact with these participants and learn more about their three weeks in the U.S. by visiting the program’s blog: <http://spiritofvolunteerism.tumblr.com/>.



IVLP participants volunteering with the Washington, DC Department of Parks and Recreation for a morning of tree planting.



International visitors discovering the great outdoors in Seattle through community service.



The Professional Exchanges Division Welcomes Three New Faces

We are happy to have on board three new Program Associates who joined the Professional Exchanges Division in July, just in time for the height of the IVLP's busy season!

Copeland Barnes is a graduate of the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill, where she received her B.A. in Global Studies, focusing on Global Health and Environment. During her studies at UNC, she traveled to Haiti with the Greek Intersity Global Plunge, working with a Haitian fraternity that emphasizes microfinance, education and small business development for its members and community. Copeland studied abroad in Seville, Spain, where she worked as an English language classroom volunteer at Colegio Claret. Most recently, she was a Program Intern at The German Marshall Fund of the United States in the Immigration and Integration Program. Copeland has also held internships at the International Affairs Council of North Carolina, working on the Community Connections and Open World programs, and at World Relief in Durham, NC, where she served as a Health and Social Adjustment Intern. Copeland may be reached by phone at (202) 939-5871 or via email at cbarnes@meridian.org.

Naakoshie Mills graduated from Howard University with a B.A. in Political Science and a minor in Spanish. While in college, she studied abroad at the University of Granada, Spain, where she volunteered with Intermon Oxfam International. She also studied at the Middlebury Language School at Mills College in Oakland, California, where she completed courses in French. Most recently, Naakoshie participated in a Staff Exchange at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium. Before joining the Professional Exchanges Division, she completed internships at Africare, Meridian International Center, and at the Helsinki Commission in the U.S. House of Representatives. Naakoshie has traveled to Morocco, Ghana, and throughout Europe, and is proficient in Spanish and French. She can be reached by phone at (202) 939-5864 or via email at nmills@meridian.org.



From left: Marc Smith, Copeland Barnes and Naakoshie Mills pictured on Meridian's campus.

Marc Smith graduated in International Studies from the University of Washington in Seattle. While in college, he studied abroad in Nantes, France. Before coming to Meridian, Marc worked as a Program Assistant for Academic Affairs at The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars. Previously, he completed two internships on Capitol Hill in the offices of Congressman Jim McDermott and Senator Patty Murray. Marc has been playing piano since the age of 7 and is fluent in French. You can contact Marc by phone at (202) 939-5549 or via email at msmith@meridian.org.

Copeland, Naakoshie and Marc come to Meridian with extensive internship experience and international insights, which they have already put to good use serving the needs of numerous international visitors. Please welcome them to the IVLP network!



Please note Meridian's new logo! This new image captures the global scope of our daily work.



The Professional Exchanges Resources Information Office

Please join us in congratulating Matthew Brooks, the newly named Resources Information Officer. Matthew succeeds Peter Dignard, who accepted a position with Marriott International. Matthew was introduced to Meridian as an intern in the Arts Department, where he assisted with exhibition development by cataloguing artworks, tracking the progress of international shows, and helping in the display and removal of exhibitions. In May 2010 he started as a Program Associate in the Professional Exchanges Division. Matthew graduated from George Mason University (GMU) with a B.A. in Global Affairs, specializing in Economics and the Middle East. During college, he studied abroad at GMU's campus in the United Arab Emirates, where he helped to establish the English Language Writing Center. Previously, he served in AmeriCorps NCCC, working in cities affected by Hurricane Katrina. He continues his involvement in community service by working with various volunteer groups. He speaks Spanish and is working on his Arabic and Turkish skills. With his recent PA experience, a minor in IT Studies and an internship with a small telecommunications firm, Matthew is well equipped for this new position. You can reach Matthew at (202) 939-5558 or via email at mbrooks@meridian.org.



Above: Newly named Resources Information Officer Matthew Brooks pictured in the resources office.

www.meridian.org

Meridian International Center
White-Meyer House
1624 Crescent Place, NW
Washington, DC 20009
Telephone: (202) 667-6670

Publication Editors:

Phillip Ives and Karina Akel

The Professional Exchanges Team

The Professional Exchanges Division of Meridian International Center is composed of roughly 50 people, all of whom work in the White-Meyer House. If you wish to learn more about who we are, please go to our website at www.meridian.org. From the home page, click on "About Us." On the next screen, click on "Contact Us." At the next page, click on "Professional Exchanges Division" to get to mini-bios of every member of our exchanges team.



Meridian Professional Exchanges is a publication of the Professional Exchanges Division of Meridian International Center. Meridian is pleased to acknowledge that the work of the Professional Exchanges Division, on behalf of the International Visitor Leadership Program, is supported by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State under the authority of the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961.