



October 2026 Newsletter

Northern Virginia Returned Peace
Corps Volunteers (NOVA RPCV)

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Corps Volunteers (NOVA RPCV)



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Your Voice. Our Community. NOVA RPCV's Future.

NOVA RPCV exists to support Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, advance the Third Goal, continue service through community activities and grants, and advocate for Peace Corps and the Peace Corps community.

We are partnering with a graduate student consulting team from George Washington University's Organizational Leadership and Learning program to learn more about what our community values and how NOVA RPCV can strengthen participation, programming, communications, and opportunities to contribute and lead.

The GWU student survey will be open for two weeks and takes approximately 10-20 minutes to complete the 32 questions. The GWU student consulting team is conducting the survey and analyzing responses as an independent third party. They will report data back to NOVA

RPCV as aggregated themes, findings, and recommendations. Individual responses will be treated confidentially.

Additionally, the GWU consulting team will be reaching out to a sample of current and past members, including former and present NOVA RPCV Board Members, to conduct telephone or virtual interviews. We appreciate your willingness to share your time and insights. If you would be willing to be interviewed, please indicate your interest in the survey. You can also email the GWU consulting team directly at Mea.domingo@gwu.edu.

We hope to hear from the full NOVA RPCV community—including active members, inactive former members, occasional participants, newer RPCVs, longtime members, people who have not engaged recently, and other stakeholders. Every perspective can help us better understand where we are today and where we should go next.

Please follow this link to the survey:

[NOVA RPCV Member Survey](#)

Please respond by Tuesday, October 20, 2026.

As a volunteer membership group, NOVA RPCV activities and grants are funded through membership fees, donations, and calendar sales. If you would like to be a paid member or donor, go to <https://novarpcv.org/join/>. To learn more about our grants <https://novarpcv.org/grants/>.

Thank you for helping shape the future of NOVA RPCV!

Happy Virginia Peace Corps Day!

On September 22, Virginia officially recognized Virginia Peace Corps Day, marking the anniversary of the signing of the Peace Corps Act in 1961.

The Commonwealth's proclamation recognizes the more than 240,000 Americans who have served in 144 countries and the continued contributions of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers through service in communities here at home. It also highlights Virginia's strong Peace Corps tradition: Virginia ranked second among states for Peace Corps Volunteers in 2025.

To all of our Virginia RPCVs, currently serving Volunteers, future Volunteers, Peace Corps staff, families, and friends—thank you for continuing the spirit of service, friendship, and international understanding.

Read the official proclamation:

[Virginia Peace Corps Day Proclamation] (<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/.../virginia-peace...>)



Upcoming Events

Join NOVA RPCV for Trivia Night in Fairfax!

Tuesday, October 20, 2026 | 7:30 p.m.

Put your Peace Corps knowledge, world travels, pop culture expertise—or completely random facts—to the test! Join fellow NOVA RPCVs and friends for a fun evening of **Pub Quiz Trivia at The Auld Shebeen in Fairfax City.**

The Auld Shebeen hosts its weekly Tuesday Pub Quiz beginning at 7:30 p.m., with a second game at 8:30 p.m. Come ready to join a NOVA RPCV team, meet fellow RPCVs, enjoy food and drinks, and see what we collectively know!

Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2026

Time: 7:30 p.m. – plan to arrive a little early so we can organize our team(s)

Location: The Auld Shebeen
3971 Chain Bridge Road
Fairfax, VA 22030

Food and beverages will be available for individual purchase.

RPCVs, friends, family, and those interested in the Peace Corps community are welcome.

Please **register** with NOVA RPCV so we know how many people to expect and can



Celebrate Diwali at Asia After Dark

Join NOVA RPCV for Asia After Dark!

Friday, November 6, 2026 | 5–9 p.m.
National Museum of Asian Art, 1050
Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC
20560

Celebrate Diwali with food from the Indian diaspora, live performances, crafts, diya coloring, rangoli decorating with Kulture Khazana, and a view of the museum lit up after sunset.

Meet NOVA RPCV by the food vendors on the West Building Plaza. Come enjoy the festivities together or explore at your own pace.

Please **register** with **NOVA RPCV** so we know who is coming. You can include your phone number and email address if you would like us to contact you to help the group connect during the event.

Museum admission is free. **The NOVA RPCV RSVP is separate from the museum's Eventbrite registration.** The museum recommends Eventbrite registration, but entry remains first-come, first-served based on capacity.

Eventbrite link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/asia-after-dark-diwali-festival-tickets-2001238735931?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

coordinate teams. Bring a mobile phone to join the team, read along with the questions, and submit team answers.

Come for the trivia, stay for the camaraderie. We hope to see you there!



NOVA RPCV Annual JFK Wreath Laying

Annual JFK Wreath Laying with NoVa RPCVs & RPCV/W JFK Gravesite at Arlington Cemetery Friday, November 20th. Meet at the Welcome Center to register at 4:00PM. Ceremony will take place from 4:30PM-5PM at gravesite on the Eve of the 63rd Anniversary of his Passing. Immediately following, we will gather to raise a glass to JFK's legacy at Continental Pool Lounge in Rosslyn.

REGISTER

Other RPCV events - Botswana RPCV 50th Year Reunion on Oct. 17th (for RPCVs who served from 1975-1978)

Tony Carroll (Botswana 76-78) is organizing a 50th anniversary reunion of Botswana RPCVs on October 17 in Arlington. Tony has asked NOVA for help in inviting PCVs who served in Botswana between 1975-78. If you're interested, please contact Tony at tonycarroll77@gmail.com.

NOVA RPCV Quarterly Gathering: Giving Thanks, Building Bridges, and Looking Ahead

Sunday, November 8, 2026 | 1–3:00 p.m.,
Immigrant Food Ballston, 4245 Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA



As Thanksgiving approaches, join NOVA RPCV to share food, give thanks for this community, and consider how we can build stronger connections—within our chapter and across differences.

We will welcome a representative of the **Braver Angels** for a conversation about practical skills for working more effectively across divides. We'll also hear from **George Washington University Organizational Leadership and Learning student consultants**, who will share preliminary findings from their interviews and survey of the NOVA RPCV community.

Come ready to share and hear about how to shape our community! We welcome your perspectives on what brings members together and how NOVA RPCV can best serve and support our community.

All RPCVs, potential volunteers, and friends of Peace Corps are welcome! We'll gather at 12:30pm in Immigrant Food's private dining room located at 4245 N. Fairfax Drive in Ballston, just across from the Ballston Metro stop on the Orange Line. After lunch, we'll hear from our guest speakers. Please register ahead of time, and be sure to check out Immigrant Food's gastroadvocacy mission, engagement menu, and international menu.

Please Register!

Other RPCV events -

CONNECT WITH RPCVs WORLDWIDE:

2026 ALL-RPCV CONFERENCE

October 24–25, 2026 | Virtual | Free

Join Returned Peace Corps Volunteers from around the world for the third annual All-RPCV Conference, hosted by Friends of South Africa and RPCVnexus. This year's theme, "Story Sharing: Life After Service," will explore how RPCVs continue to lead, serve, connect, and grow, after Peace Corps.

NOVA RPCV will be represented by Corey Taylor, our NPCA Liaison, joining RPCV leaders and community members in this global conversation.

Conference discussions will explore:

- Career pathways and transitions after service
- Education and continued growth
- Impactful leadership and public service
- Bridge building, networking, and community connection

The conference is designed for RPCVs at all stages of their post-service journey, with particular opportunities for recently returned Volunteers and RPCV group leaders to exchange experiences, resources, and ideas.

Register for the free virtual conference:

[Attending the All-RPCV Conference 2026](#)

Interested in presenting? The organizers are also accepting proposals for speakers, panels, and facilitated sessions through August 31: <https://forms.gle/Y66oMsecLTQE37h9>

We hope you'll join Corey and fellow RPCVs from across the globe for a weekend of storytelling, learning, and connection!



Other RPCV events - 65 *Objects That Changed the World*

This fall, the **Museum of the Peace Corps Experience** presents *65 Objects That Changed the World*, a new exhibit exploring 65 years of Peace Corps history through the things people carried, used, made, exchanged, saved, and brought home. Through 65 objects, photographs, oral histories, and first-person accounts, the exhibition examines what happened when Americans and communities around the world encountered one another across differences of language, culture, nationality, race, history, and power—and how those encounters changed people on both sides. Exhibit opens Nov. 10th.

NOVEMBER 10, 2026–MARCH 7, 2027
Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library
901 G Street NW, Washington, D.C.

For further details, read: [65 Objects That Changed the World – Museum of the Peace Corps Experience](#)



Gather -- inspiring everyday habits that build connection

Gather was created by **Carol Spahn and Jody Olsen**, the 21st and 20th Directors of the Peace Corps, **Amber Lucerio-Dwyer, Bryan Dwyer, Samantha Temple, Kyle Christianson, and Steve Werner**, all RPCVs, and **Stuart Thomas and Emily Spahn**. The initiative is an invitation to use the skills we learned during service to build community and strengthen democracy here at home. It offers practical information and resources for anyone interested in creating more meaningful gatherings and connections. The resources are approachable and can be adapted to many different settings - they aren't about creating elaborate events, but about being more intentional with the ways we engage in our everyday lives and bring people together.

Whether you're organizing a happy hour, welcoming new members, hosting a book club, planning a service project, facilitating a discussion, or simply looking for ways to help members connect, Gather offers ideas and tools that can help make those experiences more meaningful. It also offers a facilitation guide for bringing these practices into youth groups, community spaces, churches, or other settings.

For more details about Gather:

Gather Website: <https://www.gather-us.org/>



Past Events

Engaging potential volunteers and RPCVs at a Peace Corps Send Off and Service Gathering.



Celebrating diversity and multiculturalism at Reston's Multicultural Festival on Sept. 19th.



Proudly walking in the Parade of Flags with the National Peace Corps Association and RPCV/W at the Nationals game on Sept. 25th.



Fascinating insight on the campaign for women's voting rights and the 1917 suffragist imprisonment (a catalyst for the 19th Amendment) at the Workhouse Arts Center.

Lovely late Summer Potluck gathering on
Sept. 20th.

*"I raise up my voice – not so that I can shout, but so that those
without a voice can be heard."*

-MALALA YOUSAFZAI

Peace Corps News

Peace Corps signs letter of intent to establish North Pacific program with Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Palau

The letter of intent—signed by Acting Director Landau, President Whipps of Palau, President Heine of the Marshall Islands, and President Simina of Micronesia—builds on Peace Corps' return to Palau this summer and indicates the four nations' mutual interest in giving a new generation of Volunteers the opportunity to work alongside communities in the North Pacific.

Read the full announcement: <https://bit.ly/4y9pDSq>

Peace Corps set to reopen program in Solomon Islands

HONIARA, Solomon Islands – Peace Corps Acting Director Christopher Landau and Solomon Islands Foreign Affairs and External Trade Minister Rick Houenipwela signed a bilateral country agreement to reestablish a Peace Corps program in Solomon Islands. The signed agreement officially renews the partnership between the United States and the Pacific island nation after a 26-year absence of Peace Corps volunteers since the program was suspended in 2000 and closed in 2008.

Read the full announcement: [Peace Corps - Peace Corps set to reopen program in Solomon Islands](#)

A LITTLE PEACE CORPS INSPIRATION

At our September potluck, **Kris Besch, Peace Corps Deputy CEO**, mentioned a new video developed with Discovery Education, and we wanted to share it with the broader NOVA RPCV community.

“Volunteering to Build Global Community” is an uplifting reminder of the connections, experiences, and sense of purpose at the heart of Peace Corps service. For RPCVs, it may bring back some familiar feelings about why we served, the relationships we built, and how those experiences continue to shape us long after returning home.

Take a few minutes to watch—and perhaps share it with someone who is curious about Peace Corps or considering service.

Watch: Volunteering to Build Global Community

[Global Learners | Discovery Education](#)

Concurrent House and Senate Resolutions to Honor Peace Corps Service

This year, Congress can honor the nearly 250,000 volunteers who have served since 1961. RPCV Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA) and Delegate Amata Radewagen (R-American Samoa) have introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives (H.Con.Res.119, “Honoring the 65th Anniversary of the Peace Corps”). Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC) have introduced a concurrent resolution in the Senate. Together, the concurrent resolutions:

1. Celebrate the 65th anniversary of the founding of the Peace Corps;
2. Honor the nearly 250,000 individuals who have served as Peace Corps volunteers for their dedication to peace, friendship, and community-driven development; and
3. Commend the Peace Corps’ enduring mission to put purpose, passion, and skills to work for America and the world.

For more details, see peacecorpsconnect.org/npca-advocacy/email-congress/



Join the NOVA RPCV Board of Directors!

We are soliciting applicants for the following positions:

Advocacy Chair: This appointed Board position helps connect our Northern Virginia RPCV community with opportunities to support and strengthen Peace Corps, the Peace Corps community, and the values of international service.

Social Chair: The Social Chair plans, promotes, and coordinates social activities that foster connections among Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, former Peace Corps staff, and the broader Peace Corps community.

Community Service Chair: The Community Service Chair helps coordinate local service activities and advance the Peace Corps Third Goal—sharing host



Recognize Peace Corps Volunteers—past and present—with a Congressional Gold Medal!

Take Action to Support the Peace Corps in Congress. The Peace Corps celebrated its 65th anniversary — a perfect time to honor its legacy and Volunteers with a Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor from Congress. Legislation introduced in the House of Representatives proposes recognition for the nearly 250,000 Peace Corps Volunteers who served from August 1961 through December 31, 2026.

The bipartisan Peace Corps Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2025 (H.R. 5521) would award the Congressional Gold Medal to all Peace Corps Volunteers, past and present, recognizing over six decades of global impact and partnership. This initiative not only honors history, it also reinvigorates America's commitment to national service. The Peace Corps needs more Volunteers, and this recognition helps elevate awareness, pride, and recruitment for our next generation of grassroots ambassadors and peacemakers.

Peace Corps family, if you can, please send a message to your Representative urging them to cosponsor H.R. 5521: [Pursuing a Congressional Gold Medal for Peace Corps Volunteers](#)

Before sending a message, you can read the full bill text here: [Text - H.R.5521 - 119th Congress \(2025-2026\): Peace Corps](#)

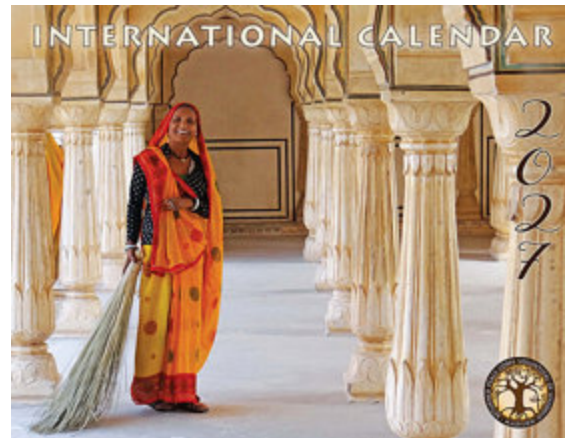
country cultures and experiences with communities in the United States.

Interim Membership Chair: NOVA RPCV is seeking a volunteer to serve as Interim Membership Chair (Data & Systems) while our current Membership Chair is deployed out of state over the next quarter.

Detailed descriptions may be found here: novarpcv.org/about-us/get-involved/

Individuals are not required to live in Northern Virginia, but we ask that you participate regularly in our programs and events, including our quarterly virtual board meetings. Individuals should be RPCVs or former PC Staff.

Please send your brief bio and expression of interest (why you would like to serve) to mail@novarpcv.org. Note: If you would like to support the group in other ways, please submit a general expression of interest (EOI) and share your ideas! Learn more about the board and our work.



2027 International Calendars Are Here!

Support NOVA RPCV and celebrate the world all year long! The 2027 International Calendars, produced by the RPCVs of Wisconsin, are now available through NOVA RPCV.

Calendars are \$19 each.

How to purchase:

Volunteers Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2025 | [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) | Library of Congress

Thank you for honoring Peace Corps so we may continue to inspire and engage new Volunteers!

- **Credit card:** Purchase your calendar here: novarpcv.org/2027-international-calendars-are-here/
- **Zelle:** Send \$19 per calendar to treasurer@novarpcv.org. Enter "Treasurer" or "Richard Popp" in the name field and include your name and "2027 Calendar" in the payment note.
- **Cash:** Pay in person at a NOVA RPCV event.

Calendar *delivery will be in person at NOVA RPCV events*—another great reason to come out, connect with fellow RPCVs, and pick up your calendar!



Peace Corps service doesn't end at Close of Service! For RPCVs, volunteering locally offers another way to continue our lifelong commitment to service and community.

Points of Light recently launched a National Volunteer Strategy focused on strengthening volunteerism and creating more meaningful, accessible, and impactful opportunities for people to serve. The strategy emphasizes investing in the ecosystem of organizations, leaders, and volunteers who make service possible; designing meaningful volunteer experiences; and strengthening the transformative impact of volunteerism in our communities.

Here in Northern Virginia, **Volunteer Arlington** is working with Points of Light and local partners to bring the strategy to life. The Volunteer Arlington portal matches volunteers with organizations and volunteer



Do you love to share stories? Wear your traditional outfits from when you served overseas? If so, please sign up with Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS).

FCPS is seeking speakers from our NOVA RPCV community interested in sharing their experience and in-depth understanding of the communities where they served. This will "promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans" -- Peace Corps' Third Goal.

Opportunities include showcasing your Peace Corps experience and the country/region you served during a cultural heritage night or perhaps giving a short presentation on various topics (i.e. how you used foreign language overseas; ancient Mali; knowledge of a particular region; information on a subject you're comfortable

engagements. Volunteer opportunities across Arlington and the greater DC metropolitan area range from mentoring and supporting neighbors to arts, environmental, and community service activities.

Learn more:

Points of Light National Volunteer Strategy:

<https://www.pointsoflight.org/national-volunteer-strategy/>

Interested in serving with NOVA RPCV?

We're also looking for volunteers interested in helping expand our community service activities and partnerships. Contact us at mail@novarpcv.org to get involved.

Have a volunteer opportunity or community partnership NOVA RPCV should know about? Send it our way!

addressing -- environmental protection, civic education, etc). Please share your info and proposed topics in this form [Returned Peace Corps Volunteers - Third Goal Opportunities](#) (only shared with FCPS staff). FCPS will contact you.

Thank you for sharing your Peace Corps experience with Fairfax County Public School students!

Virtual service and other opportunities!

For those who are nearing retirement or have time, please do consider Peace Corps virtual service or Peace Corps response.

[Peace Corps - Serve Online Through Peace Corps Virtual Service Pilot](#)

[Peace Corps - Short Term, Skilled Volunteering with Peace Corps Response](#)

Join Peace Corps Connect+!

NOVA RPCV has hundreds of members but only a handful have registered on Connect+. We need your help to encourage all our members to register! Connect+ is the brand-new virtual village for the entire Peace Corps community. Reconnect with fellow RPCVs; build your personal & professional network; contribute to conversations, join a group, find the latest news and network with the global Peace Corps community. We are stronger together!

It's a great way to connect/network! When joining Connect+ you can also become a member of the Northern Virginia Returned Peace Corps Volunteer group! If you need help to register, please don't hesitate to reach out to mail@novarpcv.org. Why wait?

How you can help!

You can help recruit the next generation of Volunteers by sharing your unique Peace Corps experience and how it continues to impact your life and career. Connect with your local community through service groups, libraries, school activities and social media networks. Your story has the power to inspire the next generation of Peace Corps Volunteers. [Sign up on the RPCV Portal](#) to be part of Peace Corps' [Global Connections Program](#) and become part of the network of RPCVs available to share your story with communities in the U.S.

Thank You for Your Support – Let's Keep Growing!

We invite you to join or renew your membership or make a one-time donation to help us continue building a strong, connected Peace Corps community in Northern Virginia.

[Donate Now](#)



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Northern Virginia Returned Peace Corps Volunteers

mail@novarpcv.org