



Peace Corps Mongolia Annual Report 2006



LETTER FROM THE COUNTRY DIRECTOR

The Volunteers and staff of the Peace Corps/Mongolia program are pleased to present you a copy of our 2006 Annual Report, highlighting the contributions of Peace Corps Volunteers and their Mongolian partners during our 15th year of operations in country.

2006 has been an exceptional year for Peace Corps/Mongolia. Due to support and requests from the Mongolian government and our partner agencies, we reached an all time high for the number of Volunteers in country, ending 2006 with 103 Volunteers. Our four current projects of English Education, Community Health, Youth Development and Economic Development all underwent revisions and modifications in collaboration with Mongolian partners and currently serving Volunteers. With input from our partners, we continued our efforts to develop strategic clusters of Volunteer placements around the country, allowing for a more integrated approach to our assistance. And, finally, on November 17th, Volunteers and staff hosted His Excellency President Nambaryn Enkhbayar and Peace Corps partners at a 15th Anniversary celebration to recognize the numerous contributions of our partners in making the Peace Corps program possible.

Through it all, the constant has been the commitment and dedication of the Volunteers towards making a positive contribution in Mongolia. 2006 saw Volunteers working in 17 of Mongolia's 21 aimags, reaching total number of approximately 10,000 beneficiaries.

As Peace Corps Volunteers always work in collaboration with host agencies and Mongolian counterparts and co-workers, this annual report demonstrates the cooperation of numerous organizations and individuals

across Mongolia who have made it possible for 576 Peace Corps Volunteers to serve in Mongolia since July of 1991. We are extremely grateful to our partners and the host agencies requesting Volunteers for their collaboration and partnership, and we hope to strengthen these relationships as well as identify new partners as we move ahead in 2007.

We look forward to working with you in 2007 to strengthen the contributions of Peace Corps Volunteers in Mongolia.

Ken Goodson



The Peace Corps/Mongolia Staff



55 new Volunteers joined the program on August 19, 2006

OVERVIEW OF THE PEACE CORPS AND PEACE CORPS/MONGOLIA

Peace Corps is an agency of the United States government created by President John F. Kennedy in 1961 to promote world peace, community development and cross-cultural understanding. Since its inception, more than 178,000 Volunteers have served in 138 countries. Today the agency is working in 70 countries around the world with 7,800 Volunteers, the largest numbers of countries served, and Volunteers serving, in the past 30 years. Peace Corps' Volunteers around the world participate in grassroots development efforts identified by host country partners in order to complete the agency's three goals of:

- 1) helping people of interested countries in meeting their needs for trained men and women;
- 2) helping to promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served; &
- 3) helping to promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

Volunteers around the world share their time and talents by serving for a two-year commitment as teachers, business advisors, information and technology consultants, health and HIV/AIDS educators and agriculture workers. In addition, these women and men – young and old, married and single, and from an array of ethnic backgrounds – are committed to learning from their hosts and integrating themselves into the culture of the country where they serve as well as participating in community designed development and service projects and activities. All Volunteers work in conjunction with a host agency partner and serve at the invitation of the host government.

In 1990, the Mongolian government requested the presence of Peace Corps Volunteers. Peace Corps began operations in Mongolia in 1991, making it one of the first U.S. Government agencies to establish presence here. Initially Volunteers worked only in Ulaanbaatar. However, as the years have gone by, the program has extended its coverage and its grassroots development services to the Mongolian people.

Over the past 15 years:

- 576 Volunteers have served in country.
- Each of Mongolia's aimags has received the support of a Peace Corps Volunteer.
- 1/3 of Mongolia's soums have received the support of a Peace Corps Volunteer.
- Volunteers have served in English Education, Health Education, Computer Skills Training, Economic Development and Environmental Conservation.
- Hundreds of former Peace Corps Mongolia Volunteers have become involved with Friends of Mongolia, a non-governmental organization started by former Volunteers which supports community development projects in Mongolia and promotes a greater understanding of Mongolia and Mongolian culture in the United States.



Today Peace Corps Mongolia is at an all time high for Volunteers with 103 Volunteers working in one of four projects in 17 of Mongolia's 21 aimags. Our projects are English Education, Community Health, Youth Development and Economic Development.

H.E. President Enkhbayar, U.S. Ambassador Mark C. Minton and Peace Corps Volunteers celebrate the 15th Anniversary of Peace Corps in Mongolia

CONTRIBUTIONS OF PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS SERVING IN MONGOLIA IN 2006



**“Peace Corps Volunteers don’t only work
with one or two staff ...
they work with all the staff who are
part of our organization ...
Peace Corps Volunteers are willing to help
and assist anyone on our team.”**

*Mongolian Counterpart of an
English Education PCV*

ENGLISH EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

English Education and Community Development is the largest of Peace Corps Mongolia’s projects. With 70 percent of Volunteers serving in the project, Peace Corps builds capacity in English language skills at two levels. First, Volunteers provide Mongolia a skilled human resource for the future education of Mongolian students by training Mongolian English teachers. Additionally, by directly supporting Mongolian students through individual or co-teaching with Mongolian teachers to provide English language skills, Volunteers assist the Government of Mongolia in making English Mongolia’s official second language. Finally, English Education and Community Development Volunteers are actively involved in supporting and initiating community service and community development efforts at the request of host communities and host agencies.

Project Purpose:

Mongolians will increase life opportunities through acquisition of English language communication skills.

Project Goals

Goal 1: Mongolians will develop their English skills in educational settings or communities.

Goal 2: Educational institutions will improve their capacity to deliver English language education.

Goal 3: Develop community outreach activities for the benefit of communities.

<i>English Education and Community Development Project Beneficiaries in 2006</i>				
Number of individuals and service providers assisted	Men	Women	Boys/youth under 25	Girls/youth under 25
Individuals	83	209	7031	8572
Service Providers	156	1152	0	0
Number of organizations & communities assisted				
Organizations	71			
Communities	46			

EXAMPLES OF ENGLISH EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE:

Kevin Brady, M-15 TEFL PCV, Deren soum, Dundgobi province

Kevin Brady is an M #15 English Education Volunteer who worked as an English language teacher in Deren soum, in Dundgovi province, where there are 2500 residents. Deren soum is a herding village, where the vast majority of young girls from the countryside are sent to school, and in many families, the boys stay year round in the countryside to care for the vast herds of livestock. As a result, there are a small but silent number of teenage males who never receive schooling and lack basic literacy and mathematics skills. During the spring of 2005, his first year at site, Mr. Brady and his school director formulated a plan for a basic educational program addressing these young adult herders, focusing on literacy and mathematics training.



The director and Mr. Brady had a limited amount of time to work with the herders because livestock require constant attention. They got funding for the program through a U.S. Department of Agriculture grant, and teachers were selected from the village schools to lead the various lessons. Time, money, and resources were in short supply, so a small target group of boys was selected for one month of intensive lessons. During the summer of 2005, twenty four students attended eight hours of classes each day, for six days a week. They developed a constant lesson schedule and administered exams; 'semester' grades were given to the students, and daily attendance records were kept. The boys themselves went so far as to elect a classroom leader within their group, who was in charge of ensuring that each student was doing his work on time. Weekly attendance was nearly perfect; the boys took the program extremely seriously.

By the end of a few weeks, there was a marked difference in the personality of the students. Those who were initially withdrawn became more open and outgoing, exuding more confidence in themselves. Other boys with clear leadership qualities quickly began to stand out from the rest of the group. Even more impressive was the learning capacity of these maturing adults. Because of the limited time frame, it was crucial to focus on a handful of essential life skills the students could master over the duration of the program. By the end of the month, many had the ability to write a short letter to their families and to read and recite traditional Mongolian poetry. By the end of the math lessons, a few boys could multiply and divide very large numbers, and they all learned how to use a calculator, and how to set up a bank account in the local bank.

Due to its success, the program was replicated in Deren soum in the summer of 2006.

Brett Burkhardt and Jessica Trudeau M15 TEFL, Zuunmod, Tov province

Brett Burkhardt and Jessica Trudeau, who worked in Zuunmod Tov aimag for 2 years, implemented the "Open Door Shelter" Project for abused women and children. It started in July 2005, during a meeting with Amgalan Terbish, a member of the community, who worked in a local branch of the National Center Against Violence (NCAV). The NCAV branch had already been active in Zuun Mod for seven years, led by several Mongolian volunteers that made up the board of directors. The function of the board at the time was to educate and train local personnel in the area of domestic abuse. Local social workers, police officers, teachers, hospital workers, and mothers had all been educated in issues involved in abuse. The board identified the need for a shelter house or some place for victims of abuse could seek refuge and counseling and began discussing resource ideas.

Quickly they realized the venture was possible if they could all work together. So, individually and collectively, they began pricing apartments, locating potential donors, and creating a cohesive and powerful project proposal with an action plan and budget, working with the Peace Corps Volunteers to share skills and knowledge and look for ways to strengthen the project. Brett and Jess scheduled several meetings with the local government and a parliamentary working group. figured around 50%, a significant amount of the total project budget. The rest of the funding came from donations from Friends of Mongolia, the association of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers in Mongolia, the U.S. Embassy, USDA Wheat Funds and private donations.



Through financial contributions from the Tov Aimag government and local residents, combined with assistance from the association of former Peace Corps Volunteers in Mongolia, the United States Embassy, the United States Department of Agriculture and private donations, in March 2006 the facility was inaugurated, making it the third shelter in Mongolia. Brett and Jess, as well as other Peace Corps Volunteers in the region continue to support the shelter by providing emotional support and educational activities to victims of domestic violence and working with local NCAV staff to improve outreach services.



“Our current PCV is the second at our school and this is a very good thing because having Volunteers has been so helpful for the language and skill development of our teachers. Their skills have definitely improved. In his second year, our Volunteer really understands and has a bigger picture of all the school’s activities in mind and he’s doing many more things with younger students this year. He always initiates new activities with the students and the whole school is very supportive of his work.

Ms. Naranchimeg, 10 Year SS #2, Kharkhorin

“In my experience the Volunteers are very talented with languages. One Volunteer that I knew in Khovd Aimag learned Kazakh and that showed respect for his community. Peace Corps Volunteers go from being a stranger to a community member through language.”

Mongolian Counterpart of a Volunteer





“Exactly one year ago was the visit of the first United States President to Mongolia. During our conversation we spoke about continuing in a comprehensive partnership between our countries. We think that a comprehensive partnership includes Peace Corps Volunteers and I am very glad that you are here.”

*H.E. President Nambaryn Enkhbayar
November 17, 2006*

“Without a doubt, you enhance understanding between the people of Mongolia and United States through educational and cultural exchanges. To assimilate English into the education system, in order for English to be the second official language in Mongolia, we need Volunteers like the Peace Corps Education Volunteers present today - highly willing and supportive instructors of the English language. I reaffirm that I need 1000 Peace Corps Volunteers.



On a personal note, I have heard many good things about Peace Corps Volunteers. I heard that they are cultural envoys, as well as hard-working, energetic Americans. You not only work in one position, but take on many other responsibilities to help your community. I've heard of Volunteers who help their Mongolian “neighbors” by developing and implementing small-scale projects in addition to their official work. Whether this assistance is done by setting up the very first internet cafe in a small soum or by teaching American songs and square dance to Mongolian children in a bagh, these small projects all make a difference.”

*Taken from a December 20, 2005 speech to Peace Corps Volunteers
by P. Tsagaan, former Minister of Education, Science and Culture*



“What I personally like is the cultural immersion of Peace Corps Volunteers. There are no foreign nationals who totally immerse into our culture, accept it and promote it like Peace Corps Volunteers.”

*D. Tsogtbaatar
Foreign Policy Advisor to
H.E. President N. Enkhbayar*

COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH



Sometimes when we work with other foreigners who have recently arrived to Mongolia, we see how they go through a lot of stress associated with culture shock but with our Peace Corps Volunteer, it has been very easy. He is flexible and adjusted to working in a new culture and environment very easily. I also feel that our Volunteer has a very open heart. He is hard working and creative and seeks out new information to solve problems or to support our work. That makes my job much easier as a Supervisor.

*Ms. Marta Lkhasuren, Assistant Project Manager,
Norwegian Lutheran Mission*

There are currently 14 Health Volunteers in-country working together with both government and non-governmental partners as part of the recently revised Community-Based Health Project Plan. Volunteer activities focus on health education and increasing access to health information and services, implementation of training activities, assisting local health agencies in capacity building of local staff, and developing and implementing - together with partners - a variety of community health interventions. Volunteers work in both urban and rural locations and currently serve in ten aimag centers across the country. The Community-Based Health Project emphasizes strategies for healthier life-styles, including HIV/AIDS prevention, through health promotion and prevention behaviors and includes both adults and children/youth taking an active role in protecting and maintaining good health.

Project Purpose:

Individuals and communities will improve their health and well-being through active participation in preventive health education programs targeting increased awareness and skill development.

Project Goals:

Goal 1: Community members will have sufficient access to health information, education, and community programs to establish preventive health practices at the family and community levels.

Goal 2: Health service providers will develop the local, regional and international collaborations to share and strengthen the dissemination of information and effective implementation of health programs.

Goal 3: Organizations will effectively develop, implement, and institutionalize preventive health education outreach activities that promote relevant health issues at the community level.

Community Based Health Project Beneficiaries in 2006				
Number of individuals and service providers assisted	Men	Women	Boys/youth under 25	Girls/youth under 25
Individuals	241	275	1,924	2,553
Service Providers	341	1,073	N/A	N/A
Number of organizations and communities assisted				
Organizations	167			
Communities	71			

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY BASED HEALTH VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE:

Jess Lampe, M 16, Uliastai Health Department, Zavkhan

I would rather not wake up at 7 a.m. to go running. Even though it is summer, the temperature on occasion drops to below zero, especially with wind chill. But that's the only time that my community running partner likes to run. He doesn't like to run in the afternoon because people would see him at that time and make fun of him. Freezing is a minor thing to suffer compared with being made fun of. In an ideal world, my running partner would eagerly run in the afternoon and help me make running a more popular sport in the area. The only problem: things are ideal. But while he may be embarrassed to be seen doing it, he loves running. In the past months he has never missed a 7 a.m. appointment and he shows up at my ger every other morning to run. I would rather sleep in and stay warm, but I can't refuse such dedication. And while it might not be perfect ... it feels like a start.

John Macom, M 16, Norwegian Lutheran Mission, Ulaanbaatar

Over the past six months I have finished the trainings of Nalaikh Health Volunteers. These Mongolian volunteers are now ready to spread health education throughout their community. The success of this project is that these volunteers respect me, and in the process, opened many doors for future collaboration with the local government.

Jesse Loar, M 16 Arvaikheer Health Department, Ovorkhangai

The HIV/AIDS panel discussion we organized at the Technical College was one of the best projects we worked on in the past six months. It was really great because members of the Technical College organized the event and invited us to come and speak. On the day of the event the turn out was good and students were honest about their knowledge base and asked excellent questions. It was also one of the first opportunities where I felt comfortable interacting in that setting using Mongolian language. I think that this event will work as a kick-off to a new series of events called "Sex in the Dark" discussion that I am hoping to begin this Fall.



“Our Volunteer has been working to support our project on promotion of healthy lifestyles and enlisting the use of local radio and television to promote messages related to this. We selected ten local role models within the community and the provided training for them on exercise and good nutrition or good eating habits – and hopefully they will serve as teachers and models for others.”

*Ms. Bolormaa
Uliastai Health Department
Zavkhan Aimag*

COMMUNITY YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



“PCVs are very hard working and they do so much for the community. In my past experience working with a Volunteer, we attended a Life Skills workshop in UB and then brought these ideas back and organized trainings here for the students based on this approach. Working on the development of life skills is so important and useful for all involved and even when the students graduate, they continue to use and apply these skills. This is a very important part of our work.”

*Mr. Luvsanvandan, 11 Secondary School #3,
Uliastai, Zavkhan*

Initiated in August 2005, Community Youth Development Volunteers now account for 10 percent of Peace Corps Mongolia program. Community Youth Development Volunteers work with governmental and non-governmental host agencies to assist Mongolian youth to maximize their potential and contribute positively to society. Volunteers share skills and motivation to assist young people in areas of education, life skills and leadership, while at the same time building the capacity of Mongolian youth serving organizations and individuals. With 65 percent of the Mongolian population under the age of 30, the Community Youth Development Volunteers are helping Mongolia prepare for the future.

Project Purpose

Mongolian youth will increase their capacity to overcome challenging life circumstances and become young adults that contribute to improving the quality of life for themselves, their families and their communities.

Project Goals:

Goal 1: Educational Complements

Youth will improve their education through participating in traditional and non-traditional activities and themes.

Goal 2: Life Skills Development

Youth will increase opportunities through improved personal, social and vocational skills.

Goal 3: Sustainability and Stewardship

Youth will develop and improve leadership abilities and organizational capacity to address their personal needs and the needs of their communities and parents will have improved parenting skills.

Community Youth Development Project Beneficiaries in 2006				
Number of individuals and service providers assisted	Men	Women	Boys/youth under 25	Girls/youth under 25
Individuals	11	78	685	759
Service Providers	11	65		
Number of organizations and communities assisted				
Organizations	27			
Communities	21			

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY YOUTH DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE:

Arnis Daiga, National Authority for Children (NAC), Ulaanbaatar

Together with colleagues from the NAC, World Vision and UNICEF, Mr. Daiga is working to improve conditions related to juvenile justice in Mongolia. This includes participating with the Ministry of Justice's Working Group on Juvenile Justice, and working with UNICEF on developing the Juvenile Justice Committee projects in Ulaanbaatar and Ondorkhaan. As a part of these efforts, Mr. Daiga participated in training sessions in Ulaanbaatar and Ondorkhaan that included police officers, lawyers, prosecutors, social workers, Supreme Court judges, and other government officials. The Volunteer's presentations focused on the experience of specialized juvenile courts, implementing alternatives to deprivation of liberty, and presenting different ideas for diversion programs and those experiences from around the world. Additionally Mr. Daiga is involved with providing Life Skills education training to School Social Workers in Ulaanbaatar.



Amanda Carson, Dornod Children's Center, Choibalsan

In addition to her primary assignment with the Dornod Children's Center, twice a month, PCV Amanda Carson, along with the other Volunteers in Choibalsan, go to a local orphanage. The Volunteers help in terms of training the orphanage staff in grant writing and spend time playing with the children and developing fun activities for the children to build their capacities and raise their self-esteem. PCVs teach the children about American holidays and hold special events on these days, such as mask making and trick-or-treating on Halloween, making turkey hands on Thanksgiving, and writing Valentine's cards for one another.



“Before working with a Volunteer, we had heard of Peace Corps and knew that they provided support to rural areas but we didn't really know too much else. Since having our own Volunteer, we feel as though we've had an excellent experience through both cultural and professional exchanges and gained experience in working together with a Volunteer. Through this direct exposure and exchange, our staff now realize how nice it has been to work with Peace Corps Volunteers and all the benefits that they bring.

It has also been extremely advantageous to having a married couple (our Volunteer's spouse works for the Health Department) as they not only provide support to one another but assist in bringing the host country organizations that they work with closer together as well.

We will be very sad to lose our current Volunteer – we'll miss her so much - but we are very interested in having another Volunteer join our team and continue to provide support to our agency's work.”

Ms. Sanchir, Director, Arvaikheer Children's Center

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



“I would say that they help to improve inter-sectoral collaboration. We have worked together with the Gobi Initiative Office and Technical University Branch office ... before the Volunteer’s arrival, these organizations didn’t work together to implement activities. We will continue this kind of collaboration next year as well.”

Mongolian Counterpart of a Volunteer

Small Business Development Volunteers accounted for 10 percent of the total number of Volunteers in the Peace Corps Mongolia program in 2005. Small Business Development Volunteers work together with host country agency partners from Mercy Corps’ Gobi Initiative project and CHF’s Ger Initiative project to strengthen business and organizational capacities of Mongolian businesses and business people. Volunteers share skills and knowledge to assist their partners and co-workers to gain awareness of business approaches and to increase access to information which can contribute to increased productivity, product quality and profits.

Project Purpose:

To develop community business and organizational capacities for successful participation in a market-based economy, thereby contributing to sustainable growth and the progression of a civil society.

Project Goals:

Goal 1: Students will acquire basic market economic and entrepreneurial skills they need for successful employment or further education.

Goal 2: Small businesses and NGOs will be self-sustaining through the acquisition of marketing and management best practices.

Goal 3: Business organizations and NGOs will be networked with similar organizations, locally and internationally, to support business operations.

Community Economic Development Project Beneficiaries in 2006				
Number of individuals and service providers assisted	Men	Women	Boys/youth under 25	Girls/youth under 25
Individuals	196	182	12	57
Service Providers	100	100		
Number of organizations and communities assisted				
Organizations	45			
Communities	39			

EXAMPLES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE:

Vita Trujillo, CHF International's Ger Initiative, Darkhan

A Community Economic Development PCV working in the peri-urban "ger districts" of Darkhan city, Ms. Trujillo provides support to local residents on ways to increase income generation opportunities. Ms. Trujillo is assigned to CHF International's "Ger Initiative" project in Darkhan. In the spring of 2006, Ms. Trujillo worked with local residents to identify an income generation opportunity through the production of organic vegetables. Ms. Trujillo and community members worked together to purchase vegetable seeds from a U.S. based program providing high quality vegetable seed at a discounted price to Peace Corps supported projects around the world.

Upon receiving their seeds, Ms. Trujillo and the CHF staff provided farmers training on planting, irrigating, harvesting and processing their crops. Ms. Trujillo and her CHF counterparts also provided training to community residents on companion planting and low cost, environmentally safe remedies to control insects in vegetable gardens. The summer production was successful and 100% of the harvest was purchased on the local market. Demands for increased production for the summer of 2007 has already been secured.

Denise Wilkins, Mercy Corps' Gobi Initiative, Mandalgobi

In addition to her efforts to support economic development in the Gobi in cooperation with Mercy Corps' Gobi Initiative project, Denise Wilkins uses her skills and background to assist local residents not associated with the project, such as Ultzihshik from Mandalgov who makes toy camels. Denise began working with Ultzihshik, who requested assistance from her about identifying a market for her goods.

Denise asked Ultzihshik to provide samples of some of her highest quality work and then took them to the UB office of Three Camel Lodge so that the lodge could think about placing an order and selling the camels in their souvenir shop in South Gobi. Denise also conducted a market survey to identify appropriate prices for the camels and visited several other souvenir shops in order to provide Ultzihshik with quality information. With this information and an idea of how to improve her product to position it in the market, Ultzihshik went to UB and visited several stores, hotels and tour operators.

Four businesses placed orders with her and she will be making camels all winter for delivery in April of 2007.



"Our Peace Corps Volunteer is now becoming part of our community. She is adjusting well. She has great relationships with everyone and we now feel as though we are brothers and sisters together here in the community."

*Mr. Batbayar,
Director Mankhan Soum
Secondary School
Khovd Aimag*

COMMUNITY SERVICE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

In addition to efforts in Peace Corps' four primary projects, all Peace Corps Volunteers in Mongolia are considered community development workers. As such, Volunteers are committed to working hand in hand with the residents of the communities where they are assigned to identify local development priorities and to assist communities in developing and implementing efforts to address those priorities. Additionally, all Volunteers support community service activities so as to be active members of their host community.

Examples of community service and community development activities designed and implemented by Volunteers and their Mongolian partners in 2006 include:

- Assisted in the development of English language Aimag websites to promote tourism
- Facilitated computer and information and communication skills trainings
- Assisted in the implementation of rural computer info-centers which provide internet and computer access to isolated soums nationwide
- Assisted development of "Best Practices Book" for a host agency
- Provided training in project design, management, monitoring and evaluation to local governments
- Developed educational games for herdsmen in order to build skills in math and literacy
- Developed and implemented Environmental Clean-Up Days
- Assisted translation of Life Skills Manuals into Kazakh language and provided training on use of manuals
- Developed English language promotion materials and tourism training at Amarbaysagalant monastery
- Organized art, dancing and cooking classes for interested community members
- Coached and participated on community sports teams
- Tutored youth and adults in English, math and other subjects
- Taught swimming lessons
- Organized community parties and cultural activities
- Designed and supported activities for National AIDS Day and International Volunteer Day



"I have always been quite impressed when I came by Peace Corps Volunteers in my travels in the countryside. Peace Corps Volunteers live under difficult circumstances, just like Mongolians.

*H.E. President Nambaryn Enkhbayar
November 17, 2006*



Many Volunteers live in gers or wooden houses with Mongolia host families

“If I had to leave Peace Corps tomorrow the thing I would miss the most would be my Mongolian family with whom I’ve shared a hashaa with for the past two years and who have treated me like one of their own. I will miss the generosity that shines through at the most important moments. I will miss the calmness and almost enlightened way many Mongolians treat problems or crises.”

*Jennifer Chow, Health Volunteer
Bulgan Aimag*

“If I had to leave Peace Corps tomorrow the thing I would miss the most would be the beautiful landscapes and welcoming environment I find in the countryside. I have not encountered quite the same things in the United States. If you tried to explain Mongolian hospitality to the typical American, they would probably give you a funny look since it is virtually unheard of it. As for my work, I would miss my students. They study with a limited amount of resources but still put in effort which amazes me. It says a lot when students under less-than-ideal situations display so much diligence in order to create opportunities for themselves. I foresee some of my students going quite far career-wise and more importantly, in life.”

*Michael Yang, English Education Volunteer
Arkhangai Aimag*



“The relationships I have formed in my community with my students and teachers are something I would never get in my life. I have realized recently how much I consider Javkhlant my home. Whenever I head to UB, “I am ready to go home” constantly running through my mind and I find it interesting that I refer to Javkhlant not America.”

*Elizabeth Clark, English Education Volunteer
Selenge Aimag*





Serving in Mongolia since 1991...



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