

Public Affairs Section

U.S. Embassy, Gaborone, Botswana

September 10, 2012

(#27/12)



Press Release

New Peace Corps Volunteers Arrive in Botswana

Thirty-five new Peace Corps Volunteers will arrive in Botswana on September 13. Upon completion of in-country language and cultural training in Kanye, the new Volunteers will work with schools to teach life skills, an integral component of the education curriculum of Botswana. They will be assigned to primary and secondary schools to work with guidance and counseling teachers to implement a leadership and self-awareness raising curriculum called *Living*.

The Volunteers range in age from 22 to 77; 34% are 40 years old or older, and 89% are women. All of them bring a wealth of experience and education to be added to their in-country training, which will include a heavy emphasis on language learning and cross-cultural understanding. Among the group are teachers, psychologists, and counselors, and nearly all have at least a university degree. The group includes two married couples.

Volunteers will be placed for their two-year assignments starting in mid-November in places such as Ramatlabama, Tshane, Makopong, Takatokwane, Ditshegwane, and Lotlhakane East.

Former President Festus Mogae invited Peace Corps to return to Botswana in 2002 to address HIV/AIDS after a five year hiatus. The current focus of the Peace Corps Botswana Program is to strengthen implementation of the Botswana National Strategic Framework II to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The placement of Volunteers is done in close collaboration with the National AIDS Coordination Agency and the Ministries of Local Government, Health, and Education.

A ceremony to welcome the new Volunteers will be held at the Education Centre in Kanye at 2pm on Friday, September 14. Press is invited to attend. Patrick Ralotsia, Kanye Administration Authority Chairperson will make a keynote address. Others in attendance will include Kgosi Malope II of Gangwaketse, Member of Parliament for Kanye South Abram Kesupile, Member of Parliament for Kanye North Kentse Rammidi, District Commissioner representative for Southern District Kabelo Tshekiso, Southern District Council Chairperson Leach Tlhomelang, Southern Region Director in the Ministry of Education and Skills Development Motsamai Phuthego, and Peace Corps Botswana Acting Director Seana Lammers.

Peace Corps Background

More than 2,200 Peace Corps volunteers have served in Botswana from 1966-1997 and 2003 to the present. They serve throughout the country, from villages such as Kachikau and Middlepits and larger ones such as Ghanzi and Maun. Currently, 112 volunteers are serving, plus the 35 newly-arrived.

President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps on March 1, 1961, by executive order. Throughout 2011, Peace Corps is commemorating 51 years of promoting peace and friendship around the world. Historically, more than 200,000 Americans have served with the Peace Corps

to promote a better understanding between Americans and the people of 139 host countries. Today, 9,065 volunteers are working with local communities in 75 host countries. Peace Corps volunteers must be U.S. citizens and at least 18 years of age. Peace Corps service is a 27-month commitment. Visit www.peacecorps.gov for more information.

For further details, please contact: Public Affairs Officer, John Warner (395-3982 ext. 2468), Laona Segatsho, Information Specialist (395-3982 ext. 2419, fax: 390-6129, SegatshoLJ@state.gov) or Angelinah Matenanga, Public Affairs Secretary, (395-3982 ext. 2415, fax: 390-6129, MatenangaAB@state.gov).