

Public Affairs Section

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Press Release

Peace Corps Volunteers to be welcomed

A group of Peace Corps Trainees will be officially welcomed on the 13th of April in Kanye at the Education Centre. Kgosi Malope II, Representative of Member of Parliament for Kanye South and Representative for Member of Parliament for Kanye North, District Officer-Southern District –Mr Tshekiso, Southern District Council Chairperson-Honorable Councilor Leach Tlhomeleng, Director of Education, Southern District-Mr Phuthego and Peace Corps Botswana Director, Mr. Hartman will welcome the guests.

The former President of Botswana, President Mogae, invited Peace Corps to return to Botswana in 2002 to address HIV/AIDS. Previously, Botswana had graduated from Peace Corps' priority needs in 1997 due to the significant development gains Botswana had achieved since its independence. 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 (NACA) and the Ministries of Local Government, Health, and Education. Of the group of 45 starting their training, 18 will work with Non-Governmental Organizations, 16 will work with clinics or the Social and Community Development Department (S&CD) around the country, and 11 will work with the District AIDS Coordinating Offices and District Health Management Teams to help in the coordination of activities related to HIV/AIDS at District level.

The youngest Trainee in this new group is 22 years old and the oldest is 64 years old; 20% are over the age of 50, and 76% 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. Amongst the group members are Social Workers, psychologists, and counselors, and nearly all have at least a university degree. The group includes five married couples.

Volunteers will be placed for their two-year assignments starting in June in places like Maun, Mmadinare, Gumare, Ghanzi, Shakawe, Sepopa, Bere, Maitengwe, and others.

About Peace Corps/Botswana: 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 45 newly-arrived Trainees.

About the Peace Corps: *President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps on March 1, 1961, by executive order. Throughout 2011, Peace Corps is commemorating 50 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.

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