

Public Affairs Section

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Press Release

Thirty-three New Peace Corps Volunteers to Swear-in for Service

United States Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission Michael Murphy will preside over the swearing-in ceremony for 33 Peace Corps trainees at the Kanye Education Centre on Thursday, November 15, 2012 at 10:30 a.m. Members of the press are invited to cover the event.

Speakers and invited guests for the event include the former President, His Excellency Festus Mogae; Assistant Minister of Education and Skills Development Honorable Patrick Masimolole; Assistant Minister of Presidential Affairs Honorable Dr. Gloria Somolekae; Mr. Richard Matlhare, National Coordinator for NACA; Kgosi Malope II; Honorable Kentse Rammidi, MP Kanye North; Honorable Abram Kesupile, MP Kanye South; Mr. Kabelo Tshekiso, Southern District Commissioner; Ms. Segomotso Nkwane, Southern District Commission representative; Honorable Councilor Leach Tlhomelang, Southern District Council Chairperson; Mr. Motsamai Phuthego, Southern Region Director. Peace Corps Botswana Director Tim Hartman and Peace Corps Africa Region Director Dick Day will welcome the guests. Kanye Administration Authority Chairperson Mr. Patrick Ralotsia will make closing remarks.

The 33 newly sworn-in Peace Corps Volunteers will work in schools throughout the country teaching life skills, which is an integral component of Botswana's education curriculum. The Volunteers will be placed for their two-year assignments in the Kweneng, Kgalegadi and Southern districts in places like Gakhibane, Lokgwabe, Makopong, Takatokwane, Ditshegwane, Salajwe, Khudumelapye, Mokatako. They will be assigned to primary and secondary schools to work with teachers and guidance counselors to implement a leadership and self-awareness raising curriculum called "Living Material."

The youngest trainee in this group is 22 years old and the oldest is 77 years old; 30% are over the age of 50; and, 80% are women. All of them bring a wealth of experience and education to be added to their in-country training which includes a heavy emphasis on language learning and cross-cultural understanding. Amongst the group members are teachers, lawyers, psychologists, and counselors, and nearly all have at least a university degree. The group includes two married couples.

Background

More than 2,200 Peace Corps Volunteers have served in Botswana from 1966 – 1997 and 2003 to the present. They have served throughout the country, from small villages such as Bere, Kachikau and Middlepits to larger ones such as Ghanzi, Maun and Molepolole. With the swearing-in of the 32 trainees, approximately 150 Peace Corps Volunteers will be serving in Botswana. 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.

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.

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