



NEWS RELEASE

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PEACE CORPS CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF SERVICE, GOODWILL TO THE WORLD

The U.S. Peace Corps celebrates this year five decades of service and goodwill to the world.

To commemorate the work that Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) continue to do -- providing relevant support to local communities to improve the quality of life -- U.S. Ambassador Harry K. Thomas will honor on March 1 the many Americans who share the ideals of the Peace Corps Program with a reception he is hosting that day.

The honorees, some of whom live and work in the Philippines, include those who have served in Samoa, Tonga, Ukraine, Bulgaria, South Africa, Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Korea and Thailand, among others. Host agencies and local partners are also expected at the event, which marks the start of a year-long celebration.

According to Peace Corps Philippines Director Sonia Derenoncourt, regional activities and events hosted by Peace Corps Volunteers and their host agencies will be held throughout the year, with a grand culminating Fiesta in November at the Mall of Asia in Pasay City.

The Peace Corps Program, which started in 1961 upon the signing of the Peace Corps Act on March 1, was spearheaded by Sargent Shriver, who shared President John F. Kennedy's vision of world peace and friendship.

The Philippines was the second country after Ghana to receive Volunteers. Since October 12, 1961, over 8,300 PCVs have worked in every region of the Philippines.

Ambassador Thomas said: "The Peace Corps would not exist if it were not for the invitation of Governments all over the world. Jointly our governments believe that people can cross barriers of language, culture, and customs in order to speak a common language of humanity."

Volunteers work hand in hand with school teachers, college professors, fisher folk, the youth, business men and women, and farmers, among various groups. In the course of their service, they develop long lasting bonds of friendship with the people they live and work with.

Many Volunteers continue the relationship by continued engagement and with the Filipinos, through the Peace Corps Alumni Foundation for Philippine Development.

“Our Volunteers currently work in the areas of Education (English language learning), Environment (coastal management), and Youth (basic education and social services among at risk children and their families),“ Director Derenoncourt, said.

“We look forward to continued dedicated service towards sustainable human development,“ she added.