

CHAPTER 2 PEACE CORPS IN SAMOA

History and Contributions

In 1967, after experiencing a difficult financial year and a devastating cyclone, Samoa turned to Washington and invited the first group of U.S. Peace Corps Volunteers to country. These first Volunteers were architects, engineers, and economists, but often found themselves teaching or working with health and sanitation in rural areas. From 1967 until October 2009, 82 groups of approximately 1,500 Volunteers have served in Samoa.

Peace Corps enjoys a 40 year legacy in Samoa, and has become nearly a part of Fa'a Samoa. Nearly every leader in Government and industry speaks openly and appreciatively of some past PCV who affected their lives. Some of the notable achievements and contributions of Volunteers are:

- Introduction of water seal toilets
- Architect & construction supervisor for old Parliament Building
- Architect & Construction supervisor for Faleolo Airport Terminal (original)
- Acting Director for Public Works, Acting Financial Secretary at the Treasury Department
- Re-design and renovation of new market place and public works building
- Engineers assisted in road construction, water works development & the “reclaimed area” along the waterfront (site of Central Bank).
- Economist at Treasury Department spearheaded the development of ferry service between Upolu and Savaii.
- Physicians, nurses, pharmacists and others in the health field – one was Director of Nursing at the National Hospital
- Two helped set up the National Provident Fund
- Design and building of first charcoal ovens in villages
- Agriculture – teaching and agricultural extension
- Fisheries, Forestry and Environment
- Many, many primary and secondary school teachers in many subjects; as well as teacher trainers
- Many, many cases of private assistance from Volunteers to individual Samoans and Samoan families

Peace Corps Samoa is focused on assisting Samoa to achieve its development aspirations by providing technical assistance and building capacities of individuals and institutions. As the needs of Samoa change, Peace Corps Samoa, in partnership with the Government of Samoa, Host Country Agencies and other NGOs and development agencies, constantly reevaluates our projects and programs.

Current Projects

In late 2010 Peace Corps Samoa will have only one current project being implemented, which is the TESL and Village Development Project. Volunteers in this project are placed in rural villages where they will teach and co-teach English in the village primary schools, as well as work on at least two community development projects. One of the two projects is expected to focus on Health Awareness and Education, and the other can be in any field and associated with a village group. The last annual input of 22 Volunteers in this project will occur in 2012. If there is still a need for this kind of technical assistance, this project might be extended. Otherwise, PC Samoa will develop a new project.