

## Give Peace a Chance

The Peace Corps, launched at Rutgers as its first training facility, turns 50.

It was no coincidence that senator John F. Kennedy chose a university to announce an ambitious plan to create a program to help the developing world. Kennedy's vision, spelled out during a presidential campaign stop at the University of Michigan in October 1960, became the Peace Corps. Rutgers–New Brunswick was one of four university sites chosen to train recruits. On June 25, 1961, R. Sargent Shriver, Kennedy's brother-in-law and the corps director, addressed 80 men on the College Avenue Campus, with 62 of them selected to serve in Colombia. As its 50th anniversary approaches (March 1, 2011), the corps has deployed 200,000 volunteers and served 139 nations. Today, more than 60 percent of the 7,500 volunteers are women, and 90 percent of volunteers are college educated. Rutgers partnered with the Peace Corps to create the nation's first master's in public administration degree featuring an international public service and development concentration, unveiled in 1987 at Rutgers–Camden. The program continues to send graduate students to Northern Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America.

The late Samuel D. Proctor, a former Martin Luther King Jr. chair at the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers, was associate director of the Peace Corps and its first director in Nigeria. The late Harry Kranz RC'45 assisted the associate director for volunteers, recruitment, selection, and training (for an interview with Kranz, who died shortly after talking to the magazine, see "[The Peace Dividend](#)"). Shriver enlisted him in 1963 to help start a domestic version of the Peace Corps, which became the AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) program.

In November 2010, Rutgers will honor the men who trained at Rutgers and served in Colombia. The Rutgers Student Center on the College Avenue Campus will host a program featuring Peace Corps deputy director Carrie Hessler-Radelet and National Peace Corps Association president Kevin Quigley on November 4, beginning at 7 p.m. An unveiling of a commemorative plaque will take place on November 5 at 11 a.m. at Hegeman Hall, the residence where the young men lived while in New Brunswick. Both events will be attended by over 30 of the men who trained at Rutgers.

Rutgers alumni, students, faculty, and staff and New Jersey residents who served in the Peace Corps are urged to attend. For more information on this event, contact Monique Schnee at [mschnee@ur.rutgers.edu](mailto:mschnee@ur.rutgers.edu). If you are a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, please include your location and dates of service.



President John F. Kennedy hands the pen to R. Sargent Shriver after signing the bill creating the Peace Corps. Shriver was the first director of the organization.



Youth Corps Director R. Sargent Shriver addresses the 80 candidates on the College Avenue Campus. View a brief newsreel on the video film archive site [British Pathé](#).

## The Peace Dividend

Read an interview with the man who brought the first Peace Corps training site to Rutgers. The late Harry Kranz RC'45 spoke with *Rutgers Magazine* shortly before his death in July 2010.

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