

The Field Experiences of The University of Maryland School of Social Work's 2006-2007 Peace Corps Fellows

"I was in a department store the other day when I heard "Mr. Compton!" It was a student from my last field placement.



After my barrage of questions, the student told me he made the cut for the chess club at his high school. I gushed. I was proud of him. This student belonged to my chess club. During my first field placement at Booker T. Washington Middle School, my supervisor encouraged me to design a program, and I wanted to organize a chess club. We received numerous in-kind donations and I was able to get about 10 students to learn the foundations of chess and some strategies. I'm trying to get the program going again and I am looking to get funding for it."

RPCV Darnell Morris-Compton
Turkmenistan-Kenya 02-04

During her second year, Jennifer interned at the Resource Mentoring Project which works to empower community based organizations through capacity building. She and her field instructor mentored several organizations, and facilitated board retreats for a couple of their clients. Jennifer was able to tailor and utilize a theory of change called Appreciative Inquiry which she learned while in the Peace Corps.

"Instead of trying to assist organizations with fixing problems, I was motivated to ask them about what was working in order to build on the things that excite and inspire people."

RPCV Jennifer Will Nepal 03-05



Devon's first placement was with Creative Kids, Inc.; a family centered multi-purpose agency which serves the growing Latino community in Baltimore County. She provided translation, interpreted at parent-teacher conferences, led a support group for Latino teens, and did case management.

In her second year, Devon was involved in plenty of advocacy and legislative work at Healthcare for All.

"I liked all of the policy work that I was able to do as well as empowering clients to be actively involved in the political process."
RPCV Devon Snider El Salvador 01-03

Laurel and Jennifer interned for their first year with the International Rescue Committee at the Baltimore Resettlement Center. Their projects included providing services to newly arrived refugees, assisting with resettlement processes, collaborating with Early Head Start to plan and implement a literacy circle for mothers and their infants, and providing cultural orientation trainings.

"Working at the IRC was extremely rewarding because it gave me an opportunity to offer newly immigrated refugees the same hospitality and guidance that I was shown while serving in Peace Corps Nepal. I definitely learned as much or more than I provided."

RPCV Laurel Smith Nepal 03-05



Jennifer leading a team building activity

"The Peace Corps Fellows Program at UMB helps students to put their values, beliefs, and skills into action at the grassroots level. Whether its organizing neighbors on a city block, testifying before the General Assembly, or mentoring students in an after-school program, I feel the Fellows program has given me the support, knowledge, and confidence to empower and build capacity with the individuals, groups, and neighborhoods that I have worked with in my field placement at the Charles Village Community Benefits District."

RPCV Mike Gaffney Panama 03-05

