

MNRPCV GRANT AWARDS 2008-2013

MNRPCV 2013 Grant Awards

By Anne Kanyusik Yoakum, President, MNRPCV (Bangladesh 1998-2000)

MNRPCV is thrilled to announce that as the result of our fundraising efforts during the past year, we have awarded \$4317.00 in grant funds for 2013 to the following five exciting projects:

Jeff Hall, RPCV Sierra Leone, 1987-1989/One Village Partners -- Empowering Marginalized Women through Self-Help Groups in Sierra Leone - \$1000.00

Vaughn Kelly, PCV Cambodia – Cambodian Classroom Improvement Project - \$930.00

Abigail Anderson, PCV Ukraine - Lubny Leadership Camp for Orphans! - \$600.00

Brian Singer, RPCV Tanzania, 1993-1995/ Project Zawadi - Computer Projector for Zinduka Vocational Training Centre, \$850.00

Kevin Werner, PCV Costa Rica - Three Multipurpose Recreational Courts - \$937.00

The 2013 grants will go to three currently serving Peace Corps volunteers, as well as two local nonprofits in which RPCVs are involved. Thanks to everyone who helped to fundraise for our grants program this year including all who cooked for and dined at the regional fundraiser dinners (and Elsa and Bernard for generously hosting!), bought or sold calendars, and attended, donated or bid on items at the slideshow and silent auction and those who paid annual membership dues. Also, a special thanks to all who responded to MNRPCV's request for volunteer grants committee members and, especially to Nicole Menard, (Madagascar, 2000-02), Richard Rowan (Lesotho, 1979-83), Kate Lechner (Mali, 2007-09) and Lauris Grundmanis (The Gambia, 1986-88), who were randomly selected for the small grants committee. They did a wonderful job carefully reading applications, evaluating projects and recommending recipients.

MNRPCV 2012 Grant Awards

Girls Empowerment Through Reproductive Health, Uganda

Submitted by: Minnesota PCV Emily Kjesbo-Johnson, Uganda (2011-13)

This initiative is two-fold, bringing together both teacher education and materials development for girls' reproductive health. Girls in Uganda have faced health challenges, missed school, and other negative consequences due to a lack of education and resources surrounding their menstrual cycle and women's health. Funds will be used for the development of reusable menstrual pads and education geared towards positively impacting the lives and reducing risky behavior for 1500 Ugandan women.

MNRPCV 2012 Grant Award - \$715 (full funding)

Early Grade Reading Centers, Ethiopia

Submitted by: Jennifer Miller, Minnesota PCV, Ethiopia (2011-13)

In Ethiopia, primary school classrooms lack reading resource material. Teachers lack training on how to deliver basic literacy skills. In the Amhara region, a significant number of 2nd and 3rd graders

are functionally illiterate in both Amharic (first language) and English (second language). This project focuses on improving reading and literacy for first and second graders through the development of primary reading centers. These centers are both committed to teacher training and to material resource development.

MNRPCV 2012 Grant Award - \$906.59 (full funding)

Kongei Primary School Kitchen, Tanzania

Submitted by: Randee Edmundson, Minnesota RPCV, Tanzania (2007-09)

Kongei is a rural farming village in the Tanga region. Increasing school enrollment and poverty standards leave many students hungry and malnourished. The Kongei School has a farm and vegetable garden worked by student and teachers. However, climate limits the number of days meals can be served to students outdoors. Many students go hungry. This project is geared towards increasing the number of days that nutrient-rich meals can be provided to school children through the creation of an enclosed and element protected kitchen. Increased meals will support health and education for 1300 school children, teachers, and community in Tanzania.

MNRPCV 2012 Grant Award - \$1000 (full funding)

Crimean Tatar Library, Ukraine

Submitted by: Barbara Wieser, Minnesota PCV, Ukraine (2009-)

The library project was initiated to support the Crimean Tatar language/cultural history (a Muslim ethnic minority group in Ukraine) through library archive preservation. Following the annex of Crimea to Russia in 1783, the Crimean Tatars were slowly pushed out of Crimea for the next two centuries, culminating in the mass deportation of the remaining population by Stalin in 1944. Little evidence of Crimean Tatar culture remained. Through this project, newspapers published during the Crimean Tatar exile in Uzbekistan will be bound into volumes for preservation and accessibility. Funds will also be used for equipment and education of Crimean Tatar history.

MNRPCV 2012 Grant Award - \$990.50 (full funding)

Total Grants awarded for 2012 was \$3612.09.

2012 Grant Review Advisory Committee: Liz Ward (Costa Rica 1977-1979) MNRPCV President, Nathaniel Guimont (Namibia 2009-2011), Nicholas A. Lauen (Cameroon 2002-2004, PC Response Liberia 2010), Alena Stewart (Turkmenistan 2008-2010), Megan Trout (Ukraine 2009-2011), and Jessica Vig (South Africa 2007-2009).

MNRPCV 2011 Grant Awards

Community Development Projects in Telenesti, Moldova

Submitted by: MNRPCV Member Dan Kane, RPCV Moldova (2005-2006)

Dan Kane has again returned to Moldova to continue the work he began during his Peace Corps service, as he did in 2009. He raises funds for these trips through appeals to individuals and organizations in the Austin MN area. His ongoing projects are many and varied. He works with local officials, current Moldova PCVs and various NGOs in Moldova. (See *his article in the Spring NEWS.*) Abandoned and orphaned children are an ongoing problem in Moldova. The MNRPCV Grant will support Dan's work renovating the Titus Orphanage facilities.

MNRPCV 2011 Grant Award – \$350

Bringing Books to Kirovograd, Ukraine

Submitted by: Minnesota PCV Karin N. Jones, Ukraine (2010-12)

Karin Jones works at the Kirovograd Oblast Scientific Research Library. As the "main" library in the oblast (region), it can distribute books it receives to other, smaller libraries. An organization called "International Book Project" will supply a pallet of English language books (1,000 – 2,000 books).

However, separate funds are needed to pay to ship the books. The library does not have funds to do this and most grant programs (including PCPP) will not pay for the cost of transporting materials. The MNRPCV Grant will help pay shipping costs.

MNRPCV 2011 Grant Award – \$700

“Why Try?” Program for the Upton Gardens Girls’ Center in St. Lucia

Submitted by: MNRPCV Member Jennifer Case, Peace Corps Response, St. Lucia, West Indies (2011), RPCV Costa Rica (2004-06)

The Upton Gardens Girls’ Centre offers a day-care, self-development program to “high risk” girls. Many have been abused and/or neglected by parents and family. Most have not mastered basic life skills or achieved normal development. The Centre provides: counseling, life and social skills training, remedial education, and general support. The “Why Try?” program will offer structured weekly sessions by trained staff members to help the girls develop initiative and self-respect. The MNRPCV Grant is for purchasing training materials for the “Why Try?” program.

MNRPCV 2011 Grant Award – \$755 (full funding)

“Power of the Skirt“ Women’s Initiative Program in Mali

Submitted by: Minnesota RPCV Kate Lechner, Mali (2007-2009)

Power of the Skirt is collaboration between African Sky (an all-volunteer, 501(c) 3 non-profit that works with individuals and communities to confront some of the devastating effects of endemic poverty and inequality in Mali), Peace Corps Mali, and women’s associations in Mali. The Power of the Skirt conference will bring women of various ages together for mutual empowerment and to gain knowledge in health and sanitation, organizational management; and income generation. The MNRPCV Grant will fund micro-grants to projects generated at the conference by local women’s associations.

MRPCV 2011 Grant Award – \$1000

Total Grants awarded for 2011 was \$3019.

2011 Grant Review Advisory Committee: Jane Bardon (Turkmenistan 2003-05) MNRPCV President, Rachel Evenson (Bulgaria 2000-2002), Carol Fairbrother (Romania 2002-2004), Patrick O’Leary (Sierra Leone 1967-1968), Richard Rowan (Lesotho 1979-1983) and Alena Stewart (Turkmenistan 2008-2010).

MNRPCV 2010 Grant Awards

Stillwater Junior High School H₂O For Life – Water For Sudan Project

Submitted by: MNRPCV Member, Ruth Alliband (India 1966-1968)

Coordinator: Sara Damon, Geography Teacher, Stillwater Junior. High School, Stillwater MN

The students met their goal of raising \$5,000 to fund half the construction costs for a deep well near Wau, Sudan through two agencies: H₂O for Life (www.h2oforliveschools.org) and Water for Sudan (www.waterforsudan.org). These students showed their concern for others in a far-off country. They demonstrated initiative and resourcefulness in implementing fundraisers in their community during the 2009-10 school-year.

MNRPCV 2010 Grant Award – \$300

Cottonwood Foundation

Submitted by: Paul Moss, Executive Director, Cottonwood Foundation, White Bear Lake MN

Cottonwood Foundation is an all-volunteer organization that provides grants to grassroots organizations throughout the world whose activities combine: protecting the environment, promoting cultural diversity, empowering people to meet their basic needs, and relying on

volunteers. (www.cottonwoodfdn.org) The MNRPCV Board of Directors has supported this local agency for several years since its goals are similar to those of MNRPCV.

MNRPCV 2010 Grant Award – \$200

Oyate Nipi Kte (The People Shall Live) Land Project

Submitted by: Minnesota RPCV Eric Angell (Kenya 1989-1991)

The project goal is to provide a new land base for Dakota youth to participate in sugar bush and wild ricing camps, a language immersion program, and learning sustainable life skills. Oyate Nipi Kte intends to purchase forty acres of land within an hour of the Upper Sioux Reservation. Oyate Nipi Kte is specifically looking for land near both of the existing Dakota communities of Upper and Lower Sioux and in the Minnesota River valley, a place of great cultural and spiritual significance to the Dakota people.

MNRPCV 2010 Grant Award – \$500.

Ahecha Paraguay Photography Project

Submitted by: MNRPCV Member Rachel Newby (Paraguay 2007-2009) This is also a Peace Corps Partnership Program Project.

Since 2007, Peace Corps-Paraguay Volunteers have involved the youth of over 56 communities throughout the country with this project. Ahecha ("I see") Paraguay is a photography project that involves local youth, Peace Corps Volunteers, and community contacts. It promotes the arts, culture, individual expression, and the personal development of youth throughout Paraguay by holding photography workshops, providing access to cameras, and implementing the exhibition of art in the community.

MNRPCV 2010 Grant Award – \$500

Clean Water Well Project

Submitted by: Cameroon PCV, B. Haenke of Minnesota to the Peace Corps Partnership Program.

The Clean Water Well Project is a collaborative effort between two dynamic villages, a district hospital, and the Peace Corps to improve access to safe drinking water in an area of dire need. Many of the villagers get their water supply from groundwater in riverbeds or water holes, which are shared with animals and used for drinking, bathing, and washing clothes. They also use traditional wells, which are hand dug and have limited structural support. Often hundreds of people share one or two traditional wells, and the water cannot replenish in the well quickly enough. The unsanitary condition of this water causes a high incidence of water related illnesses. The Clean Water Well Project proposes to dig covered, cemented modern wells in two villages in the district that have demonstrated the greatest need and initiative. A series of in-village water hygiene and sanitation education sessions, facilitated by the District Hospital and the Peace Corps Volunteer, will assure sustainability and maintenance of the supply of potable water.

MNRPCV 2010 Grant Award – \$1000

Total Grants awarded in 2010 was \$2500. *The grant reviewers this year were Cindy Jurgensen (Kiribati 1981-1983), Melissa Lenk (Moldova 1996-1998) and Jane Bardon (Turkmenistan 2003-2005), MNRPCV President.*

MNRPCV 2009 Grant Awards

Irrigation Initiative

Andrew Jondahl (Senegal PCV) from MN proposed The *Irrigation Initiative*, a project which will help four farmers in the area of Saraya, northeast from the city of Kedougou, Senegal to dig wells and construct irrigation systems in their fields to water their fruit trees and year-round vegetable gardens. This is a large project involving professional well diggers, cement, gravel and other supplies. He is seeking a total of \$8766 from a variety of sources to fund the project.

MNRPCV 2009 Grant Award: \$750

Field Trips for Eco-Kids

Gabriel Sidman (Honduras PCV) from MN is training students in his community to be eco-tourism guides in the Rio Negro area. The students are limited to a sixth grade education and have no opportunity for other education or training. He proposes to take a group of students outside of their immediate area to get a broader view of their general environment.

MNRPCV 2009 Grant Award: \$600

International Outreach Coalition

Rosa Werthwein (Ukraine 2003-2005) and three other RPCVs manage the IOC program. They propose to implement a YES (Youth Engaging Society) project in Ukraine in 2009. Selected students will run three large projects: a community leadership and project planning workshop, an HIV/AIDS art festival, and a creative leadership camp. These programs will involve 38 student leaders and 200 participants who will all be eligible for small grants and support through the YES program.

MNRPCV 2009 Grant Award: \$300

Cottonwood Foundation

The Cottonwood Foundation is an all-volunteer organization that provides funds for grassroots organizations throughout the world. The work of these organizations combine: protecting the environment, promoting cultural diversity, empowering people to meet their basic needs, and relying on volunteers. MNRPCV has supported this organization for several years.

MNRPCV 2009 Grant Award: \$200

Total MNRPCV 2009 Grant Awards: \$1850

The Grant Awards Committee Members for the 2009 Spring Awards were Jane Bardon, MNRPCV President, Anne Kanyusik, Russell Petricka, and Thomas O'Toole.

MNRPCV Fall 2008 Grant Awards

Building Construction for NGO and IREX Seminars

Applicant: Dan Kane (Moldova 2005-2006) , Austin MN

Organization: 'Recuperare', Telenesti, Moldova

RPCV Dan Kane is returning to Telenesti, Moldova to continue his work there with a local NGO. 'Recuperare' is the only human services agency in this poor village of 6400 people. One purpose of the project is to assist with the extensive necessary remodeling of a building recently donated to 'Recuperare' by the local unit of government. The remodeling will depend on an equal dollar amount of local match in labor or materials. The project also includes transportation for IREX students to attend 4 seminars on Volunteering, Grant Writing and Community Service. The seminars will be led by in-country professionals as well as Dan Kane.

MNRPCV Grants Awards Committee: This is a significant extension of a RPCV's work in his host country where he plans to return to carry out part of the project.

MNRPCV 2008 Grant Award – \$643

Bi-lingual Services for Somali Refugees

Applicants: Doris Rubenstein (Ecuador 1971-1973), Cheryl Campion (Kenya 1974-1977), Connie Diercks (Guatemala 1969-1972), Minneapolis MN

Organization: Cedar Riverside People's Center, Minneapolis MN

The third mission of the Peace Corps is to bring the world back home. In the case of the Cedar Riverside People's Center (CRPC), the world has come to Minnesota: East Africa has come to

Minneapolis' West Bank! The CRPC Clinic is located in the West Bank area and serves residents of eight low-income high rises which house an estimated 15-20,000 Somali immigrants and refugees, the largest population of Somalis outside of Mogadishu. In 2008 to date, the Clinic has provided primary health care to over 3,700 unduplicated patients through over 11,500 encounters. The CRPC Clinic has earned the nickname "the Somali Clinic" for the exceptional care given to this group and for the number of Somalis who consider it their "medical home." One of the primary reasons for this is the Clinic's efforts to provide care in ways that are both medically sound and culturally respectful, particularly in the employment of bi-lingual staff. This grant will underwrite the activities of the Bi-lingual Outreach/Patient Education worker.

MNRPCV Grant Awards Committee: This project demonstrates how three RPCVs have translated their experience in Peace Corps to providing services to immigrants to the US. This is the first opportunity MNRPCV has had to support culturally sensitive services to immigrants as specified in our Mission Statement.

MNRPCV 2008 Grant Award – \$500

Community Networks Partnership Between Riverland Community College, Austin, MN and Kherson National Technical University, Ukraine

Applicant: Chandler Harrison Stevens (Ukraine 1999-2001), Austin MN

Funds will be used to support Ukrainian students at Riverland Community College as part of the Community Network partnership between the two colleges. Matching funds may be available from Friends of Ukraine and/or Riverland Community College Education Committee.

MNRPCV Grant Awards Committee: This is an extension of a RPCV's work in his host country combined with involvement of US college students. Matching funds are available from other sources.

MNRPCV 2008 Grant Award – \$350

Total grants awarded December, 2008 was \$1493. The Grant Awards Committee Members for the 2008 Fall Awards were MNRPCV President, Jane Bardon (Turkmenistan 2003-2005), Nancy Erstad (Micronesia 1970-1972) and Les Everett (Zaire 1973-1975).

Additional grants were awarded in the spring of 2008.