



Peace Corps Achievements – August & September 2024



News and updates from the Peace Corps community – across the country, around the world, and spanning generations of returned Volunteers and staff.

By Benjamin DeMarais

John E. Fleming (pictured, Malawi 1967–69) released a memoir reflecting on his experiences as the only African American Volunteer in his cohort during his Peace Corps service in Malawi. **Rod Rylander** (Belize 2000–02) is addressing America's housing crisis by developing solar-powered homes in New Mexico, constructing a self-sustaining prototype with a \$50,000 budget. **Margaret Sanchez** (Botswana 1990–92) has been recommended as the next chancellor of Kaua'i Community College, drawing on her extensive Peace Corps experience and leadership in education.

Have news to share with the Peace Corps community? [Let us know](#).

BELIZE



Rod Rylander (Belize 2000-02) is working to address America's housing crisis by building off-grid, solar-powered homes in New Mexico. With a \$50,000 budget, Rylander is creating a prototype for this self-sustaining house. His goal is to create a cost-effective, off-grid community for artists, military veterans, or families with financial constraints. His extensive background includes building eco-friendly homes and volunteering across the globe. Despite the challenges of extreme weather and using unconventional materials, he remains dedicated to completing ten homes and inspiring others with his sustainable housing solutions. [Read more](#).

BOTSWANA



Margaret Sanchez (Botswana 1990-92) has been recommended to be the next chancellor of Kaua'i Community College. Sanchez has served as interim chancellor since 2023 and was previously vice chancellor for student affairs at Kaua'i CC for five years. She brings a wealth of experience from the education section to her new administrative role, including from her Peace Corps service in Botswana, where she was a middle school science and English instructor. "I am so grateful to have this opportunity to work in the Kaua'i and Ni'ihau communities," Sanchez said. "I am excited to continue the work with our students, staff and community to provide all island residents with increased access to reach their personal and education goals." [Read more](#).

HONDURAS



Beth Carlton (1999–01) was named the new Chair of the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health at the Colorado School of Public Health. Carlton brings a wealth of experience from her work solving waterborne illnesses during her Peace Corps service in Honduras to studying neglected tropical diseases, COVID-19, and the impacts of climate change on infectious diseases. She aims to foster an environment where faculty, students, and staff can thrive, continuing the innovative spirit that led her to ColoradoSPH over a decade ago. Carlton has been instrumental in forming the Colorado COVID-19 modeling group and developing courses on infectious diseases and climate change. [Read more](#).

MALAWI



John E. Fleming (1967–69) has released his memoir, *Mission to Malawi: Memoir of an African American Peace Corps Volunteer, 1967-1969*, which recounts his experiences as the only African American volunteer in his cohort. Fleming's memoir details his encounters with White missionaries, his integration into Malawian culture, and his travels across Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda. He highlights his adventures and challenges, including motorcycle accidents and cultural exchanges. Fleming, who has had a distinguished career as a director of major museums of African American history, offers a deep reflection on his youthful idealism and transformative experiences in Africa. On July 31, the Museum of the Peace Corps Experience hosted a book launch and panel discussion of Fleming's new book. [Watch the event recording here](#).

TANZANIA



Joseph Cavanaugh (1964–66) has been elected president of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS), a nonprofit organization promoting poetry as part of national cultural heritage. An award-winning writer, journalist, and poet, Cavanaugh has published seven books, including four poetry collections, and served as president of the Florida State Poets Association. His first initiative as NFSPS president is the Poets for Peace Program. "I presented the idea of a Poets for Peace Program to provide resources and support for the orphans of Ukraine (and other war-torn regions of the world) and actively support efforts for peace through poetry," said Cavanaugh. He was one of the first Peace Corps Volunteers in 1964, and he holds degrees from Georgetown University and SUNY Buffalo. [Read more](#).

Benjamin DeMarais was a 2024 NPCA summer intern working with the communications team. He is a senior and member of the Peace Corps Prep Program at Iowa State University – majoring in journalism & mass communications while minoring in fashion, culture, history, and social justice as well as apparel, merchandising and design.

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📰 Latest News

- Peace Corps to Close Country Program in Ethiopia
- Cancellation of Incoming Cohorts to Cameroon and Kyrgyz Republic
- In Honor of the Fallen: A Memorial Day Reflection on Peace Corps Volunteers
- Town Hall Summaries and an NPCA Call to Action!

📅 Upcoming Events

NPCA Quarter 2 Board Meeting

