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Subject: Fwd: Fw: Whoohoo! High Five to You!: Speakers' Celebration, Speaking Opportunities & More!
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NorCal Global Presenters Newsletter

November 2015 - Vol. 1 Issue 8

In This Issue

[In This Newsletter](#)

[Join Us Dec. 15! It's Our Global Presenters Celebrate & Share Event!](#)

[October Recap - The Latest & Greatest!](#)

[Donate to Support the Global Presenters Program](#)

[Handling Difficult Questions and Different Generations - Q&A with Gale Lederer](#)

[Speaking Opportunities](#)

In This Newsletter

The Global Presenters program has never been more important. The Syrian refugee crisis and the terrorist attacks in Paris are just two world events grabbing the current headlines, and with them, the rise in conflicting sentiments around Muslimism and immigration. American leaders are grappling with what is the right thing to do to help other citizens of the world while protecting Americans.

As returned Peace Corps volunteers, you have on-the-ground, real-world experience from around the globe to share. You can bring new and much needed perspective to Americans about the religions and cultures of the world when you talk at schools, community organizations, and businesses. Some light is shed on this in the Q&A with **RPCV Gale Lederer** in this newsletter.



RPCV Judith Lesner speaks at the Hayward Senior Center on October 6.

If you have been on the fence about volunteering to speak, this is a great time to add it to your list of goals for 2016. Our Global Presenters program is growing and evolving. The program is about to celebrate its first year anniversary, and it's been an

evolving. The program is about to celebrate its first year anniversary, and it's been an amazing year! It couldn't have happened without you, our volunteers. Whether you have volunteered to present this year or are thinking about doing it in the future, we hope you'll help us celebrate our accomplishments on **December 15**. Find out the details in this newsletter.

Also in this newsletter, get highlights about some of the latest and greatest speaking events we've participated in, and learn some speaking tips from RPCV Gale Lederer, who has experience speaking to audiences of different ages.

If you are looking for opportunities to speak, scroll down to see upcoming opportunities in 2016!

Enjoy and best wishes to you for the Thanksgiving holiday!

Join Us Dec. 15! It's Our Global Presenters Celebrate & Share Event!

With our first year as a formal speakers program coming to a close, we can't wait to honor and celebrate you, our global presenters!

Together, you presented at **more than 100 speaking opportunities**. Whoohoo!

So come join us on **Tuesday, December 15** from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the [Rockridge Public Library](#) in Oakland for good eats, mingling, activities, surprises, and a chance to talk shop - in the most fun way possible, of course - and a few high fives!

And we'd love to have a few brave souls - we know you're brave to speak in front of others! - to do a little presenting and put your best to the test.

Even if you didn't present this year, come join us. Learn about the program, see who your RPCV presenting colleagues are, and find out if presenting in 2016 is for you.

Besides RPCVs, we are inviting some of our venue coordinators, audience members, and folks who have enjoyed our program offerings.

Please RSVP to Betsy Aaron at betsy@norcalpca.org by December 9 so we can be sure to have the right count for food and goodies.



RPCV Dwayne Hunn speaks about his Peace Corps experience in India at the Petaluma Senior Center on October 19.

October Recap - The Latest and Greatest!

By Betsy Aaron, Global Presenters Outreach Coordinator

Senior Centers all over the Bay Area and UC Berkeley kept RPCV global presenters super busy in October - with 12 speaking opportunities!

Year to date, 86 RPCVs have filled 105 speaking requests. And our speakers have been getting great feedback. With



many of these opportunities, RPCVs are also receiving constructive criticism, helping them grow and become even better at speaking with each opportunity they do.

Highlights of October include **RPCVs Aleksandra Hulisz, Steven Bosiljevac, Rhian Carreker-Ford, and Allison Bakamjian** speaking to students at the UC Berkeley student-run DeCal class. This weekly class has been a fantastic opportunity for our speakers, because it is casual and conversational. Also, the audience is highly engaged because all participants, as prospective Peace Corps volunteers, are invested in learning about Peace Corps and Peace Corps experiences. This venue has proven to be a great training ground for new speakers and a fun place for more experienced speakers to share their story and remember what it was like when they first started thinking about Peace Corps. There will be a bunch more of these presentation opportunities in the spring 2016 semester.

Also, a big shout out to **RPCV Will Spargur** who has been behind the scenes, making technical improvements to our database and website. Now the online process for RPCVs to volunteer for opportunities is easier than ever. It has been a lot of work, and as a result, more time can be focused on finding RPCVs great speaking opportunities and less on administrative tasks.

Stay tuned for our next newsletter when we will talk about the record number of presentations we are seeing in November!

Know of a school or organization interested in hosting a global presenter? Fill us in by emailing speaker@norcalpca.org.

Interested in being a global presenter? Look at the [speaking opportunities on our website](#) or below in this newsletter for one that is right for you, and let us know.

Donate to Support the Global Presenters Program

With more than 100 matched speaking events this year, the Northern California Peace Corps Association Global Presenters Program is the most successful Third Goal program in the nation. This program engages RPCVs in the Third Goal in every region that NorCal serves in Northern California. RPCVs have spoken at schools and universities, senior centers, Rotary clubs and more.

This unique grassroots ambassador program is only made possible by the



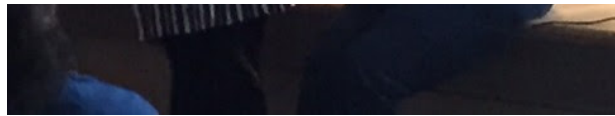
RPCV Lydia McCloskey talks about her Peace Corps experience in Jordan at the Oakland Senior Center on October 7.



RPCV Aleks Hulisz presents at UC Berkeley's student-run DeCal class on October 13.



program is only made possible by the generous contributions from members and donors. Help us continue to promote understanding between peoples of the world with a financial contribution today.



RPCVs Madeline Wu and Laura Chakerian
co-present in Spanish and English at the Fair Oaks Senior Center in Redwood City on October 28.

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Global Presenters: Handling Difficult Questions and Different Generations - Q&A with Gale Lederer

By Betsy Aaron, Global Presenters Outreach Coordinator

Gale Lederer is an RPCV who served as a teacher-trainer in Azerbaijan from 2009-2010. She earned her BA at UC Berkeley and her MA from the University of Chicago - both in history. She always wanted to do Peace Corps, but marriage, children, and a long, satisfying career as a high school history teacher and department chair for San Francisco public schools delayed that decision until her retirement. Gale is one of our most active and frequent global presenters.



RPCV Gale Lederer speaking to Girl Scouts from Livermore last summer.

Q: You presented four times this year and have volunteered for two additional speaking opportunities. What keeps you volunteering?

A: I was a teacher for thirty years and so it's fun to have a chance to interact with an audience - to exercise my expertise again. Also, I volunteered in Azerbaijan, a Shia Muslim country on the Caspian Sea just north of Iran. Many Americans these days seem to have such awful misconceptions about Muslims. So I think it's important for me to talk about my experiences and show my fellow Americans that Azerbaijanis are really just people - like us. They're certainly not terrorists!

Q: You've presented to audiences of different age ranges. What has that been like?

A: Well, my very first presentation was at my Quaker meeting before a lot of mostly older people who know me well. So that was easy - a good way to get started. My tech-savvy daughter had helped me put together an effective PowerPoint. The whole thing went really well and made me want to do it again.

My next presentation was at the Northern California Peace Corps Association's Festival of Cultures last January in Palo Alto - where I mainly presented to my fellow RPCVs. I just loved seeing my colleagues' presentations, and they seemed to enjoy mine. With all that built-in interest, presenting was easy and a lot of fun.

Presenting at the student-organized DeCal class at UC Berkeley was also easy. I'd gone there as an undergrad and it was fun to revisit my old haunts and to discover

that getting around Dwinelle Hall is still just as confusing as ever. The students - about twenty of them-were very responsive. When I asked how many were actually considering the Peace Corps, over half raised their hands!

I was a little worried about presenting to the Girl Scouts because they were much younger than the high school students I used to teach. Also, they were a large group and seated awkwardly at tables in a long, skinny room. However, my teaching style has always been interactive and even sort of theatrical. So I asked lots of questions based on the girls' own experiences - such as how many of them had ever been to a foreign country - and they responded eagerly. Just taking quick little polls - like asking kids to put their hands up if they've ever thought of this or that - helped keep their attention.

I haven't presented at the senior center yet, but as I'm in my seventies myself, I'm sure I'll be comfortable. I'll be sure to show lots of pictures and ask lots of questions!

Q: Why do you think your presentations have worked well?

A: First, I have good pictures which capture people's interest and I try to say interesting things about them and not leave them up there too long. I tell funny stories about myself. Next, I'm flexible - even though I have sort of a presentation routing chart, I'm not wedded to it. I watch my audience carefully, and if interest seems to be flagging, I change my approach. I might ask more questions, try to find out what really interests my audience and what doesn't. However, I'm always well prepared - I'll go over my PowerPoint before a presentation to make sure I remember everything I might want to include.

Q: Are there any challenges that have come up?

A: I'm not any kind of a technician. I've always been lucky to have people to set up the PowerPoint. I'm not sure what I'd do if I couldn't get the thing to work - I do depend on having something visual to go along with my babble.

Then, at the Peace Corps Festival of Cultures, someone in the audience who was clearly more politically conservative than I am objected to one of my comments about Azerbaijan's awful government. I replied by saying something like "Isn't it cool that in America - unlike Azerbaijan - we can speak our minds so freely, that we can embrace all kinds of opinions?" and the incident blew over. However, I don't think the possibility of being challenged means you should try to be politically correct or say what you think people want to hear - too much caution will drain the life out of your presentation. Say what you feel, what you believe, and play it as it lays.

Q: What would you tell an RPCV who is thinking about presenting but is unsure about it?

A: Do it. It's fun. Also, it helps you process your Peace Corps service, to put it all those crazy experiences into some kind of thought-out form. People's responses to your experiences can be enlightening - sometimes they make you think in a different way about what you did and what happened to you. And then, people seem to be genuinely interested in the Peace Corps. As a PCV, you've experienced far more of the real life of a country than most tourists ever manage to do, and I think it's important to share our knowledge and insights with people who've not been fortunate enough to have had our experiences. We're ambassadors, so go on! Embrace it!

Be prepared to get questions you don't know the answer to - just say it's a good question but you're going to have to look that one up. Don't be afraid to present because you don't know everything - no one does, and an honest admission of ignorance is usually well received.

The initial preparation work is intense, but once you get a presentation together - a PowerPoint for instance - even with different audiences it's easy. All you have to do is review your material from time to time. And once you've put something together, you find you want to keep trotting it out. So do it! You'll like it!

Speaking Opportunities

Let us know if you are interested in any the following opportunities to speak by clicking "Register" by each listing, or emailing Betsy Aaron, our Global Presenters Outreach Coordinator, at betsy@norcalpca.org. And keep your eye out for more opportunities on the [Global Presenters section of our website](#) for the latest listings.

REQUEST 1 - REGISTER

Palo Alto: Avenidas Senior Center

What: **Two individual presentations - topic is speaker's choice**

Who: Seniors

When: One date each month:

January:

Tuesdays - ANY - 2:30 start

Thursday - 1/14 - 2:30 start

Fridays: 1/15, 1/22 or 1/29 - 1:00, 1:30 or 2:00 start

February:

Tuesdays - 2/16 and 2/23 - 2:30 start

Fridays - 2/5, 2/19 or 2/26 - 1:00, 1:30 or 2:00 start

Time: One hour allotted

The Need: Speak to an audience aged 50+ (the majority are in their late 70s and early 80s), most are well-educated. Equipment is provided for a PowerPoint presentation.

REQUEST 2 -

[REGISTER - MARCH](#)

[REGISTER - APRIL](#)

East Oakland: Mandela Law & Public Service Academy at Fremont High School

What: **Speaking opportunities on climate change for two RPCVs**

Who: 10th graders preparing a Model UN project that they will present in May

When: Each RPCV will present once, one RPCV for March and one for April, on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. Wednesdays will be the easiest in terms of timing.

Time: If speaking on a Wednesday, the timing will be 10:55 a.m.-12:50 p.m, speaking to three class periods for approximately 25 minutes to each class.

If speaking on a Tuesday or Thursday, class periods are longer, and RPCVs would speak for the same amount of time but would need to stay longer - from 8:15 a.m.-1:38 p.m.

The Need: RPCVs whose focus was on climate change and who have served in one of

these countries: US, Russia, China, United Kingdom, France, Guatemala, Pakistan, South Africa, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, India, Argentina, Mexico, Nigeria, Haiti. The teacher is excited about the possibility of viewing the presenters' PowerPoint presentation ahead of time in order to better prepare her students.

REQUEST 3 - [REGISTER](#)

Alameda: Edison Elementary School

What: **Speaking about Peace Corps experience**

Who: Cub Scouts

When: May 18

Time: TBD, though likely late afternoon or evening

The Need: RPCV to talk about being immersed in another culture. More details to come.

The NorCal PCA Global Presenters Newsletter Editorial Team

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[Back to top](#)

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