



5-3-78

ACTION UPDATE

Celebrating Older Americans Month

ACTION staff across the country will be working together through the next several weeks to promote--and pay tribute to--ACTION's older volunteers. May is Older Americans Month, so proclaimed by President Jimmy Carter on April 19.

While it is agreed that one month a year is hardly enough to focus adequate attention on the contributions of ACTION's older Americans, it does provide ACTION staff an opportunity to pay tribute not only to OAVP programs and participants, but to America's older citizenry in general, and to renew efforts to support them all. In this way Older Americans Month "belongs to everyone," in the words of ACTION Director Sam Brown.

There is a steadily mounting challenge here for programmers, support people and administration alike, directly proportionate to the rising voice and vigor of our nation's elders, OAVP Director Helen Kelley observes.

"Each year, the men and women who turn 60 and become eligible for one or more of ACTION's Older Americans Volunteer Programs carry with them all of the changes in American life they have experienced. By and large they have had more education, their health is better and they are accustomed to greater mobility. They will, in general, expect to be more active and to play a more significant role in their communities than in earlier generations.

"This change in the expectations and vigor of older citizens represents a challenge to ACTION and the directors of RSVP, FGP and SCP projects--a challenge to expand the programs so that more people have an opportunity to participate, and a challenge to their imagination to conceive of new ways in which the vigor and experience of older Americans can be brought to bear on the main agenda of the American government and the American people: the steady improvement of the quality of human life."

Enlarging on Ms. Kelley's thoughts, Director Brown comments:

"ACTION's Older Americans Volunteer Programs provide an outlet for caring and sharing for about 280,000 senior citizens. Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions provide personal sustained attention for especially needy children, frail elderly and handicapped people. The vast majority, the Retired Senior Volunteers, give of themselves freely in a program that returns only the satisfaction of accomplishment.

"...Senior citizens, more than most Americans, know that our pursuit of happiness must be defined in terms of the general welfare of our society rather than just our own individual needs...I agree with Margaret Mead, who talks about the older generation as conveyors and confidants. Let us, those who will be older next, learn to profit more from those qualities that develop with maturity."

Besides the 280,000 senior citizens currently serving in ACTION's Older Americans Volunteer Programs, there are 341 older Americans, aged 51 and older, serving overseas in Peace Corps assignments and 639 senior citizens, aged 55 and older, working as VISTA volunteers.

This month ACTION staff throughout the field and at headquarters will be involved in activities targeted on increasing public knowledge and appreciation of senior volunteers.

On the national scene, OAVP Director Helen Kelley is scheduled to make a number of appearances before groups across the country, and on radio and television, and to receive national press coverage.

A poster contest open to volunteers and those they serve will be announced in the May issue of Prime Times. Contestants--from children to seniors, amateurs to professionals--will be asked to illustrate their views of the OAVP program with which they are associated.

A national press release along with photos and a letter-to-the-editor is being sent to all U.S. dailies and magazines. Radio public service announcements have been mailed to project directors for distribution to local stations, and TV "break slides" listing FGP, SCP and RSVP will be sent directly to the top 75 markets. These will be distributed with a cover letter and notation of local phone numbers for additional information.

A new OAVP poster, headlined "A Heritage of ACTION," will be ready for distribution during May. It is designed for year-round use.

These national-scale efforts will supplement the broad range of activities planned on the local level:

NEW YORK

A three-day recognition program, sponsored by the state of New York, is planned for almost 1,000 Foster Grandparents at Grossinger's resort in the Catskill Mountains of New York. Both Sam Brown and OAVP Director Helen Kelley are expected to participate. The three-day program will include several hours of specialized training in such areas as child abuse, and dealing with institutional staff.

SEATTLE

Regional Director John Keller will be attending OAVP recognition ceremonies in King County (Seattle metropolitan area) and will also speak, along with Helen Kelley, at a Michigan statewide volunteer conference for 600 Foster Grandparents in Detroit on May 19-20. ACTION state staff will be greatly involved during OAV month in continued support of project efforts.

DALLAS

In addition to numerous local recognition ceremonies for older American volunteers sponsored by projects and by the cities in which projects are located, Regional Director Joe Bernal will also speak at a day-long Governor's Conference on Aging in Little Rock, Ark. on May 2. Arkansas State Director Robert Torvestad and Program Officer Freeman McKindra will also participate.

Keynote speaker at the Third Statewide Conference on Voluntarism on May 11 in Austin, Texas will be Sam Brown.

KANSAS CITY

According to Regional Director Mamie Hughes, several events are planned in the Kansas City area: an RSVP recognition affair on May 9 in Wellington, Kans.; an RSVP recognition event co-sponsored by RSVP and the Area Commission on Aging on May 12; and a Foster Grandparent special affair planned for May 24 in Omaha, Neb. Director Hughes will be attending all events.

SOUTH DAKOTA

ACTION's South Dakota State Program Office will conduct a statewide senior citizens' day on May 10 in the Corn Palace in Mitchell, S.D. Hundreds of senior citizens are expected to attend the event, which will be sponsored by the South Central Community Action Agency in Lake Andes, S.D.

A king and queen will be selected among the oldest participants.

SAN FRANCISCO

On April 27, Northern California State Director Willie Hall spoke at a special recognition ceremony for Foster Grandparents working at the Stockton State Hospital in Stockton, Calif. Stockton State Hospital is one of two in the state in which Grandparents are assigned to delinquent youths.

Carter in Liberia

President Jimmy Carter met with volunteers and staff at Peace Corps Headquarters in Monrovia, Liberia on April 3.

The hour-long meeting, during which the President shook hands and talked with volunteers about their assignments, was part of Mr. Carter's five-hour stay in Liberia.

The tumultuous welcome given the President by citizens in Monrovia threatened to disrupt the presidential motorcade as it passed near the Peace Corps office in the capital. But, the crowds dispersed, and President Carter greeted 120 PCVs standing outside the Peace Corps office.

The President seemed heartened by the reception, which ACTION Director Sam Brown and Deputy Director Mary King helped plan, as Carter and First Lady Rosalynn Carter shook hands, asking volunteers about themselves and their assignments.

April 3 was declared a Liberian national holiday to honor the presidential visit. To mark the occasion, volunteers presented the President with a Peace Corps/Liberia t-shirt.

VISTA Aids in Flood Relief

February and March brought extreme hardship to many areas of the country. In the Northeast and Midwest severe snowstorms crippled major cities. In the Southwest, floodwaters reaped devastation over vast tracts of land, leaving hundreds homeless. In March, President Carter declared sections of Arizona and Southern California national disaster areas.

Responding to a call for help from the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration, (FDAA), VISTA volunteers and ACTION staffers from Colorado, Utah and California leaped into relief efforts as waters rushed over Arizona lowlands and sent houses careening down muddy banks in Southern California.

Twenty-five VISTAs and four staff members from Region IX and 14 VISTAs from Region VIII labored an average 12 hours a day, six days a week, for nearly two weeks. In

California, volunteers manned disaster centers, often moving from one to another to meet peak needs. There they assisted flood victims in contacting appropriate agencies for help with housing, loans, welfare, food stamps and other problems. In Arizona, volunteers operated hotlines, assessed damage in rural communities and on the Navajo Reservation, and interviewed victims.

According to FDAA Regional Administrator Robert C. Stevens, his agency would not have been able to gear up and deliver needed services without the contributions of VISTA volunteers and ACTION staff.

The bilingual abilities of California staffers Wally Murphy, Linda Lane and Linda Borst, all former Peace Corp volunteers in Spanish-speaking countries, proved particularly valuable in the Fillmore area of Ventura County, according to Chuck Tooker, Southern California state program director. Murphy and Lane are recruiters in the Los Angeles office; Borst is an evaluator in the San Francisco placement unit. They were joined by a fourth staffer, Cheryl Jamero, clerk-typist in San Francisco.

Nine of the Colorado volunteers in Arizona also spoke Spanish, and one, Navajo. Nine of the volunteers, normally assigned to the Colorado Congress of Senior Organizations, were over age 55.

"Characteristically, VISTA volunteers respond to the needs of their fellow human beings, and these volunteers are no exception," said Colorado state program Director Dorothy Wham.

Youth Service Director Named

David Muchnick, an attorney and sociologist who has spent the past five years as a member of the graduate faculty of the New School for Social Research in New York City, was appointed in March as the first director of ACTION's national youth service project.

"National youth service provides alternatives to youth who are excluded from meaningful involvement in the labor market," Muchnick explained, "and will give youth an opportunity to participate effectively in choosing their own futures and influencing public issues. Projects will be meaningful to the volunteer and necessary to the community."

Muchnick said that youth service is a chance for the youth of suburban and city areas to serve together for community betterment. Because some young people never receive an opportunity to leave their cities or suburban communities, they miss out on another part of living in the United States, Muchnick noted.

"I don't think the domestic problems of the U.S. can

be alleviated unless the alienation of young people from themselves and from the community is ended or overcome; youth service is a chance to create an alternative opportunity for young people to develop a sense of self-worth and community loyalty."

Muchnick's career has included positions on the staff of former Speaker of the House of Representatives, John W. McCormack; as New York City's liaison to the Congress for housing and community development legislation; consultant work in the areas of urban policy and housing in the U.S. and in England; and as professor at Columbia, Harvard and New York Universities.

He is currently writing a book on technocracy in America, and has written extensively on housing and urban policy in the U.S. and in England.

Muchnick, who believes the future of America's cities depends on imaginative answers to the problems of unemployed youth, holds both a Ph.D in sociology and a law degree from Harvard University.

Canadian "VISTA"

Julie Mazo, director of Katimivak, a newly formed Canadian domestic volunteer program for youth aged 17 - 22 met with VISTA staff in late March to learn about VISTA's successes and failures, both administrative and programmatic. Katimivak is in its first year of operation, according to Mazo.

Katimivak, an Inuit Indian word meaning "meeting place", is a private, nonprofit Canadian corporation funded by the Canadian government "to serve Canadian communities, aid in the personal development of its participants, encourage environmental awareness and provide opportunities for a greater understanding of the country." Unlike VISTA, Katimivak is a nine-month program and involves placements usually for about 30 volunteers together in three successive projects, one of which is in a French-speaking community.

The program defines a project as an "action/learning experience with two basic interlocking elements: the service to the community and the group experience lived by the participants." Service is through group volunteer activities including outdoor physical work to protect or improve the environment; working with people in the area of community services; and educational and cultural activities.

Projects are developed throughout the country in cooperation with local communities. Specific activities vary with each project and may include environmental clean-up, trail cutting, reforestation, construction, park maintenance, improvement of recreational facilities, restoration of historical sites, and housing rehabilitation. The area of individual service activities might cover aid to the elderly and handicapped, work with children in day care centers, and others.

According to Mazo, "We are concerned with the role of youth in

our society and its relation to the future development of our country. We are confident that Canada's young people have the energy, the talent and the imagination to shape a better world for themselves. Our role is to provide participants with the means, the resources and the support to start acting today to improving the quality of life."

Katimivak volunteers receive an allowance of one dollar per day plus an honorarium (tax free) of \$1,000 upon completion of the program. Katimivak provides food, lodging, transportation and basic expenses for program activities.

Similar to the United States, Canada also has an international volunteer program, CUSO (Canadian University Services Overseas), formed within a few months of the Peace Corps in 1961. CUSO now fields approximately 800 volunteers in 40 countries. CUSO volunteers often work hand-in-hand with Peace Corps volunteers.

VISTA Focus

Editor's Note: The last issue of ACTION Update featured an article on how VISTA volunteers throughout the country are involving low-income people in the vital decisions that affect their lives. The following article focuses on a specific VISTA project at a Sioux Reservation in North Dakota which exemplifies the new VISTA thrust toward community organization and self-help.

A little more than a year ago, Indians on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in Cannon Ball, N.D. had to travel 13 miles to buy a loaf of bread. Now they not only have a general store, but a laundromat and a cafe as well, all owned by the community.

"We're working to break something loose in Cannon Ball and we won't move on until we know we're going to win," said Amelia Kroeger, 34, of Rochester, N.Y. She and her husband, Richard, 34, also of Rochester, are two of eight VISTA volunteers serving on the reservation through the North Dakota Institute of Cultural Affairs.

The Kroegers helped local residents get together and renovate an old cinderblock building that once had been used to shelter horses.

"The residents wanted the store and they decided that it was going to open. We were the catalysts who helped them get organized," said Mrs. Kroeger. "They elected a board of directors for a not-for-profit development corporation and formed task forces on how the building should be renovated and what people wanted the store to stock."

More than \$8,000 in money and materials was raised to convert the building into the community's general store, which opened May 27, 1977. The laundromat and the cafe

opened later in the year.

"We helped train a staff to keep books and financial statements, do the inventory and manage the business, but they run the show," said Mrs. Kroeger, who estimates that the center will gross \$80,000 and break even in its first year of business.

"Not only that -- the center will triple in size on its anniversary. The residents are now renovating an old community gym that will open as an all-service grocery store on May 27," she continued. "They did this themselves. We worked and learned along with them."

This one accomplishment has brought about a new mood and a sense of direction on the reservation, said Kroeger. "Practical demonstrations of change make the difference. Apathy existed, not because the people of Standing Rock didn't want to improve their lives, but because they didn't know how," he said.

Subsequently, a day care center was established in the community as well as an after-school activities program for elementary grade students, both run by local residents.

Streets which once were nothing but muddy roads have been paved and street signs erected. Park areas have been set aside for community activities and as play areas for children. In an effort to recapture pride and awareness of the Indian heritage shared by the residents of Standing Rock, tribal rituals and town meetings are held regularly.

"Our goal is to help bring in industry and new spirit back into the community, with self-sufficient people across the board," Mrs. Kroeger said.

PEOPLE

Barbara Kelley:OGC

Barbara Jean Kelley, 28, a Colorado attorney who was active in the Denver Legal Aid Society and the National Conference of Black Lawyers, has been named Deputy General Counsel.

Kelley, who assumed her legal duties at ACTION on March 8, 1978, was associate general counsel to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Colorado in Denver immediately prior to her appointment.

As Deputy General Counsel, Kelley will have supervisory responsibilities for general advice and assistance to ACTION's international and domestic program operations. She will also share administrative responsibilities with General Counsel Harry MacLean and will supervise special project activities.

"For me, the particular attractions to ACTION are the nature of the programs and the current revitalization plans," said Kelley.

"ACTION's redefinition of its domestic programs is as it should be. I am glad to see volunteers getting away from the direct services that have been offered in the last few years.

"ACTION is not all about volunteers going to man a library," she noted. "I like all that's happening to ACTION -- the new direction will give communities skills to facilitate their ability to help themselves.

"It's not to say that we are returning to the '60s," she added. "We do not want to reincarnate the '60s, but to go back to the original spirit of voluntarism."

Kelley graduated cum laude from Indiana University Law School in Bloomington with a doctor of jurisprudence degree in 1973. She received her bachelor's degree in history in 1970, also from Indiana University.

From 1973 to 1975, Kelley served as a Regional Heber Smith Community Law Fellow assigned to the Legal Aid Society of Metropolitan Denver. There, she worked on consumer and welfare law cases. She informed staff attorneys of judicial and legislative developments through training sessions and seminars and litigated on housing, consumer rights, prisoners' rights and abortion issues.

Kelley wrote the "Handbook on Consumer Affairs" in 1975 for distribution throughout the state of Colorado to low-income consumer groups and to clients of the Legal Aid Society.

Also in 1975, Kelley developed materials for a pilot program in consumer law for high school students in Colorado. She conducted the pilot consumer law course at Thomas Jefferson High School in Denver.

From 1975 to 1977, Kelley was an associate in the law firm of Dawson, Nagel, Sherman and Howard in Denver. She was involved in civil litigation, primarily of a business and commercial nature.

She has served on the board of directors for the Legal Aid Society of Metropolitan Denver, the American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado and the YWCA of Denver. She is listed in the 1976 Colorado Who's Who.

Kelley is a member of the American Bar Association, the Colorado and Denver Bar Associations and the American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado. She has served on the American Bar Association Subcommittee for Federal Credit Legislation and on the Denver Bar Association Consumer Rights Committee. She has been a guest lecturer throughout the State of Colorado.

Peace Corps : Director Teams

Norman and Elsa Rush and John and Liz Abernathy are the first husband and wife country director teams to serve in the Peace Corps.

The Rush's will serve jointly in Botswana; the Abernathy's will co-direct Peace Corps programs in the Philippines.

The team approach comes as the result of heightened concern among top level agency officials for the need to recognize and fully utilize women.

In August--before the appointment of Peace Corps Director Carolyn Payton-- a task force composed of Mary King, Irene Tinker, Mary Leyland, staff trainers and wives of former Peace Corps overseas staff, met to discuss increasing frustrations among staff spouses on tours of duty abroad.

The concept of the team was one of many new measures suggested to eliminate inequities and increase spouse involvement in, and potential for contributing to the Peace Corps effort.

Norman and Elsa Rush just completed one month of Peace Corps training to prepare them for their 2-1/2 year assignment in Gaborone, the capital of Botswana.

"We heard the Peace Corps was looking for country directors and that they were interested in couples who could share the job," Mrs. Rush said. "It sounded like it would be an exciting challenge," she continued. "We shared child care over the years and we've also shared jobs off and on."

Although Mrs. Rush has a special interest in developing a crafts program in Botswana, Rush observed that the major goal will be to expand volunteer involvement in agriculture extension, wells construction and health programs at the village level.

Prior to his appointment to the Botswana country team, Norman Rush, author of many articles and novels, including Ruins of Earth, published in 1971 and Bad Moon Rising, 1973, served as co-director of College A of the Community College Experimental Satellite in New City, N.Y.

From 1960-1975, he operated his own book-selling business and also worked as a researcher and consultant for various authors.

Elsa Rush was head of the fiber arts department of the Rockland County Center for the Arts, Inc., in West Nyack, N.Y., prior to the Peace Corps appointment. Before that, she developed and administered a program to improve art teaching methods at Rockland Children's Psychiatric Center in Orangeburg, N.Y. and also worked as a design consultant to private industry.

Both John and Liz Abernathy, the newly-appointed country director team for the Philippines, have had a history of working together-- in joint business ventures and various "nonrenumerative endeavors." Both see the concept of husband and wife sharing the Peace Corps directorship as a "great idea" and one which is a "manifestation of changing attitudes in our society."

John Abernathy believes that the co-directorship approach is "managerially wise." Mrs. Abernathy feels that integrating women into the management process will prove that women can fulfill both social and business roles and "be twice as successful at both."

John Abernathy first became acquainted with Peace Corps programs when he served as a Foreign Service Officer for the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs during the 60's. Prior to that, from 1956-60, he was legislative secretary to the Governor of Michigan, and before

that, received a law degree from the University of Michigan.

Before accepting the Peace Corps position, Abernathy directed his own management consulting firm in the Washington, D.C. area.

Liz Abernathy, a graduate of the University of Alabama, served on the Governor of Michigan's policy board from 1956-60; as chairman of President Kennedy's women's campaign in his 1960 bid for the presidency; and as deputy vice chairman of the Democratic National Committee from 1960-63. She has also held the position of affirmative action chairman of the District of Columbia government; community relations director for Pre-Term Clinic, a women's health care center in Washington, D.C.; and has been active in the National Women's Political Caucus.

Peace Corps: Dominican Republic

Stephan LeRoy Honoré, assistant professor of law at Thurgood Marshall School of Law, Texas Southern University in Houston and former Peace Corps volunteer and staffer, has been appointed Country Director for the Dominican Republic. He will assume his duties in July.

Honoré first served with the Peace Corps from 1961 to 1963 as a volunteer in Bogota, Colombia, where he worked as a member of an agricultural extension team and organizer for self-help projects. From 1963 to 1966 he was an associate country director in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, where he was responsible for volunteers working in urban and rural community development, water well drilling, fisheries, cooperative development teacher and nurse training. He also assisted in program planning, budgeting, liaison with host country national government officials and general administration.

Honoré has been with Texas Southern University since 1974. He is an assistant professor, teaching international law, contracts, commercial law, legal research and writing.

From 1971 to 1974 he was a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Toledo (Ohio) College of Law, and from June to September 1972, served as a law clerk for the Ohio Migrant Legal Action Program of the Toledo Legal Aid Society.

Prior to earning his law degree from the University of Toledo College of Law, he was graduated, with a B.A. from Capital University in Columbus, Ohio. He also has attended the Parker School for Foreign and Comparative Law at Columbia University Law School, N.Y.

Honoré is a native of Urbana, Ohio, and is now living in Houston.

Costa Rica

Former Peace Corps Volunteer, Virginia T. Robinson Price, who served in Colombia from 1963-65, has now been named Peace Corps Country Director in Costa Rica.

Born in the Republic of Panama and now living in New York City, Ms. Price will assume her new duties in Costa Rica in early August. There she will work with 150 volunteers serving in such areas as seed production, grain storage, nutrition, and public health.

Prior to her appointment she served as a management consultant to a number of organizations focusing on a broad range of areas: community development, youth development, health delivery services, government and education. She provided technical assistance in operations analysis, organizational diagnosis, program planning, development and implementation, professional development and process consultation.

From 1969 to January 1972, she was a training specialist with the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, and earlier in 1969, was a program director with Supportive Services, Inc., also in New York.

Ms. Price specialized in remedial education while employed with Trans-Century Corp. in Washington in 1968. In that position, she designed, organized and set in motion a program for remedial education for a manpower training project. From 1966 to 1968, she was an instructor in general and developmental psychology, and education at Briarcliff College in Briarcliff Manor, N.Y.

While serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Colombia from 1963 to 1965, Ms. Price designed and implemented a teacher training program at the AID Educational Center in Cali in coordination with the Ministry of Education. She also provided training to in-service teachers in rural areas, and taught psychology. Prior to that, she taught third grade in Brooklyn from 1962 to 1963.

A 1962 graduate of CUNY (City College of New York), Ms. Price also holds an MS from Yeshiva University of New York.

New Items :

Peace Corps Times

The pilot issue of PEACE CORPS TIMES, a monthly periodical for and about Peace Corps volunteers and issues that concern them, came out in March. A major article was a comprehensive discussion of the growing controversy surrounding the promotion of bottle feeding and the use of manufactured infant formulas in developing countries. Other articles included an expression of the views of former ACTION director Michael P. Balzano on the Peace Corps, an interview with Carolyn Payton, a photo feature on Peace Corps volunteers helping to build a bridge in an isolated village in Nepal, views on "Basic Human Needs" by a Peace Corps

staff person and a volunteer and observations on the role of women in developing countries by John Gilligan, administrator of the Agency for International Development (AID).

Regular features for future issues of PEACE CORPS TIMES will include a column in which Carolyn Payton answers questions from volunteers, and a Letters-to-the-Editor column giving volunteers the opportunity to share their views and questions with others. Bill Barrett is the coordinating editor of the tabloid.

If you'd like more information about PEACE CORPS TIMES or would like to receive a copy of the publication, contact Bill Barrett, Room M-1200, Ext. 47990.

VISTA Currents

The first issue of VISTA CURRENTS, a technical assistance publication for VISTA volunteers and their sponsoring organizations, was published in April. According to VISTA Director Marge Tabankin, the magazine will provide a steady flow of practical "how-to-do-it" information and serve as a forum for the exchange of information among VISTA volunteers.

The pilot issue contains a discussion of how utility policies can hurt the poor and what two VISTA-sponsoring community organizations were able to do to correct some injustices. It also includes a profile of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, information on the Emergency Energy Assistance Program administered by the Community Services Administration, sources of anti-crime funds and an article on how to write a press release.

For more information about VISTA CURRENTS or copies of the publication, contact VISTA, Room M-1007, Ext. 48370.

"There is No Place Like Home"

"There Is No Place Like Home" is a new OAVP film on the Senior Companion Program. The film, which runs a little more than 15 minutes, is expected to be ready for nationwide distribution to churches, community organizations, television stations and individuals within a month.

The film shows Senior Companions assisting elderly men and women by providing transportation, doing grocery shopping, preparing meals and doing many other things to help them maintain independence at home. Produced by H.G. Peters & Co. in Primos, Pa., the film features the Senior Companions commenting on what the program means to them.

New Directions in Recruiting

This summer, ACTION expects to recruit nearly 3,000 Peace Corps volunteers and 800 VISTA volunteers. This represents about 44 per cent more Peace Corps volunteers and 11 per cent more VISTA volunteers than were recruited last summer.

This summer also will mark the beginning of new directions in both Peace Corps and VISTA recruitment. The Peace Corps is moving its emphasis away from the recruitment of applicants with specialized skills toward people who demonstrate high motivation and commitment. Some technical skills will still be needed, but commitment is more of a priority than special skills. This will give a greater number of people an opportunity to volunteer.

New Peace Corps volunteers will receive intensive training to prepare them for assignments in disease eradication, maternal and child health care, agriculture, fishery and reforestation. Currently, persons without special skills are being recruited to fill 400 to 600 assignments in these areas this summer.

The Peace Corps also is going to train volunteer teachers in secondary skills which they can apply when school is not in session. These supplemental skills will be in health care, for example, and will be used to help enhance the role and improve the status of village women.

Volunteers with technical skills will be trained in related skills. For example, a Peace Corps volunteer in grain farming might receive training in the techniques of grain storage, thus enhancing his or her effectiveness and value to the program.

Recruiters will be moving away from matching applicants to specific assignments, as they have done in the past. To accomplish this, they will use fewer specific Training Assignment Criteria (TAC) sheets. These are placement forms used to match applicants to certain programs. Instead, they will use more of the new "generic" or "non-specific" TAC sheets, which will assign applicants into general training areas, rather than into specific programs in specific countries.

The generic TAC sheets will take into account certain common requirements including education, experience, language, common assignment types and common availability dates, and will provide broader position descriptions than have previously been used. This process should screen out applicants whose primary motivation is service in a particular country, because applicants will not be given specific assignments until the final stages of placement.

Another advantage of the generic TAC sheets is that they should facilitate the recruitment of greater numbers of people and give Recruitment and Placement more flexibility in placing applicants than the previous one-to-one placements. About 30 per cent of this summer's Peace Corps training classes will be placed through the use of generic TAC sheets and the number will steadily increase.

Guidelines currently are being developed to devise a

generic TAC sheet for VISTA. To save time, a standardized set of VISTA assignments will be developed for use regardless of later specific requests. This standardized set of TAC sheets will eventually be used to recruit VISTA volunteers. Recruiters will be gathering information on specific programs, but this information won't be sent to the applicants until they are invited to specific programs.

VISTA will be shifting its emphasis on direct service activities provided to low-income people by large agencies to helping low-income neighborhoods develop leadership skills in order to ultimately solve their own problems. VISTA volunteers will be serving primarily in support roles. To accomplish this goal, VISTA has developed national grant programs through which about 800 volunteers will be assigned to eight or 12 national organizations which have proven experience in assisting low-income people.

Under this new direction, the main responsibility of recruitment will be to screen prospective volunteers instead of searching for specialized skills. Recruiters will receive training in interviewing and evaluating applicants, and in screening out those without the necessary motivation. Recruiters will need a thorough knowledge of generalized program areas to develop uniform suitability standards to be used in placement.

The volunteer "pools" for both VISTA and the Peace Corps will be larger than those developed under the pre-slotting system, thus giving the placement staff a greater choice of applicants from which to choose. Placement, however, will not be faced with the huge pools of non-needed skills that occurred before pre-slotting because the recruiters will be trained to screen out applicants who lack needed skills.

The number of nominations permitted under the new recruitment system will be large enough to ensure the delivery of a sufficient number of applicants. As program areas expand, this will allow greater flexibility in placing applicants into assignments where they best match and are most needed.

Under the new delivery system, an applicant first will be nominated by recruitment into a general program area. His or her application then will be sent to the appropriate service center to obtain references and receive an evaluation. The service center will send qualified and cleared Peace Corps applications to the Peace Corps placement unit in Washington, D.C. (A placement unit for VISTA applications is being developed.)

Placement will match the applicants with specific program requests and invite them to the programs. Thus, Placement will have actual control over final specific assignments instead of Recruitment.

One Million Letters

A direct mail campaign to recruit college seniors and graduate students began in early February when a million letters with an accompanying flyer on Peace Corps and VISTA service were sent to students nationwide.

According to Freddie Baumer, Public Affairs/Advertising, the first mailing was a direct recruitment tool describing projects and volunteer benefits to the student audience. Since the first mailing in February, 12,000 inquiries from students came as a result of the recruitment effort. An estimated 20,000 leads in all are expected from the February mailing campaign.

This is the first year that there will be a follow-up mailing to campus addresses. The follow-up to 900,000 students in now is the mail. This second mailing to college senior and graduate students included a letter from Sam Brown and an accompanying flyer with pictures and quotations from various Peace Corps and VISTA volunteers on their volunteer experience.

From Dream to Reality

Not long ago the Peace Corps School Partnership Program staff announced that it had succeeded in raising the \$1,200 needed to fund a facility for exceptional children in Crato, Brazil. Contributions from ACTION staffers, said Partnership spokesperson Evelyn Egan, helped turn the project, now the Hubert H. Humphrey Memorial Project, from a dream into a reality.

The following letter from Peace Corps Volunteer Karen Beaulieu in Crato to the ACTION staff warmly expresses what staff members' generosity has meant to the people she is serving.

"We here in Crato are very fortunate to have friends such as you, for it is truly an act of friendship when people give so generously to others as you have done.

"Your donations will make into a reality what has been a dream for the people of Crato for some time now: the construction of a much needed physical education and recreational facility at our school for exceptional children.

"It is impossible for me to say how much the staff, the children and I appreciate the donations you have sent. Perhaps more important to myself and the others is the moral support which you send. Your donations let the people here know that it is not I, Karen, alone who is trying to help, but that I am a representative of many people who wish them well.

"As a volunteer in a foreign country there are times when one feels quite alone, and wonders if the struggle will be worth the efforts. Your prompt response is especially encouraging and motivating for it is proof that although physically I am here alone, your good wishes are with me.

"Let me close in saying to each one of you a very grateful thank you for the generosity you have shown to us through your very beautiful contributions."

In an accompanying letter, Special Education Teacher Maria Luna Riberio sent this message to ACTION staffers:

"Through this letter I come to thank you for the help given to the Instituto de Reeducacao Evilene Rolin Lucetti maintained by the APAE (Associacao de Pais E Amigos Dos Excepcionais de Crato), of Crato, the quantity sent of about Cr\$20,000 (twenty thousand cruzieros). This money came to benefit the Institute, principally our children, because until today we haven't had financial conditions to offer a sports area to these children who really need it.

"It has been since the beginning of the APAE in Crato that the students of this establishment haven't participated in the Olympics (Special) of our country justly because we haven't had an adequate place to train them.

"Without more for the moment, we renew our votes of elevated esteem and consideration."

And, from the children...

"I think the school is very good. I like lunch, and recreation and I like Beta. I think the field is very good for us to play (soccer). Our team is good. There is Assis, Humberto and Francisco."

- Francisco Irlando Lalandro

"School is good for us to study a lot. The field was already supposed to be done, it's good for us. The money is already here and the men are waiting to begin. Our team is good because there is Irlando."

- Assis

"I don't like the band because they don't let me play. I like Doctor Saul, Maria, Ulises, and I also like the field where we play ball. I like the food, the classroom, the trips to the swimming pools and the films that Edilson shows. I like Karen very much, the workshop and everything about the school. The only I don't like is the student Francisco Jucais because he hit me."

- Francis de Assis Lima

Helping the Handicapped

What ACTION could and should be doing for the handicapped was discussed by Leslie Milk, the executive director of Mainstream, Inc. at a Brown Bag session on March 31.

A Washington-based, non-profit organization formed in

July 1975, Mainstream, Inc. helps the handicapped to participate in the mainstream of society. The organization sees itself as a catalyst for change in the attitudes of other people about the handicapped and the handicapped about themselves. It offers programs to increase public awareness of affirmative action for the handicapped and assists organizations in compliance.

Milk believes that if any program for the handicapped is to be effective, "we must first dispel the myths and unspoken assumptions about the disabled. In our society today, a disability or a handicap is still often considered a sickness. The image of a volunteer, on the other hand, is healthy," she said.

She feels that if ACTION is serious about recruiting the disabled, there have to be outreach efforts to attract them. Opportunities for the handicapped should be included in the agency's speeches, literature and recruitment activities, she advised.

One of the areas in which volunteers can be most effective is community education. "Changing cultural stereotypes about handicapped people is vital," said Milk. "Making people aware of federal regulations which mandate the employment, education and participation of the handicapped in other areas is another important activity that volunteers could be involved in.

"Many disabled people themselves do not know about the regulations," she continued. "How can you exercise your rights if you don't know them?"

Volunteers could also work with schools to help disabled children get the services to which they are entitled under the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142). According to Milk, the problem of employment among handicapped adults often stems back to childhood and not having easy access to educational facilities and opportunities.

Discussion at the Brown Bag session repeatedly turned to the biases and barriers which stand in the way of progress for the handicapped. "Above all, we have to learn to deal with our differences," emphasized Milk. She and her staff stand ready to help ACTION deal with this and other issues in training programs.

Finally, Milk stressed the importance of involving the disabled in the very early planning stages of any programs ACTION might undertake on their behalf.

An Idea That's Right

April marked the tenth anniversary of the National Fair Housing Law, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of

1968. The law guarantees equal opportunity in housing to every American. The law provides that it shall be unlawful "to discriminate against any person in the terms, conditions, or privileges of the sale or rental of a dwelling, or in the provision of services or facilities in connection therewith, because of race, color, religion, sex or national origin."

According to Raul Rodriguez, Assistant Director for Compliance, "just as Fair Housing is a guaranteed right, it is also an idea that is right for our nation. We face many problems and challenges to the quality of our life, and before we can surmount them we must first remove the barriers that prevent us from acting together in a cooperative manner. Each of us should resolve to fight discrimination in our personal, daily lives, as well as in the conduct of government business.

"April was an appropriate time for all employees of ACTION to re-examine the meaning and intent of the Fair Housing Law as well as the ways in which each of us relates to the law," Rodriguez added. "We all share responsibility for assuring that the Fair Housing Law is implemented in personal as well as legal terms. Everyone is involved.

"Fair Housing should be a basic right for every American - Right Now".

FWP Notes...

** A national training conference for members of the Federal Women's Program will be held at the Sheraton Inn, Gettysburg, Pa. on May 10 through 12, 1978. For information, contact Vivian Ritter, Headquarters Federal Women's Program coordinator.

** "The Spirit of Houston," the official report on the International Women's Year (IWY) conference was presented to President Carter in a special White House ceremony on March 22. This marks the first step toward a national response to the IWY plan of action.

** The Women's Equity Action League, a private, nonprofit organization dealing with women's issues, will celebrate 10 years of accomplishment with a national training conference to be held at the Shoreham Americana Hotel in Washington, D.C., May 5 through 7. Training will be conducted for women in economic advancement, enforcement of anti-discrimination laws, effective use of media, citizen participation in government, women's changing roles in society, career opportunities and fundraising methods. Contact Vivian Ritter for more information.

Regional News:

Denver

An unexpected spring blizzard greeted Deputy Director Mary King as she arrived in Denver on April 10. King was in Denver to address the Conference on World Affairs at the University of Colorado (Boulder) on the topic of "Appropriate Technology."

While in Denver, the Deputy Director took the opportunity to visit a VISTA project at Southwest Youth Services, a non-profit, community-based organization dedicated to reducing the number of juvenile re-arrests in Denver. Project supervisor Joe Gomez, Southwest Youth Services Director Everett Chavez and the nine VISTAs assigned to the project toured the facilities with King. KMGH-TV a CBS affiliate, filmed a news segment at Southwest Youth Services which appeared on the evening news.

King also made a brief stop at the Westside Action Center to say hello to former VISTA Pancho Brabo, now the VISTA project supervisor. Angie Lovato, staff aide in Rep. Timothy Wirth's Denver office also greeted Ms. King at the Center. Prior to leaving for Boulder, KOA radio news taped an interview with the Deputy Director which ran throughout the day on VISTA's new directions.

Last stop in Colorado was a visit to the Boulder Daily Camera where Lawrence Paddock, editor, received an ACTION plaque for the newspaper's outstanding contribution to voluntarism over the past year. The plaque is one of 10 awarded in Regions VI and VIII. More than 600 publications compete for the honor. ACTION's Colorado state program director, Dorothy Wham, accompanied King during her day-long visit.

Atlanta

"'I have a dream' that the elderly are useful, are important and can live meaningful lives. Your commitment can help keep the elderly from feeling abandoned," stated Dorothy Cotton, the new director of ACTION's Region IV, to OAVP project directors at the opening of their regional conference on March 19 in Charleston, S.C.

About 155 project directors from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, and Tennessee attended the four-day conference which featured training programs, workshops and experience-sharing sessions aimed at improving their recruiting, communication, training and administrative skills. Pat Rowe, a local RSVP director, hosted the conference which was conducted at the College of Charleston.

"Voluntarism is too important for agencies to be competing rather than cooperating," said guest speaker Cynthia

Wedel, the national chairman of volunteers for the American Red Cross. "And the American Red Cross is very much concerned with cooperating with ACTION. Voluntarism is an exploding field today, thanks in large part to the impetus of ACTION."

OAVP Director Helen Kelley outlined the "New Directions for OAVP" in her keynote address. "The new directions are only a reflection of the best of what's going on now," she said. "There should be serious, competent, challenging programs for older people in the United States and communities should take over these programs after initial federal involvement. I would like to see a situation in which no older person is ever denied the chance to do more than he or she is presently doing."

Workshops at the conference which ended March 13 included "Creative Placements," "Rural Volunteer Programs," "Coping with Stress," "Visual Aids for Marketing Programs," and "Responsible Assertive Behavior."

Domestic Operations Director John Lewis and Region IV Director Dorothy Cotton surprised the Atlanta recruiting office in March when they unexpectedly stopped by to extend a "thank you" to recruiter Terry Miller on his last day. Both Lewis and Cotton cited Miller for his outstanding recruitment efforts from September '76-March '78 and for dedication during his earlier VISTA service working with young people. Lewis and Cotton noted that Miller "earned the confidence and respect of youths, ranging in age from 11-18 years (through) self-sacrificing, dedicated performance as a counselor which positively influenced their lives." Miller will depart for Birmingham, Ala. where he will do counseling work with youths.

After an inspiring evening in which she addressed more than 170 black students at her alma mater, Bennett College, Greensboro, N.C., Peace Corps Director Carolyn Payton found herself in court the following day. Before an audience of youths and minor traffic violators, Payton was summoned to the bench and asked to plead her case. She did. "I told them that VISTA or the Peace Corps could be the toughest job they'd ever love." The judge, an old-time friend, observed that for young and old, the Peace Corps offers opportunities to "do something good with your lives..."

Payton was just giving the court audience some "food for thought" as it has occasionally been the custom in Greensboro to "sentence" petty offenders to a day or two of public service, which many have found afterwards to have been a most rewarding experience.

The Peace Corps Director was also happy to learn that 12 of the graduating students at Bennett College plan to join the Peace Corps following graduation.

New Mexico

Julianita Romero, an RSVP volunteer in Socorro, N.M. since 1973, has been nominated New Mexico's Mother of the Year for her outstanding contributions in civic, church, and school work.

Romero, one of 170 volunteers in the Socorro RSVP Program, is assigned to three service centers: Torres Elementary School, where she works with bilingual children; Good Samaritan Nursing Home, where she provides companionship to the elderly; and the Socorro General Hospital.

Romero's nomination for New Mexico Mother of the Year was submitted by the Socorro Senior Citizens Club and by Archbishop Robert Sanchez of the Santa Fe, N.M. diocese.

Despite overwhelming odds, Romero has been a highly spirited and determined individual throughout her life. Her husband died at the age of 34, leaving her with seven children and another on the way. She raised her family, even helping put several through college by finding various domestic jobs in the rural Socorro area.

"To provide for them, I took in washing and ironing clothes for other people," she said. "I also cleaned homes as a maid." Now, all the children are grown, and Mrs. Romero has 30 grandchildren.

The 68-year-old volunteer will be honored at a Governor's tea in Santa Fe before departing for the National Mother of the Year competition in Des Moines, Iowa, May 7-11.