



*Peace Corps  
Fellows Program  
in Community Development  
at the Illinois Institute for  
Rural Affairs*

# Voices

Volume 6 • Number 1 • Spring 2005

## Christian Tscheschlok Receives Alumni Achievement Award



Christian Tscheschlok (l) receiving Alumni Achievement Award from Thom Anderson (r)

*By Jessica Kaskie*

Christian Tscheschlok is the 2005 recipient of the Western Illinois University Peace Corps Fellows Alumni Achievement Award. Thom Anderson, Peace Corps Fellows Program Manager, presented the award to Tscheschlok on March 9, 2005.

“Christian has provided exemplary service to the community of Rock Falls, Illinois. Through his leadership, the Rock Falls Community Development Corporation was organized, community investment has increased, the number of new jobs is growing, and Rock Falls is now positioned for a progressive, robust economic future. In addition, Christian has assisted with the placement and mentoring of four Peace Corps Fellows in northwest Illinois. In fact, Christian’s impact on the Fellows program over the past five years has been a major factor in our success,” stated Anderson when commenting on Tscheschlok’s selection for this honor.

The Peace Corps Fellows Program in Community Development honored Tscheschlok at a gathering held at Old Chicago in Peoria, Illinois. Peace Corps Fellows, alumni, members of the Rock Falls Community Development Corporation (RFCDC), Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs staff, and Christian’s family joined in honoring Tscheschlok.

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**Editor**  
Jessica Kaskie

# Changes and Transitions

By John Gruidl

It is a time of change and transition in the Peace Corps Fellows Program. In fact, this is my last column of "Notes From the Director," since I will no longer be involved in the day-to-day management of the program. It is time for me to pursue other new and exciting projects at the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs and time for new leadership of the Fellows program. Fortunately, I will remain in contact with Fellows through the training offered by the new Community Development Institute that I am creating and directing. Furthermore, I will be available as a resource for the new management team whenever they wish to call upon me.

It has been a great pleasure to have served this program since its inception in 1994, to see it grow from an idea to a successful major program today. The greatest pleasure has been to witness the professional growth of the Fellows while in the program and to hear of their successes in the "real world"

after graduating. Please continue to keep in touch as I am thrilled to hear alumni reports of new children, new jobs, professional awards, and other events.

The program transitions do not end with me. Thom Anderson will be leaving his position as Program Manager to enter a Ph.D. program in Recreation, Sport, and Tourism at the University of Illinois in the fall. He will be sorely missed. Everyone connected with the program over the past six years knows that Thom is a major reason for the program's success. Thom has been a whirlwind of energy and new ideas. He has been dedicated to assisting Fellows in their internships and professional growth. He is a wonderful colleague and friend. Thom, we wish you all the best!

For those Fellows and alumni who are nervously wondering whether Carolyn Lawrence is leaving the program, you can breathe easy. Carolyn is continuing as Administrative Liaison for the program until her planned retirement in May 2006. We are grateful that Carolyn will



Dr. John Gruidl, Director of the Peace Corps Fellows Program in Community Development at Western Illinois University since 1994.

help the program during its transition.

I am pleased that Karen Peitzmeier will be joining the staff as Internal Coordinator beginning June 1. She will be joining Karen Mauldin-Curtis as the key management staff to take the program into the future. Both Karens are bright and innovative. I am reminded of the expression "whenever one door closes, another door opens." I look forward to new doors opening in my career as I hope you will welcome changes and growth that the new leadership will bring to the Fellows program. 🌐



## Tidbits from the Institute

**Community Development Society Annual Conference** — **Date:** June 26-29, 2005

**Location:** Radisson Hotel, Baltimore, Maryland **Theme:** Policy and Practice

**For more information:** contact John Bloch, at [John@bugleg.com](mailto:John@bugleg.com) or 1-802-229-4734

**Midwest Community Development Institute** — **Date:** August 8-12, 2005

**Location:** Quality Inn & Suites State House Inn, Springfield, Illinois

**Description:** The Midwest CDI is a five-day training session designed to enhance the leadership and management capabilities of individuals who are engaged in building their communities. Individuals who complete all three years of CDI are eligible to become Certified Community Developers, a professional certification available through the International Community Development Council (ICDC).

**For more information:** contact Molly Davies at 309-298-1710 or John Gruidl at 309-298-2984

# The Transition Continues: Karen Peitzmeier Joins PCF Staff

By Karen Mauldin-Curtis

Our Peace Corps Fellows Program has been undergoing an internal transition with support from our current AmeriCorps grant. As a continuation of that transition, we will have a new management team member join us on June 1, 2005. We are pleased to announce that Karen Peitzmeier has accepted the newly-created position of Internal Coordinator.

As the Internal Coordinator for our Fellows program, Karen's primary responsibilities include:

- ♦ Fund-raising and partner relations
- ♦ Recruitment of returned Peace Corps Volunteers
- ♦ Financial and Administrative Management

Additional responsibilities will include: advising prospective and current Fellows, maintaining contacts with alumni, coordinating training activities, arranging internship sites, providing site support, and

performing public relations, as required.

To this position, Karen brings years of management experience gained while serving as Program Coordinator for Horn Field Campus at WIU. Since 1996, Karen has worked with and supervised many undergraduate and graduate students in administration and management of the 92 acre site and its many programs and services. She has developed strong group facilitation skills and is committed to team building and community leadership.

Karen is a Macomb native and received her Bachelor of Science degree from the department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Administration at WIU in 1988. In 2001, Karen received her Master of Science degree in Leisure Studies, from Oklahoma State University. Karen is a certified Wilderness Education Association National Standards Program Instructor

and has traveled extensively in the US and abroad.

In her capacity as Program Coordinator at Horn Field Campus, Karen has recently partnered with our Fellows Program by serving as site supervisor for two of our

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Karen Peitzmeier, Peace Corps Fellows Internal Coordinator.

Visit the Fellows Program online at [www.peacecorpsfellows-wiu.org](http://www.peacecorpsfellows-wiu.org)



*Peace Corps  
Fellows Program  
in Community  
Development*

### Program Staff

Dr. John Gruidl, Director  
Thom Anderson, Program Manager  
Karen Mauldin-Curtis, External Coordinator  
Carolyn Lawrence, Admin. Liaison

### Fellows and Alumni!

We would like to make this newsletter one that serves your needs. If you have moved, let us know where you are. We are always looking for article submissions. Please write us with your thoughts and experiences. After all, this is your newsletter!

800-526-9943 (toll free)  
CA-Lawrence@wiu.edu

The Peace Corps Fellows Program in Community Development (PCF) is managed within the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs. The mission of the PCF Program is two-fold: 1) assist smaller Illinois towns in implementing community and economic development projects while enhancing citizen capacity; and 2) train returned Peace Corps Volunteers for two years as community and economic development specialists while they pursue Master's degrees at Western Illinois University.

*Western Illinois University is a fully compliant affirmative action, equal opportunity institution.*

# Spring Workshop 2005

By Rani Bhattacharyya

On February 4, 2005, the Peace Corps Fellows Program held its annual spring workshop in Macomb City Hall. This year's events were focused on professional etiquette and volunteer management. The day began with a brief series of updates for all current fellows concerning the new office position interviews, registration for the Economic Development Conference, and grant status for the PCF program.

Following the program update, the morning session was facilitated by Dr. Janice King, a professor in the Department of Dietetics, Fashion Merchandizing & Hospitality (DFMH) who reviewed with the fellows the importance of how and why to maintain good communication etiquette at the workplace.


The seven spheres of communication she focused on were meetings, talking on the telephone, receiving cell phone calls, letter writing, email etiquette, faxes, and general work place etiquette.

In summary, Dr. King highlighted a few general reminders that:

- 1) we set the stage for the type of interactions we have
- 2) we should be courteous and thoughtful of those around us
- 3) we should learn to keep a problem situational
- 4) we should apologize when necessary
- 5) we should work towards being a trusted co-worker.

For the lunch hour, the fellows and PCF staff were joined by interested staff members from the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs. Dr. Charlene Callison, former chair

of DFMH, facilitated the lunch hour session. In addition to thoroughly discussing formal table and dining etiquette, she introduced the group to the concept of the 12 point system, which applies to proper interview attire. This point system takes into account any part of a person's attire that focuses a listener's attention away from what is being discussed between an employee and employer. For example, a man who wears a tie with a lot of detail is assigned more points than a man who wears a tie of one color. For women, one point is added for each piece of jewelry they wear. The maximum points allowed per person is 12. If someone goes over that, they need to re-think their outfit in a way that is much more simple and clean.

After lunch, Thom Anderson, PCF Program Manager, presented the fellows with strategies of how to manage volunteers from a community based perspective. In addition to outlining all the aspects of volunteer management (the Volunteer's Role in Community Development, Planning for Volunteer Involvement, Questions Concerning Organizational Capacity for Volunteers, Elements of the Job Description, Recruitment, and Supervision & Monitoring), he provided each Fellow a copy of the manual he developed, through IIRA, that is used in community training programs. 



Peace Corps Fellows Eric Anderson, Shannon Ruh, Darren Treml, and Christina Davis learn about table etiquette from Dr. Charlene Callison, Chair of the Department of Dietetics, Fashion Merchandizing & Hospitality.

# Five New Fellows Join Program

## Marci Roberts

Hometown: Hay Springs, Nebraska  
 College: University of Nebraska, Kearney, NE  
 Major: Recreation and Parks Management  
 Peace Corps: Republic of Georgia, 2002-04  
 Degree sought: Masters in Community Health  
 Graduate Assistantship: McDonough County Health Department  
 Reflections on PC Service: Man is most at fault, most in error when he stops exploring — William least Heat Moon.



Seated in Front: Marci Roberts and Shannon Ruh  
 Standing in Back: Jessica Gershick, Angela Sanders, and Rani Bhattacharyya

## Shannon Ruh

Hometown: Traverse City, Michigan  
 College: Michigan State University  
 Major: Earth Science  
 Peace Corps: Belize, 2002-04  
 Degree sought: Masters in Geography  
 Graduate Assistantship: Industrial Cluster Studies with the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs  
 Reflections on PC Service: It was a life-changing experience, and I would do it all over again!

## Jessica Gershick

Hometown: Agoura, California  
 College: San Francisco State University  
 Major: Liberal Arts  
 Peace Corps: Belize, 2002-04  
 Degree sought: Masters in Community Health  
 Graduate Assistantship:

Community Health and Health Services Management Department  
 Reflections on PC Service: No matter how slow or how fast paced life is, always strive to be "Tranquilo"

## Angie Sanders

Hometown: Several places in Iowa and Illinois  
 College: University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA  
 Major: Broadcast Journalism  
 Peace Corps: Malawi, 2000-02  
 Degree sought: Masters in Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration  
 Graduate Assistantship: Horn Field Campus  
 Reflections on PC Service: Take into account that great love and great achievements involve great risk. — Dalai Lama

## Rani Bhattacharyya

Hometown: Maple Grove, MN  
 College: Northland College, Ashland, WI  
 Major: Environmental Studies and Humanities  
 Peace Corps: Ivailovgrad Municipality, Bulgaria, 2001-04  
 Degree sought: Masters in Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration  
 Graduate Assistantship: Western Illinois Agritourism with the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs  
 Reflections on PC Service: A clarity of mind means clarity of passion too. This is why a great and clear mind loves ardently and sees distinctly when it loves. — Blaise Pascal 🌍

# International Bazaar 2005

By Rani Bhattacharyya

On April 8th and 9th, 2005, Peace Corps Fellows at Western Illinois University participated in the 32nd Annual International Bazaar. This year's theme was "United We Embrace the World".

The event was sponsored by the International Friendship Club, Casa Latina Cultural Center, and the Center for International Studies.

Entertainment at the Bazaar included the Monmouth bagpipers, the World Beat ensemble, dance presentations from India, Japan, Brazil, Mexico, and a fashion show of traditional costumes from around the world. In addition, Peace Corps Fellows helped

with face painting in the children's room.

At the PCF booth, Fellows represented the countries of Malawi and Georgia. Food specialties, such as Mandasi and Eggplant Istanbul, were prepared and served. Mandasi is a staple food for the people of Malawi and is very similar to fried bread. Eggplant Istanbul is found in many countries that border the Black Sea, one of which is Georgia. Additional activities at the booth included a Mancala board from Malawi and writing visitors' names in Georgian, one of the original and oldest languages in the world.

Fellows who volunteered their time, keepsakes, and efforts this year were Angie



Angie Sanders and Frank and Miriam Antonucci tend the booth at the International Bazaar.

Sanders, Marci Roberts, Christina Davis, Shannon Ruh, Craig Millares, Jessica Gershick, and Frank Antonucci. 🌐

## UPDATES

### CAREERS

- ♦ Michael Louie (PCF 2001-2002) — Outdoor Recreation Planner, Northeast Regional Office, National Park Services, Philadelphia, PA
- ♦ Jori Koffman (PCF 2001-2003) — 21st Century Program Coordinator, Boys & Girls Club, Springfield, IL
- ♦ Patrick McLaughlin (PCF 2002-2003) — Assistant Planner, City of Big Bear Lake, CA
- ♦ Janelle Eggert (PCF 2002-2004) — Regional Extension Educator, Onsite Sewage Treatment Program, Water Resources Management and Policy, University of Minnesota Extension Service, St. Cloud, MN
- ♦ Joel Haskard (PCF 1999-2000) — Clean Energy Resource Teams Assistant Coordinator, University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, Minneapolis, MN
- ♦ Kevin Hale (PCF 1999-2001) — Community Development Office, PPEP Microbusiness and Housing Development Corporation, Inc., Tucson, AZ.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ♦ Joel and Cindy Haskard (PCF 1999-2001) — Son, Erza Hullabaloo Haskard, was born on March 2, 2005, weighing 9 pounds and 10 ounces and 22 inches long
- ♦ Brandy Garrett (John) Kluthe and family have been transferred to Owensboro, KY
- ♦ Kevin Williamson (PCF 1999-2001) — Married Nancy Mireya on April 9, 2005 in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico

### AWARDS

- ♦ Molly Davies (PCF 2004-2006) — Outstanding Graduate Student - Economics Department
- ♦ Paul Wierzbicki (PCF 2003-2005) — Outstanding Graduate Student - RPTA Department

# Fellows Fun on Campus

By Angie Sanders

Everyone knows that returned Peace Corps Volunteers like to have fun! And the Fellows at Western Illinois University are no exception. Several times during the semester, groups ranging in size from two people to everybody, get together outside of class to do a little relaxing.

At the beginning of the semester, all the fellows—on and off campus—got together with Carolyn, Thom, Karen and others at the Roseville bowling alley. After a wicked walleye dinner, everyone hit the lanes—and old fashioned scorekeeping. Better watch out for Carolyn, she's good!

What's become a more frequent occurrence on campus has been the Tuesday Walleyball nights. Almost every Tuesday at six o'clock, groups of fellows have come out to



release tension and stress.

Christina Davis, one of the walleyball pros states, "It's important (to hang out outside of class) so I do make a huge effort to make time to develop relationships with other fellows, which means being involved in fun stuff!"

Other activities of note include cultural on-campus

events, Argyle Lake State Park walks, and the Maple Syrup Festival. Rani Bhattacharyya recommends staying clear of the Sap to Syrup relay (did those clothes ever get dry, Rani?).

So, graduate school is not all books and exams. With the Peace Corps Fellows program, a little fun is mixed in too! 🌍



Pictured above: Fellows and friends enjoy a game of volleyball!

Pictured to the left: Peace Corps Fellows take time out to have some fun at Roseville Lanes!

Fellows joining in the fun include (back row, left to right) Jessica Gershick, Rob Lawrence, Dave Keiser, Shannon Ruh, Marci Roberts, Carolyn Lawrence, Craig Millares (front row, left to right) Rani Bhattacharyya and Christina Davis.



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### **Alumni Award**


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In addition to the Alumni Achievement Award, Tscheschlok was presented with a certificate and letter of recognition from Fellows/USA.

Tscheschlok began his community development career as a Peace Corps volunteer in Slovakia for three years. He was a student at WIU in the Fellows Program from 2000-2002 and completed an 11-month internship in Rock Falls, Illinois. Tscheschlok received a Master's Degree in Business Administration in May 2002.

After graduation, the Rock Falls Community Development Corporation, pleased with Tscheschlok's performance as an intern, asked him to stay in the community as Executive Director for the RFCDC. Last year he signed a second

contract with the organization for service through 2007.

The story behind the drafting of his first contract is a classic PCF story as it occurred with the RFCDC Board on a napkin over lunch. "The napkin was later presented to me framed and signed by the original stakeholders of the development initiative. It was a really moving moment and a very symbolic beginning to a very rewarding future," states Tscheschlok. 



### **Peace Corps Fellows Staff**

*(Continued from page 3)*

Fellows. It was while working with Karen that Anne Hylla coordinated the first Environmental Summit on the WIU campus and began to lay the foundation for the development of the Midwest Center for Sustainability. Currently, Angie Sanders works with Karen on behalf of those efforts.

When not working, Karen enjoys hiking, kayaking, climbing, traveling, and reading. Karen looks forward to working toward the continued success of our Peace Corps Fellows Program. We invite each of you to join us in welcoming Karen to our PCF family! 