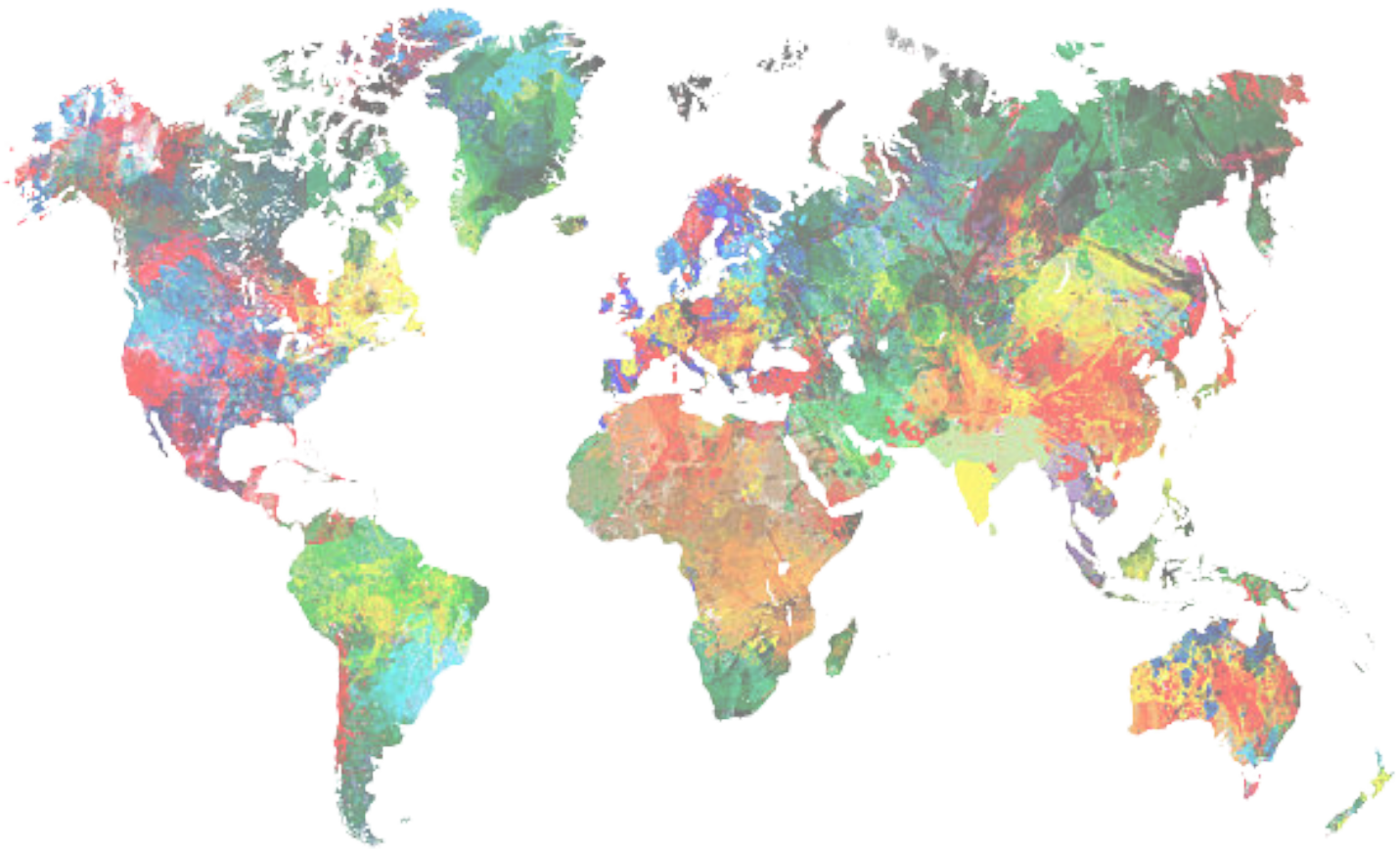


Welcome Back Package



RPCV
nexus 

Congratulations on your Completion of Service & Welcome to the RPCV Professional Network!

When completing service, many Volunteers often wonder, “What’s next?” Truth be told, Volunteers go in every direction after COS - finding work, going back to school, taking time off, creating a business or nonprofit private, back to the US or stay international... you name it. Many have no idea as well. So, no matter where you’re at, you’re on the ‘right’ path for you.

This Welcome Back Package contains quick checklists to help prepare as you close service and connects you to more detailed [Career & Transition Guide](#) of compiled resources, recommendations, and articles including those from across the Peace Corps professional network - PC HQ, RPCV groups, individuals, and more.

Feel free to jump into the [RPCV Network WhatsApp Channel](#) or connect with specific groups through the [RPCV Professional Network](#); you’ll find that RPCVs are happy to share their experiences as you consider your own!

Dive Into the Network



[Linktr.ee/RPCVnexus](https://linktr.ee/RPCVnexus)

The Professional Network is here for you to access and take benefit from, providing a boost up as you reach for the next step of your life and career.

Should you have questions that are not answered here, have thoughts on things to be added, or want to write an article from your experience, email us at Support@RPCVnexus.org !

Again, congratulations and welcome to the network!

Jonathan Keenan

Co-Founder & Executive Director of RPCVnexus

RPCV Cameroon, 2014-2016

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Before You COS

Download Your Documents

****One of the most pressing items to note because of the short timeline that it is accessible.**** Before you leave village / country, make sure that you have **downloaded and emailed to yourself** and/or printed the following items. You should be able to get all from the [RPCV Portal - instructions and complete list of docs here](#).

- Description of Service (DOS) - this is the log of everything you did during service. Keep this to remember in days, months, years to come and when submitting for school or job applications.
- Grab accomplishments, data, and summaries from the [Volunteer Portal](#) to reference later on.
- Any copies of your medical files - make requests through PCMO before you COS. If afterwards, email Office of Health Services medrecords@peacecorps.gov
- Awards, certificates, letters of recommendation from counterparts

Peace Corps Provided Healthcare Coverage - Physical and Mental Support

Peace Corps provides returning Volunteers with 30 days of physical health coverage and 30 days of mental health coverage. Both can be extended for an additional 60 days - keep this in mind so you don't miss out! Learn more at the [Short Term Health Insurance on the Peace Corps website](#)

Corps website

- Request your medical records from Peace Corps before COSing to transfer to your new medical provider, especially if you were injured or experienced an accident
- Find a provider near where you're going or even virtual ones
- If applicable, get onto your parent's healthcare until the age of 26
- Consider eligibility for Medicare / Medicaid
- Any additional paperwork

Readjustment Allowance

You get a check of about \$12,000 when you COS! Taxes will automatically be taken from the amount). As you consider a COS trip, taking care of student loans, and how to stand on your own feet when you get back, consider some options below and [read more here](#)

- Take care of your W-2 Form. Taxes might not be fun, but better to do and get them over with.
- Buy-back your deferred public, federal student loans
- Consider what you'll need when you get 'home' - housing / apartment; food; transportation
- Invest a portion to create a rainy day fund
- Invest back into yourself: get professional clothes made in country or when you return; take a certification program; invest into your own organization or business

Prepping for the Flight

COSing with a Pet

Our four-legged sitemates often make all the difference during service with some becoming traveling companions who return with us to the US. [Check the full list and links here.](#)

- Getting shots, passport, and visa for your pet
- Finding a travel container, blankets, & bed to keep comfy
- Passport and any visas for the pet
- Snack or treats if bringing on the plane
- Getting your pet's flight ticket
- Any relaxing medication for the flight

Bags Packed; Things Given as Gifts

What will go into a bag, to a host family member, the school or passed down to the next Volunteer? Will you hold a garage sale or give things away? Consider what souvenirs to bring back with you

- Great 'leave behind' gifts are things that made your life easier: solar lamps, a good knife or pair of boots. You can get another more easily than they can and they'll remember you longer than the thing will work
- One fun gift is to print off pictures of you and a community member then write a note on the back for them to keep

COS Trip to Another Country

Reach out to PCVs and/or RPCVs in that country! People are often willing to host, provide a place to sleep, and recommend spots to check out. Ask in the [Travel Tips Group in the RPCV WhatsApp Community](#)

- Money exchange
- Connect with local PCVs and Expats for recs
- Visa and renew personal passport
- Activities - SCUBA cert, safari, beach, food?!
- Sign up with [STEP through State Department](#), just in case

Returning with (or ahead of) a Partner - Community Member or Another PCV

While we all bring back mementos from service to remind us of village and talk about through Goal 3, many take this a step further by working on Goal 4 - finding a partner in country.

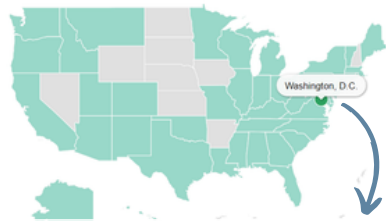
[Get the Full List and Read Samantha Cade-Mnisi's Experience](#)

- Have the long-term conversation on what next steps could mean
- How are you going to stay in touch while distant? Calls, emails, letters...
- If an Community Member: [Passport and visa requirements](#); tickets for traveling
- Consider any documentation assistance that might be needed for visas. Note key dates and decisions: when you met, meeting parents, etc. and save photos, emails, journal entries

Connecting to the RPCV Network

“Who should I talk to about opportunities? How do I find connections?” One of the greatest benefits you have is [access to a network of RPCVs](#) in over 175+ groups, ~130 of which are affiliated with NPCA. While groups have different categories, we’ve created maps and grouped them on our site for ease of finding them. For the maps on the site, simply click the state or country and information will show on the right side!

Locality-Based Groups



RPCVs of Washington, D.C.
Website: www.rpcvw.org
Email: info@rpcvw.org

Service Country Groups



Friends of South Africa:
Email: friendsofmzansi@gmail.com

Cause-Based Groups

LGBTQI+
Peace Corps Museum
Partnering for Peace
Women of Peace Corps
Legacy
... and more!

Workplace Groups

RPCVs & Friends at USDA
RPCVs at CDC
RPCVs at EPA
RPCVs in Higher Education
RPCVs in Law
... and more!

Connect with individual RPCVs through the network on WhatsApp or pair with a Mentor in the [Community-Wide Mentoring Program and Individual Mentors](#) willing to chat at any point!

- Join the [RPCV Network on WhatsApp](#)
- Connect to your country of service group
- Connect to groups back in the US
- [Connect with an RPCV Mentor](#)
- Find [Discounts for RPCVs](#)



Register for the next cohort

By the end of January for the February cohort
By the end of July for the August cohort

Considering Next Steps: Study, Work, Live

So this is why RPCVnexus was created - to provide services and support as consider next steps be it going back to school, finding a job, or anything else.

Going Back to School

Volunteers get a Masters degree or higher. Yes, it can be expense - BUT 1,000s have done it and survived. You can too! Check out the Education Resource Page for these [articles](#) & more!

- [Finding a Grad School and Program](#)
- [Coverdell & Financing School](#)
- [International Graduate / Professional School](#)
- [Prep your application](#)

Finding Work

Whether its right away or after some time, we're here to make sure you put your best foot forward when you apply for opportunities. Here are all of our [job related articles](#)

- [Link to the career resource page](#)
- [RPCVnexus Job Board](#)
- [Link to the Newsletter sign up](#)
- [PC Job Board & Sector specific job boards](#)
- [Resume Review & Support](#)
- [NCE & USA Jobs for federal employment](#)
- [Recorded Discussions & Career Panels on Spotify](#)

Life after service

It's not always about work and we create space for ourselves to connect and to serve others. Readjustment is hard, take the space for you.

- [Transitioning back home](#) - an article on some common things felt, considered, and needed to figure out that are not work or school related, but about life itself and coming back 'home'.
- Coping with [reverse culture shock](#) from RPCV Health Crusade
- [Bringing It Home](#) - a substack on how RPCVs bring service home through shared meals, conversations with neighbors, and taking the time to simply talk.
- Typically in-country visa will lapse after 30 days. Will need to get it renewed on your own
- [Living Overseas and not returning to the US](#)
- [Healthcare conversations from the RPCV Health Crusade](#) - some additional information on healthcare and insurance after service



Plug straight into the RPCV Professional Network by signing up for the monthly newsletter for the latest discussions and events; jobs shared across the network; the Mentoring Cohort; and more!

A One-Stop-Shop for Volunteers Taking the Next Step



Resources from Across the Community RPCVnexus Connects You To

Current and Returned Volunteers can quickly find a compilation of [resources](#), [upcoming career discussions](#), [job boards](#), a [network of RPCVs](#) and more.



Developed an Online Community through WhatsApp

Plug into a virtual network of RPCV Professionals through the [WhatsApp Community](#) to informally get and share advice and information.



Individualized Career Services

Let us help you [put your best foot forward](#) or consider which path you wish to take by connecting with a network of RPCV Coaches.



Distribute a Monthly Newsletter

[Get the latest](#) updates, events, news, and opportunities exclusive to PCVs and RPCVs on a regular basis.



Community-Wide Mentoring Program

[Connect with a Mentor or Mentee](#) from across the RPCV Network of Groups to talk on a regular basis. Held in the Spring and the Fall.



Career Panels & Skill Discussions

[Monthly conversations](#) as RPCVs talk of the career paths they took and about the education and skills gained and honed along the way. Recordings are found on our [Spotify](#).



Professional Workshops

Readying Volunteers as they take the next step in their career through resume writing seminars, transition conversations, and upskilling opportunities.



COS Conference Presentations

Preparing Current Volunteers prepare through resume workshops and discussions as they consider their options post-service. Contact us about joining an upcoming COS Conference! - Support@RPCVnexus.org