

BOSTON AREA RETURNED PEACE CORPS
VOLUNTEERS

ANNUAL REPORT 2020





Dear BARPCV Community,

While every year brings its challenges, 2020 will no doubt go down in history as unprecedented, marked by a global pandemic, ongoing protests, and a stressful election. Peace Corps itself made the unprecedented move of evacuating every single currently-serving Peace Corps Volunteer, leaving RPCVs, affiliate groups, and the NPCA scrambling to provide support. This has also become a time of reflection for the RPCV community: who are we as a Peace Corps? What about the Peace Corps do we most value, and where is there room for improvement and change? How can we improve the Peace Corps before it relaunches? If you have not already, I encourage you to check out NPCA's community report, "Peace Corps Connect to the Future": <https://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/cpages/peace-corps-connect-to-the-future>.

In March of this year, BARPCV joined forces with the NPCA and the JFK Presidential Library and Museum to launch Peace Corps Week 2020 with a screening of the Peace Corps Documentary "*A Towering Task: The Story of the Peace Corps*," with over 500 people in attendance and over \$1,500 raised. BARPCV also hosted an event every night of Peace Corps Week. Little did we know that these would be our last in-person gatherings for some time.

Throughout the Pandemic, BARPCV has continued to provide virtual gatherings for our membership, including Zoom-based happy hours, trivia nights, storytelling events, and a BARPCV summer picnic/scavenger hunt. We even hosted our annual September New Members Party in a virtual setting. We also awarded 4 Community Grants this year (instead of the usual two), with a focus on our RPCV community both at home and abroad.

We continue to seek opportunities to best serve our members and community. We appreciate your support, participation, and suggestions. Thank you for keeping this community alive. On behalf of the BARPCV Board, I wish all of you better skies in 2021. Yours in Service,

Elise Simons
BARPCV President
RPCV Zambia 2010-2013



2020 BARPCV ANNUAL REPORT

Boston Area Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, Inc. (BARPCV) is a non-profit, membership-based organization, founded by Carol Ball, Marjorie Harrison and Nancy Tiedeman in 1978, that serves as a support network for newly returned & prospective volunteers, and for those who have served or worked for the US Peace Corps. BARPCV also serves as an educational resource by connecting local communities with the unique experiences of members who gained important insight from living and working abroad. As BARPCV members, we share our skills and knowledge gained through Peace Corps life and professional experiences with our friends, families and the greater community, in hopes of promoting a better understanding of each other and the world.





BARPCV EXECUTIVE BOARD



Elise Simons
President

Peter Hulbert
Vice President



Matt Walsh
Treasurer

Erin Meade
Secretary



2020 OUTGOING CHAIRS

We thank the following board members, who stepped down from the BARPCV Board of Directors during 2020, for their service to the organization:

Lynn Arsenault, Events Chair
Kevin Crooks, TGIF Chair
Jannah Muhammad, Community Grants Chair
Gladys Muñoz Romero, Communications Chair
Kevin O'Brien, Community Service Chair
Tamene Tedla, Third Goal/Speakers Bureau



BARPCV BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Megan Compaine
Social Ambassador

Mathew Corliss
Community Grants

[Image Missing]



Erika Gianni
Communications

Charlie Klemmer
Careers



Rebecca Madden-Sturges
Photos

Holden Mills
Sports



Sara Pipe-Mazo
Events

Caitlyn Winders
Third Goal



For full BARPCV Board Information, please visit: <https://www.barpcv.org/cpages/board-of-directors>



COMMUNICATIONS

BARPCV communicates with its members and the larger community through emails, social media, the monthly newsletter, and the BARPCV website (barpcv.org). BARPCV frequently uses the monthly Newsletter, Instagram, Facebook, Facebook forum, and (to a lesser extent) Twitter to promote events, share important information with the community, and advertise jobs and volunteer opportunities for community members.



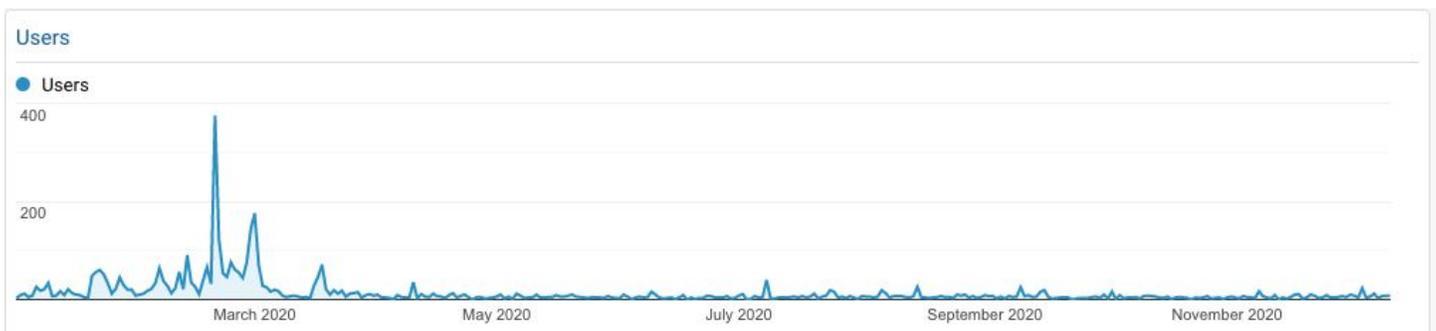
In 2020, BARPCV distributed 21 Newsletters to a total of 190 BARPCV members utilizing the existing website software. Newsletters feature general announcements, promotions of upcoming BARPCV events, and links to the BARPCV website and social media accounts. The average open rate for BARPCV Newsletters was 50.14%, with an average click rate of 10.33%. The February and September 2020 newsletters received the most views.

On nine occasions, supplemental mailings were sent to current and former members and other BARPCV contacts to amplify specific events. Special announcements regarding the annual potluck, a ski trip, Peace Corps Week, Towering Task documentary viewing, Covid 19 Forum, and the new members party were delivered to over 1,200 contacts.

The BARPCV Facebook page has 1,499 followers and has gotten 1,393 page likes in the past year. BARPCV published 24 events to Facebook in 2020, reaching 8,000 people and receiving 346 responses. The Facebook forum has 820 members, and BARPCV members posted 17 times in November alone. To encourage BARPCV membership for Facebook forum members, BARPCV began sending membership information to all who requested to join the group. The Instagram account (@BARPCV) saw a 114% increase in followers in the past year to a total of 300 followers. In one 30-day period, BARPCV's Instagram account reached 188 accounts and had 855 impressions. This past year, a Linktree link was added to the Instagram and Facebook accounts to facilitate ease of connecting members to other BARPCV pages, and a social media calendar helped organize effective daily posts to Facebook and Instagram.

The BARPCV website serves as a source of information for our membership as well as prospective and serving Peace Corps volunteers and their families. In August, the Communications and Social Chairs performed a comprehensive review and update of the existing website. This started with a review of existing pages, identifying content and imagery that needed to be changed or refreshed. All pages throughout the site were refreshed during the month of August with several pages retired or refined to include more up-to-date content.

10,509 people visited the barpcv.org website in 2020. The majority of website access occurred in March, with over 2,900 people visiting the Towering Task event page. That event and the homepage were the most-visited webpages.





IN-PERSON EVENTS

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic severely limited our ability to host events. The Welcome Back/Send Off events, generally held twice a year in collaboration with the Peace Corps, were cancelled. Softball season and the annual canoe/camping trip were put on hold. Other regular BARPCV events, such as the New Members Party and the Annual Summer Picnic, were moved to a virtual setting. It is our hope to resume in-person activities as soon as it is safe to do so.

Between January and March 2020, BARPCV hosted multiple in-person events, including a ski trip to Mount Sugarloaf, multiple gatherings over Peace Corps Week, and the Annual Meeting/Potluck. In January, 10 people attended a lively Board Game Night at a cafe in Brookline, and a large crowd gathered for TGIF at Darryl's Corner Bar and Kitchen in the South End. Our largest event, the viewing of "*A Towering Task*," attracted over 500 members of the RPCV community and launched a packed week of Peace Corps Week activities. More details are provided below.



Ski Trip

Over Martin Luther King Jr Holiday Weekend, 6 RPCVs went on our annual ski trip to Sugarloaf Mountain in Maine. We stayed at a cabin and skied for 2 days. This was one of 11 in-person events held in 2020.

Annual Meeting/Potluck

At the end of January, BARPCV hosted an annual meeting at Hosting International. While we discussed last year's accomplishments and brainstormed activities for the following year, the main attraction was a potluck dinner featuring menu items from around the world.

A Towering Task

To kick off Peace Corps week 2020, BARPCV partnered with the National Peace Corps Association and the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum to host a film screening of the documentary "*A Towering Task: The Story of the Peace Corps*" on March 1, 2020. The film screening was followed by a Q&A Panel featuring: Alana De Joseph, RPCV Mali, film Producer and Director; Glenn Blumhorst, RPCV Guatemala, NPCA CEO/President; Mark Gearan, former U.S. Peace Corps Director and current Director of IOP at Harvard University; and moderator Alan Price, Director of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. The panel led a discussion for strategies for the Peace Corps community to continue supporting the Peace Corps and its ideals.

Over 500 RPCVs, members of the Peace Corps community, and the general public attended the film screening event. Members were invited to join BARPCV for an afterparty at Dorchester Brewing. With generous support from our members, we surpassed our target of \$1500 – excess funds were redirected for grants and other BARPCV activities as voted upon by the BARPCV board.





Peace Corps Week

Each year, BARPCV celebrates Peace Corps Week by holding a variety of events. This year, an estimated 50 or more RPCVs gathered for, Trivia Night at Barlow’s Restaurant, Restaurant Night at Mumbai Spice, Comedy Night at Bill’s Bar, Trampoline Fun at Sky Zone, TGIF at Aeronaut Brewery, Ice Skating at Frog Pond, and Sunday Brunch at Cafe Luna.



VIRTUAL EVENTS

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, all of our events relocated to a virtual setting in March. Using Zoom software, BARPCV hosted 14 virtual events with over 80 total attendees, including trivia nights, storytelling events, open mic nights, facilitated discussions about the Peace Corps, and several informal happy hours. Our Careers Chair hosted a Virtual Careers Night with over 15 attendees and assisted 3 additional RPCVs seeking employment. We also launched a virtual Pop Culture Media Club in December. For our last virtual event of the year, 6 RPCVs wrote over 70 holiday cards to nursing homes and the Fall River Deaconess Center to wish them a happy holiday season. We look forward to continuing and expanding our virtual activities in 2021 and resuming our in-person activities once it is safe to do so.

Summer Picnic

In August, BARPCV hosted a virtual picnic in place of our usual annual gathering. We encouraged all 13 participants to call in from an outdoor location if they were able to do so. We had a fun afternoon of socializing, which included a Peace-Corps-themed scavenger hunt.

New Members Party

Annually in September, BARPCV hosts a celebration for new and current members to meet and mingle. Unfortunately, an in-person event was not in the cards for us this year. Instead, BARPCV hosted a virtual New Members' Party for all new and recently evacuated RPCVs who have a connection to the Boston area. We had presentations from our grantees and a scavenger hunt with 9 people in attendance.



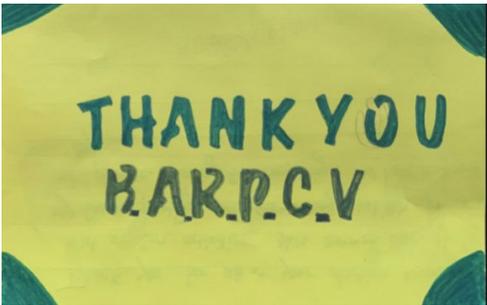


GRANTS

As part of our mission of supporting Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and the larger Peace Corps community, we usually fund a community grant of \$500 twice annually, in the Spring and Fall, to either a local or international program affiliated with a Boston-Area RPCV. This year, thanks to extra funds raised by the *“Towering Task”* documentary film screening event, we were able to award four grants to two local and two international programs.

Spring Grants

The first grant awarded in the Spring of 2020 provided study aids for kindergarten children’s cognitive, physical and intellectual development in the rural town of Sisian, Armenia. Boston resident and RPCV Anastasia Bannikova was a Peace Corps volunteer in this community from June 2019 until her March 2020 evacuation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The objective of the project is to provide a kindergarten in this community with developmental learning aids (e.g. books, math games, Armenian and English alphabet study aids etc.) and toys for approximately 100 children.



The second grant was awarded to the Fall River Deaconess Home, where RPCV Grace Williams is Assistant Deputy Executive Director. The Fall River Deaconess Home provides comprehensive Group Living and Residential Treatment services to teenage girls in the care and custody of the Department of Children and Families. The grant funds provided activity supplies, literature and electronics for the girls at Deaconess Home so that they could engage in new programs and activities while family visits and community outings were on hold during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Images on this page are from them.

Fall Grants

Two grants were awarded in December 2020 to Women's Economic Empowerment in Librazhd, Albania, and More than Words in Boston, Massachusetts. The grants will begin in January.

More Than Words (MTW) is a social enterprise that empowers young adults ages 16-24 who are court-involved, in the foster care system, out-of-school, or homeless to take charge of their lives by taking charge of a business. This grant allowed their Career Services Department to provide improved virtual support to young people through digital modules, virtual check-ins, and improved website management. RPCV Domitille Burcatu joined the MTW Career Services Department after being evacuated from her Peace Corps Service in Colombia due to COVID-19.

In Librazhd, Albania, a group of 15 women plan to generate income for themselves and their families by raising chickens. This grant will fund the initial purchase of chickens and needed supplies to begin the work and an overnight trip to receive training on best practices for raising chickens. This will also provide an opportunity to invest the profits into other income-generating activities. RPCV Mike Black, Boston-Area Recruiter for the Peace Corps, served in this community from 2017-2019.

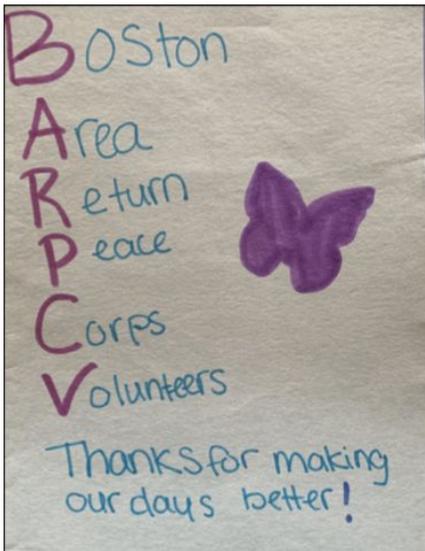




PHOTO CONTEST

The BARPCV Photo Contest continues to be a great opportunity to showcase RPCVs’ countries of service and connect with the larger Boston community through local cafes. This year, we received 30 submissions from ten different photographers for the 2020 photo contest. Ten were selected by the board and displayed in Simon’s Coffee Shop during the fall. The winners, Jonathan Foster-Moore and Ellen Kim, were announced and received cash prizes in December.



MEMBERSHIP

In 2020, we performed a community survey of our members to better understand our impact as an organization and which programs, events, and services are most sought after by our members. We used that information to inform virtual event planning in 2020 and plan to apply to in-person events in the future. We saw a modest increase in membership in 2020, with a large number of new and continuing memberships, as shown in the table below.

Plan Name	Members at Start	Joins	Renewals	Expiries	Change	Members at End	Renewal Rate (%)
Student BARPCV Membership	11	6	0	11	-5	6	0
Family BARPCV Membership	5	7	1	4	3	8	20
New BARPCV Membership	78	87	6	71	16	94	8
Individual BARPCV Membership	98	41	52	39	2	100	57
Total Members	192	141	59	125	16	208	



TREASURER'S REPORT

BARPCV ended the 2020 fiscal year with a cash equivalent balance of \$15,678.08. For fiscal year 2020, BARPCV's expenses were \$5,148.29, and the organization's income was \$6,184.55, leaving BARPCV with a \$1,036.26 positive cash flow for the year. A detailed profit and loss statement has been provided in the table below.

Profit and Loss Statement

January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020

Revenue	
Amazon Smile	\$11.96
BARPCV Direct Memberships	\$60.00
BARPCV NPCA Memberships	\$2,820.00
Donations from Towering Task Event	\$1,945.00
Other Donations	\$640.00
Ski Trip Ticket Sales	\$690.00
Sales of Product	\$17.21
Gross Profit	\$6,184.55



Profit and Loss Statement (continued)

January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020

Expenses		
Event	Towering Task	\$1,990.32
Event	Photo Contest	\$328.08
Event	Board Outing	\$120.00
Gross Events		\$2,438.40
Grant	Community Grant: Fall River Deaconess Home	\$500.00
Grant	Community Grant: Armenia Education Project	\$500.00
Gross Grants & Donations		\$1,000.00
General	Annual Nonprofit Corporation Fee	\$18.50
General	Printing and Postage	\$231.23
General	P.O. Box	\$366.00
General	Bank Charges	\$40.00
General	Online Software	\$701.94
General	Paypal Fees	\$76.48
General	NPCA Affiliation	\$250.00
General	Administrative Costs	\$25.74
Gross Administrative		\$1,709.89
Total Expenses		\$5,148.29



Boston Area Returned Peace Corps Volunteers™

Boston Area Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, Inc. (BARPCV) is a non-profit organization founded in 1978 with approximately 400 members concentrated in Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire. BARPCV seeks to connect with and support Returned Peace Corps Volunteers as well as those thinking of serving and to carry out the third goal of the Peace Corps, as stated in the 1961 Peace Corps Act: “to promote a better understanding of other people on the part of American people.”

BARPCV is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization with employer identification number 04-2716236. All charitable contributions are fully tax-deductible to the extent of the law. Proceeds support our small grants program and programming for members.

Contact us at info@barpcv.org.

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