

Motivation Statement

Service to others has been an important part of my life for a long time now. In high school, I chaired youth councils, led a Boy Scout troop and created service projects including a \$3,000 amphitheater affecting hundreds of people. In college, I co-founded the largest service club on campus, volunteered hundreds of hours to my community and created even larger service projects; these affecting thousands of people. Bigger meant better. If I could positively impact dozens of people, I would go for hundreds, and if hundreds, I would go for thousands. However, when I went to Costa Rica a lot of things changed. I saw the interaction of people in small communities and they helped me understand, for the first time, that I had been obsessed with quantity over quality. I had always thought bigger meant better, but after seeing wonderful people in the small families around me, I realized I had a lot to learn. Better, I found, was helping people, person by person, one by one.

Maybe it's because I'm young and feel so powerful, but I have always struggled with a saying by Confucius that to change the world we must first change ourselves, then our families, then our communities, then our countries and then eventually the world. I have always felt a strong urge to skip ahead and try to make change at the highest level possible. When I arrived in Costa Rica I wanted to tell other people how to change, how to become happier and how to be more successful. However, what I found was, as many Peace Corps volunteers have said, I had a lot to learn myself. My new family and friends in Costa Rica taught me what it takes to make them happy and their examples were very different from the world view that I brought into their country. Because of that experience, I was able to bring quite a different world view back when I came home.

I want to serve others, as I have wanted to for a long time, and I think loving other people is one of the greatest ways to serve them. I have built many things, founded many organizations and held many titles, but now I would like to build relationships with people, one by one, and cherish the many close relationships I already have. I would like to create a solid foundation for myself emphasizing compassion and service to others, and I would like to hold the title of Peace Corps Volunteer as I try to do both of these things. Visiting with Peace Corps Volunteers in Costa Rica, talking with so many people who have been positively affected by Peace Corps, and living with new friends and family in Costa Rica transformed me in incredible ways. I can only imagine what two years in the Peace Corps will do.