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## Peace Corps ideals started at Colorado State

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### Water resource management led to travel abroad

Maurice "Maury" Albertson has always been fascinated with visiting countries and cultures new to him. During his trips, he not only taught others about new innovations in his field of water resource management, but he discovered many different ways of life in environments outside the United States.

It was this passion that prompted his colleagues at other colleges in 1958 to suggest that he be the one tapped to help build an engineering college on the Mekong River - to be known as the Asian Institute of Technology - in Bangkok, Thailand, under the authority of the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization.

### Passion to spread good will to underdeveloped nations

At the time, Albertson couldn't have known that his drive to disseminate knowledge, provide leadership, and spread good will to underdeveloped nations would have a lasting influence on the students of Colorado State and on more than 180,000 people throughout the country who have volunteered for the Peace Corps over the past 46 years.

Students who have signed on for a 27-month Peace Corps mission hail the experience as an opportunity to be immersed in new cultures by putting education to work soon after finishing school.

"Aside from an amazing cultural experience, I found that I was able to use the skills right away that I learned through earning my degree," says Tami Wolff, who graduated from Colorado State in 1998 and went to the Solomon Islands to teach English.

### Peace Corps initiated in the early 1960s

Albertson arrived at Colorado A&M (now CSU) in August 1947 to help bolster the College of Civil Engineering's water-resources management program. By 1958, Albertson had moved from being a professor in the college to overseeing all research projects on campus.

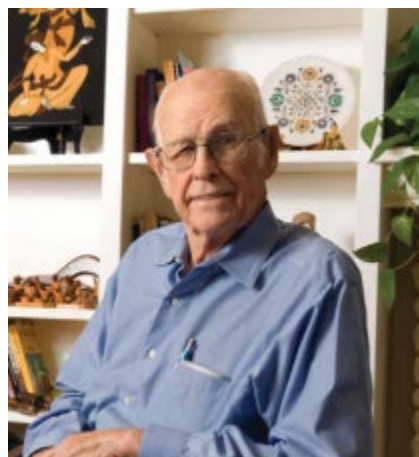
As the establishment of the Asian Institute of Technology neared completion, Albertson began to hear murmurs in the early 1960s of a new project called Point 4 Youth Corps. Given his background, Albertson was interested in conducting a study on how the program should operate. The program eventually was named Peace Corps.

### Albertson's study became the operational groundwork of the Corps

He tracked down the people who were conducting the search for the right person to design the program. By his own admission, Albertson was tenacious.

"I found an excuse to contact the people who were going to make the decision," Albertson says. "I had an excuse to contact them every week for four months. It worked."

With the help of his assistant, Pauline Birky-Kreutzer - who would eventually spend years working for the



CSU's Maurice "Maury" Albertson compiled a study that was accepted by Sargent Shriver, the politician and Kennedy family member charged with forming the Peace Corps.

Peace Corps in Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan - Albertson compiled a study that was accepted by Sargent Shriver, the politician and Kennedy family member charged with forming the Peace Corps. That study became the operational groundwork of the organization.

"I've never talked to a guy who caught on so fast," Albertson says of Shriver. "He was an amazing guy."

### **Volunteers are launched**

On April 1, 1962, President John F. Kennedy addressed the first-ever class of Peace Corps volunteers, telling them their "influence may be far-reaching and will go far beyond the immediate day-to-day tasks that you may do in the months that are ahead."

Part of the reward for Peace Corps volunteers is the ability to use their experience toward a master's degree, says Martha Denney, director of International Education at Colorado State. Students can complete a portion of their master's through the Masters International Program before heading out on 27-month volunteer commitments. Upon their return, students complete the program, using their experiences as a basis for a thesis. Students studying natural resources, English education, agriculture, and nutrition can participate in the program.

"It's a wonderful opportunity for them to transition back and debrief everything they took in during their volunteering," Denney says, adding that 55 Masters International Program students at the University currently are volunteering in the Peace Corps.

### **More than 1,400 Colorado State alumni have been Peace Corps volunteers**

Colorado State ranks 12th in the nation among large colleges and universities in the number of alumni serving as Peace Corps volunteers, according to 2006 rankings by the Peace Corps. Since the organization's inception in 1961, more than 1,400 Colorado State alumni have volunteered. The Peace Corps has experienced an increase in applications to 12,242 in 2006 from 8,917 in 2001.

The majority of volunteers are put to work in educational positions, according to the organization. Others go into health-related fields, business development, environment, youth development, and agriculture.

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