

Peace Corps News

The Latest News about the Peace Corps and the Returned Volunteer Community

January 26, 2009

Maury Albertson, one of the architects of the Peace Corps, has died at 90



Maury Albertson, one of the architects of the Peace Corps, died at 90 on January 11. [India RPCV Jane Albritton has written her memories Albertson and his contributions to the Peace Corps:](#)

"As Maury recounted his story, his voice was still filled with the wonder of it all. He remained amazed that everything moved so fast. That Sargent Shriver could put together a team that included Bill Moyers and Warren Wiggins. That "Sarge" had the stamina to have lunch with every legislator in DC to get the money to fund JFK's vision and Maury's plan. Colorado State became one of the first training sites for volunteers, and Pauline became the first director in Pakistan. Check it out. In 1961 a Farsi-speaking woman running the show in Muslim Pakistan where the first group included three Black volunteers. Martin Luther King made his "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963, and it took until 1964 for the Civil Rights Act to bar discrimination in employment on the basis of race and sex. I came to understand that the pivotal role he played in the development of the Peace Corps was just part of his bigger, personal vision for Peace on Earth. Just weeks before he died at 90, he had been in Jakarta, Indonesia, teaching a doctorate-level class on sustainable development. Who was this guy? I have tried to come up with an image for Maury. Here's the best I can do. I think he was like a big planet with its own gravitational pull. Even from a distance, it looks bright in the night sky. But what happens when you look more closely with a stronger telescope? Why there's more. The bright planet - like Jupiter, maybe - has color and 63 moons orbiting around it. And no matter how close you get, the vision never gets out of focus, even as it turns - with apparent joy - in multiple motions. That would be Maury. "

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