



## The Peace Corps in Malawi

Jill Bhowmik, Returned Peace Corps Volunteer  
California

### ☀ Call to Action

To get involved with one of the many goodwill Peace Corps Initiatives around the world, please visit [www.peacecorps.gov](http://www.peacecorps.gov)

### ☀ Values

- Commitment
- Dedication
- Altruism
- Creativity
- Open-Mindedness

### ☀ Lessons Learned

**Innovation and knowledge can be found in ancient traditions, too.** Look to people from different cultures, and learn from them.

**Our choices affect other people, too.**

We are citizens of the world, and the consequences of the way we treat our planet affects the global community.

**You can always learn from other people, regardless of their age, educational level, or position in life.**

**As a Peace Corps volunteer, Jill Bhowmik taught English in Malawi; and in the process she inspired countless young people.**

“When you decide to go halfway around the world with the Peace Corps, you think you are going to a place like Malawi to teach. And you do. But it didn’t take long for me to realize that the amazing people and places involved with the Peace Corps end up teaching you.”

As a creative educator, Jill found many novel ways to encourage young people in Malawi, and to accelerate cross-cultural knowledge sharing, which is central to the Peace Corps’ overall mission and goals. Today she teaches English and Journalism at Granite Hills High School in San Diego, her alma mater. She also runs the school newspaper and the literary magazine, where the bravery and creativity of her students’ writing never ceases to inspire her.

### ☀ Language Arts

**What is the Peace Corps?** Write a research essay about the Peace Corps: explain what it is, how it started, what its goals are, and what its mission statement is.

**Visit the [Peace Corps Website](#)<sup>1</sup>.** Choose a country and a project that appeals to you. Create a PowerPoint presentation in which you explain what the Peace Corps is doing in the country you chose, why you think it is important, and how people can help support the cause (aside from donating money).

**Malawi is a country with a very small carbon footprint, yet it is suffering from the consequences of climate change brought on by human activity in the industrialized world.**

Write a compare and contrast essay, in which you compare Malawi’s economy and susceptibility to climate change with the situation in the U.S. What conclusions can you reach after making this comparison?

## STEM Activities

**Investigate the role of soil fertility in improving food security using the [The Growing Challenge in Senegal](#)**

**[WebQuest activity](#)<sup>2</sup>.** Learn from the experiences of two Peace Corps volunteers who worked with Senegalese farmers to use knowledge of the local soil to improve agricultural productivity. After completing the WebQuest, try using a soil-testing kit to determine the nutrient content in soil samples from your community.

**Search the [UN's website](#)<sup>3</sup> for their estimated and projected total world population, and world population by area (region).** What information can you gather from these data and projections? Compare the data with the [FAO map of Prevalence of Under-nourishment](#)<sup>4</sup> in the Total Population. Given the projected trends, in which regions of the world do you predict the greatest food security challenges in the coming decades? How would a higher or lower rate of population growth change your predictions?

**Returned Peace Corps volunteers involved in the [Speakers Match](#)<sup>5</sup> program introduce students to the Peace Corps experience and explain how STEM education can be used abroad.** Invite a returned volunteer to speak to your students about a specific topic, or area of the world where STEM knowledge is needed.

## Sustainability Innovations

**[Action for Environmental Sustainability](#)<sup>6</sup> is a Malawian organization that was founded in 2007 to address the critical root causes of poverty and environmental degradation.** Food security and sanitation are at the source of addressing both of these issues in many of their projects.

**[Sustainable Rural Growth and Development Initiative](#)<sup>7</sup> is a Malawi-based organization that is focused on economic empowerment, and improving the peoples' lives through better access to clean water and sanitation.** They try to address additional cross-cutting areas like HIV & AIDs, gender and women's empowerment, and the response to COVID-19.

**Jill was able to use her experience in the Peace Corps as a way to become more globally aware, and to help communities around the world.** The Peace Corps is not the only organization that has made it a priority to assist the rest of the world. [World Teach](#)<sup>8</sup> is an organization that focuses on similar issues by placing college graduates as volunteer teachers in countries around the globe for one-year teaching commitments at secondary schools.

**In addition to volunteers reaching students from around the world and assisting struggling communities, it is important for students to connect with each other too.** [Collaborative Online International Learning](#)<sup>9</sup> has become an integral way for students to collaborate on global issues. This is vital in order for today's students to develop the ability to grasp world-focused issues and become a part of the solutions to a better future.

## Sustainability Career Pathways

**Peace Corps or AmeriCorps.** While not a lifelong career, Peace Corps and AmeriCorps (or if you're from a developing country, joining a program, like Germany's [Weltwärts](#)<sup>10</sup>) offer opportunities to learn new skills and languages, and to discover other cultures--all while helping others by teaching, farming, or other skills. Want to learn more about the Peace Corps? [Start here](#)<sup>11</sup>.

**High School Teacher.** Often people who want to help save the planet think about teaching environmental studies or science. But any subject can incorporate sustainability messaging--whether its English literature, history, social studies, even art. Teaching is a noble

profession and there are never enough passionate teachers. Already convinced this is the path for you? Here's a good guide on [how to become a teacher](#)<sup>12</sup>. Want to weigh the pros and cons? [Start here](#)<sup>13</sup>.

**Journalism Teacher.** Today, between local newspapers shutting down and large news outlets becoming more polarized, it's more essential than ever to inspire a new generation of journalists who are passionately committed to discovering and reporting the truth. Jill teaches journalism in order to do just that. Perhaps you'll become a journalist--or, like Jill, maybe you'll teach journalism, to help grow the field. Here's an introduction to getting [certified as a journalism teacher](#).<sup>14</sup> But you don't need to wait. You can start teaching journalism informally right away: get involved with your school paper or magazine; learn all you can about reporting and editing, and help your peers become better writers. [Here are six tips](#)<sup>15</sup>.

**Nonprofit Manager.** Many people work for nonprofit organizations. Some even found their own nonprofits. But very few have any formal management training, which is an ongoing problem in this sector. There are programs to train managers for nonprofit organizations specifically. While many of these are masters' level programs (such as [these leading programs](#)<sup>16</sup>), there are informal and undergraduate opportunities to learn essential management skills as well. And if you're really serious about this path, here's a 500+ page [introduction to the field](#)<sup>17</sup>.

---

1 <https://www.peacecorps.gov/>

2 <https://www.lessonplanet.com/teachers/webquest-the-growing-challenge-in-senegal>

3 <https://www.un.org/en/>

4 <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-fs/en/>

5 <https://www.peacecorps.gov/educators/speakers-match/>

6 <https://www.afesmw.org/>

7 <http://www.srgdi.org/>

8 <https://www.worldteach.org/>

9 <https://coil.suny.edu/>

10 <https://www.weltwaerts.de/en/requirements-volunteers.html>

11 <https://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/is-peace-corps-right-for-me/>

12 <https://www.teachercertificationdegrees.com/become/>

13 <https://medium.com/teachers-on-fire/so-youre-thinking-of-becoming-a-teacher-818cb87cceb9>

14 <https://www.teaching-certification.com/journalism-teacher-certification.html>

15 <https://secondaryenglishcoffeshop.blogspot.com/2019/09/six-tips-for-teaching-journalism.html>

16 <https://www.usnews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-public-affairs-schools/nonprofit-management-rankings>

17 <https://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1119585457/stansociinn09-20>

