



Courtesy Photo

Skye Sieber (middle) is sworn into the Peace Corps at the training center in Ngaoundéré, Cameroon, on January 3, 1997. Stefan Cherry (left) and George Yebit (right) are also staff members with the Peace Corps, which has seen a recent increase in interest.

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world, but he said he hopes to gain an enlightened perspective of different cultures. Hawthorne also admitted that the state of the economy influenced his decision to join. He said he thinks it is more difficult to find a job now than it's ever been.

Tyler Crabtree, after graduating winter term, will leave as a Peace Corps volunteer with his wife. They decided to join in part because they didn't know which careers to pursue, but also so they could travel and gain new experiences.

"I wouldn't be surprised if more people were joining because of this year's events; especially people at the U of O. So many students want to reach out and help make a better image of the U.S.," Crabtree said.

Crabtree is hoping to be stationed in Eastern Europe. His wife would prefer Central America. Wherever they get sent, however, they aren't going to worry about their safety.

"We both realize the world is how it will be — regardless of where we go," Crabtree said.

According to the Peace Corps Web site, the agency is preparing for an increased presence in the Muslim world and other countries. Depending on the safety and security situation, the Peace Corps is eager to assist in the reconstruction of Afghanistan with the help of Crisis Corps volunteers. Sieber said the corps won't be sending new applicants or inexperienced volunteers to Afghanistan. In general, it tries to station people where they will be the most productive.

Foster, who is learning French, expects to be sent somewhere in West Africa, where there is a demand for French-speaking volun-

teers. Although she is anxious to go right now, she is also realistic.

"I think it's necessary to finish getting my foundation in education before I go out into the world and work with the Peace Corps and get diseases," Foster said with a laugh.

Sieber said she is impressed with the level of interest and the quality of applicants this year.

"They are already sincere people who are really committed," Sieber said. She has also noticed more calls from people in the community and more interest from graduate students.

"Sept. 11 actually greatly influenced my decision to join the Peace Corps. I feel it is now more important than ever to show Americans are doing good things."

Angela Susak
senior

The Peace Corps application process is extensive, with a great deal of paperwork, interviews and documents to be gathered and mailed across the country. This results from the Corps wanting to make sure they are sending the right people. Crabtree who has gone through the process, knows just how painstaking it can be. Still, he is determined to persevere.

"I think the Peace Corps isn't for everyone. It won't be a cushy life, and it will be frustrating. Some people aren't cut out for it. Hopefully I am," Crabtree said.

Kathryn Franz is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

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