



JENNIFER & DEREK SNELLING

Solomon Islands, 1995 – 1997

Jennifer and Derek set up a distance learning center for rural children unable to finish school. Local teachers ran the center after they left. Jennifer says, “I remember the days spent making coconut soup on the beach with the local women, the adventure of riding on a cargo ship across the open ocean, and hiking through a mangrove swamp to get to a remote village. The adventure of it all will never leave me. My time in Peace Corps influences my life every single day — in my ability to make the best of a situation, in the way I interact with people who see the world differently from myself, and in that I always know that I have friends around the world.” Jennifer is a freelance writer for The Register-Guard and the University of Oregon. Derek practices law with Shlesinger & deVilleneuve Attorneys, P.C.

SPIKE GILDEA

Nepal, 1983 – 1985

Spike was trained in Teaching English as Foreign Language (TEFL). It was challenging to get his students to speak English in so short a time in a village where nobody else spoke English. He says his more important contribution was exposing students and friends to a completely different way of being, especially surrounding a willingness to make mistakes in public. He says, “I made lots of them myself and I accepted them from my students.” Following Peace Corps, Spike became Night Manager at the Dairy Queen near the University of Oregon, then entered Oregon’s MA program. He says education looked great compared to the fast food industry. Spike has conducted fieldwork on isolated tribes in Venezuela, in the jungles of Brazil, and in Guyana, and written and lectured on the 15 related languages in the region. Spike taught at Rice University and is currently an Associate Professor of Linguistics at the University of Oregon. In his lectures he uses examples from his Peace Corps experience to illustrate “how good intentions do not protect Americans (like my younger self) from radiating that unique combination of ignorance and arrogance.”



“In my district in Tanzania, volunteers helped HIV positive people access free medication. They also supported secondary education, helped with agriculture, and taught women to make cookers that were affordable and environmentally friendly. At my mother’s funeral, they dressed in traditional fabric called *khanga* and participated in our rituals like immediate family.”

MARKO MWIPOPO

Kiswahili Instructor, University of Oregon



CHUCK KALNBACH

Lesotho, 1977

Chuck was 12 years old and his sister was 14 when their parents joined Peace Corps. His older brothers stayed home. Chuck’s mom had been an elementary school teacher in Michigan. In Lesotho, she worked at a national teacher training center. Chuck’s dad had an agriculture degree from Michigan State. In Lesotho, he taught farmers about root storage, root cellars, and how to grow alfalfa for cows. Chuck grew up in a small farming community in Michigan, with no minorities. In their small village in Lesotho, the Kalnbachs were the only minorities. Chuck says the experience fundamentally changed the way he viewed the world. Chuck is a Senior Instructor of Leadership and Communication at the University of Oregon’s Lindquist College of Business.



TOM ENGLISH

Nepal, 1966 – 1969



Tom’s Peace Corps site was cut off during monsoon season. He was the first and last volunteer to serve there. He built the first area high school and conducted the first local census of education needs. This determined where bridges would be built so that children could get to school. His Peace Corps experience made a big

impact on how he has lived his life — doing his best to make the world a better place. Tom is a Deacon at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, a Chaplain at the Lane County Jail, and Chairman of the Board of Sponsors, Inc., a nonprofit organization helping those released from prison. He is active in Rotary which gives him an opportunity to continue his service to the world at large.

