

The Toughest Newsletter You'll Ever Love

PEACE CORPS MOROCCO QUARTERLY-ISH

Spring 2018

Ramadan Around the Corner

Can you believe it, a newsletter released in a timely manner, Tbarkallah3lia! Wishing everyone a fruitful season of fasting (or not fasting), breaking fast (or not breaking fast), and generally enjoying great company with you neighbors and community. Ramadan mubarak! Bs7atkum!

If it's your first time or you need some help, here are some useful [fasting tips](#)!

رمضان مبارك

Summer Planning & Fun

For work:

Mix it up with GAD Glow and Bro Day Camps

Set goals for your language or professional development when things get slow

Work on intentional relationship building either with counterparts or develop a mentee

And remember, don't take things personally! Programs might not work. Work might be slow. It happens.

For play:

Gnaoua Festival in Essouira June 21-24 - Link to the [festival](#), link to [Gnaoua music](#)

Fes Sacred Music Festival - June 22 - June 28 - link to [festival](#), link to a [previous performance](#)

Hiking in the mountains - visit your Atlas Mountain volunteers and escape from the sun

Plan a trip to the beach! - Cool off and go swimming

Start a book or movie club with other volunteers

Supporting People with Special Needs



Supporting People With Special Needs committee is happy to welcome four new members from Staj 99 to the committee! **Maizie Martin**, **Yangzi Li**, **Natasha King**, and **Chelsea Mullen** will be working alongside the current members and transitioning into leadership roles as the members of Staj 98 finish their service.

20 PCVs attended a training in Rabat for the Special Olympics this April in order to prepare for the Special Olympics being held from May 5-10 in Ifrane. The training allowed volunteers to meet with staff from the Special Olympics and learn about the history of the games and more generally about the perceptions and treatment of people with disabilities in Morocco. People with disabilities face marginalization and discrimination throughout Morocco, but programs like the Special Olympics are striding to address these issues and demonstrate the capabilities of people of all abilities. Volunteers will travel to Ifrane this May to volunteer during the Olympics and work closely with the staff and athletes.

Along with this event, Michael Triozzi, a volunteer in the Nador Province, recently shared his experience using the “Starting the Conversation” toolkit with SPSN. During a discussion about the five senses in English class, Michael was inspired to improve his lesson to be more inclusive to people of all abilities after a student asked for the English word for someone who can not see. After reaching out to a member of SPSN, Michael developed a lesson on discussing blindness, deafness, and other special needs and abilities in a sensitive way.

Mike used the “Starting the Discussion” toolkit, which he says is a “great starting point- it had helpful language and learning materials for discussing special needs. I was able to combine that with a few original ideas into my next lesson for our class.” Michael’s students learned to write their names in Braille, learned some Moroccan sign language, listened to music by artists like Ray Charles and Beethoven, and looked at works of art by artists with visual impairment. “The conversation became geared much more toward ability rather than disability, my students were curious and enthusiastic, and I was very heartened by the result.”

Michael’s experience demonstrates how toolkits designed by SPSN can be utilized even if you do not work with people with disabilities in your site. The resources can be easily adapted to the group or association you hope to do them with. If you have any questions about the resources or want advice on how to implement these activities at site, please email us, we would love to hear from you. specialneedsmorocco@gmail.com

Volunteer Advisory Committee

VAC went and got five new committee members! Please welcome Alena Klimas, Brad Janocha, Nate Balk, Jalyn McNeal, and Senju Rajan.

Alena is an outdoorsy, history buff living in the midst of the high Atlas Mountains. She likes working on sports and environment projects. **Brad** is an enthusiastic volunteer who loves starting clubs and talking about his town dinosaur. **Nate** is a die hard Cardinals fan who loves airplanes and husky dogs. **Jalyn** is an aspiring polyglot who would love to see the whole world someday and who is at all times sporting his alma mater, UNC, gear. **Senju** shares a distinction with few others, a complete and unabashed love for both Smashmouth and Lil' Romeo, he continues to spread the underappreciated majesty of both artists in his community.

What VAC can do for you:

- Support you and talk about what's going in your service
- Help you with policy questions and research
- Gather staj and committee wide data/issues to bring to PC Administration

What VAC can't do for you:

- Communicate with PC administration for you if you break a policy. Individual issues with PC administration must be handled directly with the Country Director or other staff.

VAC Updates & Projects:

- **VAC EMAIL:** VACMorocco@gmail.com
- Working on creating a VAC landing page and survey to keep at pcmorocco.org
- Finance Meeting with Bill and Youssef
- Preparing for VAC calling during Ramadan

VAC Contact Information - *Don't hesitate to reach out whenever for whatever*

Liz Day (0639299830)

Michael Triozzi (0639299891)

Senju Rajan (0639299869)

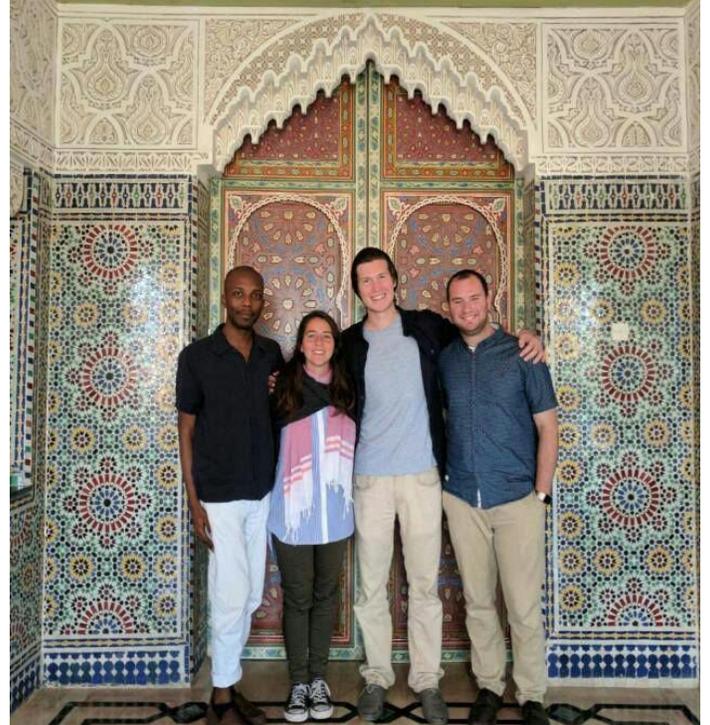
Will Burriss (0639299815)

Alena Klimas (0639195854)

Jalyn McNeal (0639195865)

Nate Balk (0639195805)

Brad Janocha (0639195849)



Volunteer Support Network

Hello Peace Corps Morocco,

We hope all is well at site in these spring months prior to Ramadan and the BAC exams. VSN would like to introduce five new members from Staj 99 that have recently joined the VSN Morocco team:

Hunter Levy lives in Ait Bougamez, a collection of Tamazight villages in the High Atlas Mountains located in the Azilal Province. He runs an English Club at a local association and assists his sitemate, Alena Klimas, with a girls' sports program on the weekends.

Luke Nelson lives in Tahannoate, the provincial capitol of Al Haouz Province (about 40 minutes south of Marrakech). He is currently teaching beginner and intermediate English at Dar Chabab, beginner Spanish at Tahannouate Youth Association, and conversational English at Café Henna in Marrakech.

Angelika Sinay lives in a town called N'Kob located in the Zagora Province. Her work at the moment includes teaching beginner English to adults and children at the Dar Chaba, Dar Taliba, and People's with Special Needs Association. She also focuses on life skill development through sports and art.

Bethany Barone lives in the low Atlas Mountains in a town named Tounfite. She is currently teaching BAC1 and BAC2 level English in the Dar Chabab. She also teaches a women's aerobics class at the Nadi Naswi.

Molly Dyer is serving in Boudnib, a desert town in the Errechedia region. She works with women in the Dar Chabab teaching yoga and aerobics and hosts clubs with girls from surrounding rural villages. She also assists her host family with organizing a volunteer program for students in Europe and other countries.

We are excited to be in the position to be able to help our fellow Staj-mates. In early April, we met up with the Staj 98 committee members in Rabat to be trained on how to most effectively support and communicate with each one of you. As Ramadan and summer come around, we know that work and life at site can create unforeseen difficulties. If you are interested in receiving a call from a VSN member, to check in, to have someone listen, or simply to vent, feel free to contact us at: angelikasinay@aol.com with your name and phone number, or a direct message over Facebook works as well. We look forward to hearing from you!

Best, VSN Morocco





First MMC meeting with the new members in March 2018: (L to R) Breana Echols, Jackie Bannon, Rachael Diniega, Kelsey Holmes, Chris Bull, Pariesa Young, and Matt Rogers (not pictured: Shay Braxton)

Salaam from the Multimedia Committee!

This spring 2018, the Multimedia Committee (MMC) has continued to collaborate with Peace Corps staff and volunteers to develop media-based projects to expand PC Morocco's impact. A few exciting updates of note are:

New Committee Members

In March 2018, the MMC welcomed five new committee members: Kelsey Holmes from Staj 98, and from Staj 99: Jackie Bannon, Rachael Diniega, Breana Echols, and Pariesa Young. Congratulations to our new members! They bring a broad background of experiences and interests that will enrich MMC activities and goals. With their arrival, the MMC clarified roles and positions within the committee; each member's committee title can be found on the PC Morocco MMC web page.

#55YearsofFriendship Campaign

With the arrival of Staj 100 this September 2018, Peace Corps Morocco will be commemorating 55 Years of Friendship with the Moroccan government. The MMC will be launching a broad-scale social media campaign across PC Morocco media channels, including Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter. This summer, the Multimedia Committee looks forward to connecting with PCVs and RPCVs as well as current and past counterparts and PC Morocco staff to celebrate the lasting and meaningful relationships and impact that have grown out of Peace Corps Morocco's 55 years in-country.

Chromebooks Project

The MMC worked with Aaron Childs, a Togo RPCV, at the Rabat American School to distribute 39 Google Chromebooks to Peace Corps Morocco Volunteers via the committee. Five volunteers were chosen based on project goals, feasibility, and sustainability. Congratulations to Chris Bull, Jan Sojka, Nisha Tabassum, American Muñoz, and Kelly Parliament! We are excited to learn about the programs they have created using the Chromebooks and outcomes for their communities. And a big thank you to the Rabat American School for the generous donation!

Diversity Working Group

Salaam everyone from the Diversity Committee working group! Because this is new committee, Sue invited all 15 volunteers who applied to be a part of a working group for the diversity committee because "the range of perspectives they offer is crucial at this formation stage." The working group was tasked with developing bylaws, purpose and responsibilities for the committee.

Plans and Updates:

Our first meeting was held on Friday, April 6, 2018 and since the meeting, we have been planning some great things! Such as:

- Establishing partnership with members of staff who will be our staff liaisons. They will help provide trainings and workshops to staff and LCFs, assist with trainings to final site HCNs and host families, and aid in being an ally for volunteers.
- Developing a workshop/discussion during PDM training for staj 99
- Creating surveys: One survey will be sent to staj 98 and 99 to ask how they feel the diversity committee and staff can best support them, any resources that they feel they need, and the diverse identities that they represent.
- Another will be sent to reach out to staj 100 asking what questions they may have about being of a diverse background and coming to Morocco. This will later turn into a Facebook live event where those questions will be answered in real time; also providing more time to answer other questions relating to diversity.
- Creating a document of learning sessions in Darija that is focused on diversity and developing a calendar that helps to support the wide range of cultural holidays.

We have had a lot of success and support thus far and we hope that it continues.

Final Committee

We are looking forward to finalizing the members of the committee before June 1st and we will hold the first official, online meeting with both the final members AND the working committee the week of May 27th. As soon as the final members are chosen, the list of names will be announced!

As a final note, we would like to add that as a new committee, we don't have all the answers. We would like to encourage both staj 98 and 99 to reach out if you have any ideas, comments or feedback to share. We cannot be successful without all of you.

“In diversity there is beauty and there is strength” Maya Angelou



PEACE CORPS MOROCCO GENDER & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

If Two's Company and Three's a Crowd, What's Eight?

Hmdullah, we say. After a year operating at half-capacity, the GAD committee is finally 3mmr. Staj 98's Kelly Parliament, and Staj 99er's Amara Wilson, Caroline Hayes, Leslie Grueber and Tanya Hollandsworth have joined Abbie Olson, Katie Bercegeay and Young Kwon to round out the Committee.



The GAD Committee: (from left) Leslie Grueber, Amara Wilson, Abbie Olson, Katie Bercegeay, Young Kwon, Caroline Hayes and Tanya Hollandsworth. *Not pictured: Kelly Parliament*

GAD's Lifeblood: The CCTs

We're ecstatic to welcome 12 CCTs to our GAD team. After receiving many amazing applications, Atmane, Ayman, Ayoub, Bochra, Bouziane, Hourya, Ibtissam, Ismail, Khadija, Lamyae, Merieme, and Seloua are joining us to develop new material and make other material accessible to our diverse communities around Mghreb. If you have any projects that you would like to work on with a CCT, submit your project to our PCV-CCT Match program [here](#).

GAD Heats Up: Our Ramadan and Summer Guide

Ever wondered how to stay cool (in the eyes of your community) during Ramadan and summer? How about facilitating one of these **Iftar conversations** over a bowl of harira and some chebkia. We've translated the questions into Darija, Tash and Tam so no matter how your community communicates you can learn some new things about your friends, family and students. Follow this [link](#) for the translations.

We hear a lot of people say work in siff? Makaynash. To fix this we're working on some great manuals for BRO and GLOW camps and clubs with the working groups. Be on the lookout for these in June so you can take them and do one-off activities with your communities during the long, hot days of summer. There may even be a summer edition...can anyone say #staycool?

Please feel free to contact the GAD Committee with ideas, comments, suggestions, or a good pun at gadmaroc@gmail.com

Iftar Conversation Resources:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BwApjX6qrWb6dnpEOTFURzhmZWc>

CCT-PCV Match Program:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1azvRnO-TbMhcWEf1kqdJxkcVrrsoT6af2IGm3ZN0Hzo/edit>

THE END. Thanks for reading!

For comments, questions, or feedback to the newsletter please contact the scribe, Alena Klimas (alenaklimas@gmail.com)

For questions regarding specific committees or their information please contact them directly.