

My Application Essay for the Peace Corps. I got in!

THE MOTIVATION

by Andrea A.

Don't know when it first started; perhaps I was a teen.
Didn't know when in my lifetime I'd find time for my dream.
Don't know why I was touched, but perhaps I just knew.
There was so much help needed, so much work I could do.

Not just sit at home watching sad shows on TV,
But to get out there doing! Now that was for me.
Yes, I'll join the Peace Corps! That's just what I'll do!
They'll surely accept me since volunteers are so few.

I went to their office, to pick up the application,
In two weeks (I assumed...) I'd be at my location!
Until... the Peace Corps rep asked several questions of me:
Have you dug out a road? Raised a family of three?
Do you speak other languages? Do you have a degree?
Well, you haven't done much yet....you're only twenty!

I was sad and disheartened, but I knew what he meant.
I hadn't lived life yet, hadn't even paid rent!
I needed to do things to prepare for the Corps.
I'd volunteered in the New York City, but I had to do more.

So I came up with a plan to travel three months.
Had I returned at that time, I would not have learned much.
But by remaining abroad for a full eighteen months,
I discovered the world, and I learned who I was.

Yes, I traveled the world for that year and a half.
On a tight budget, shed some tears, had some laughs.
I learned many things, met great people too.
I even learned to speak Greek...(at least enough to get through!)

I did many things while I was away,
Volunteered on two farms, I even bailed hay!
Picked cotton, milked cows, and cleaned chicken coops,
Swatted flies in a greenhouse and worked well in groups.

I volunteered for three months in a city called Tzfat.

A short time to do much, but our group did a lot.
This location in Israel was an old ancient town,
When a strong earthquake hit it, everything had come down.

We rebuilt that city with 1,000 bare hands,
We built it for immigrants, those from very far lands,
Those from Africa and Russia, expecting piles of stones,
Were moved beyond words, when moved into new homes.

I saw nineteen countries, and many cool sights,
Toured dozens of landmarks, took ten different flights.
But no building I saw impressed me as much,
As meeting new people; by that I was touched.

But when money ran out, it was time to return,
Yet I never forgot all the things I had learned.
Sure, I found a new job, but I still had my goal:
To join the "Peace Corps" wracked my mind, plagued my soul.

Then, to prove to the Corps, that to accept me was right,
I worked during the day and went to school in the night.
I received my degree in International Studies,
Learned customs and cultures, the Peace Corps would love me!

Those days, all my money went toward education.
I didn't have cash for fancy vacations.
So, I volunteered my time off, people called me a fool!
But it was the best way to have fun while still paying for school!

The most fun vacation? A race in Alaska!
My assigned racer won! No one else could go faster!
Ten athletes in wheelchairs, displaying concentration,
500 miles in 9 days! Now that's an inspiration!

But those were vacations, they could not be compared,
To spending time in one country. Of that, I'm not scared!
So I kept at my task! I would not be rejected!
I would continue to learn! My app would be accepted!

The idea that I could fail...now that made me nervous.
There was something more needed to raise demand for my service.
So I'm learning a language, good old Español.
The final step (how I pray!)to achieving my goal.

Then, a funny thing happened about three months ago,
My company was merged, one thousand people let go.
So I went to my boss and asked if I could stay on,
To the month of July, and then I would be gone.

Now...the job that I have is a great one, no doubt,
But the hours are crazy, and I wanted out!
If I'm going to stress and work 16-hour days,
Then at least I should be changing the world in some way.

I'll make lots of money just by staying till then.
I'll settle my bills and fulfill my obligations.
So...the reason I asked my boss for this option, you see,
Was because it was right! NOW THERE'S TIME, FINALLY!

Yes, I'm a free agent (at least come July).
I can finally join you! I am here to apply!
I've thought this through well, and I don't have a doubt,
For me, the Peace Corps is what my life is about!