



## DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE

**PCV Name: Kristin Lambert**

**Country: Romania**

**Project: CED – Ovidius University, Constanta, Romania**

After a competitive application process stressing applicant skill, adaptability, and cross-cultural sensitivity, Kristin Lambert began Peace Corps training on February 23, 2007 in Ploiesti, Romania, and completed a 10-week training program. Training included courses in Romanian language and culture, as well as lectures and discussions on political development, economic and historical issues of Romania and Eastern Europe. Trainees received technical training in their appropriate field, which also included a technical practicum with formal observation and feedback. Training on safety and security issues was also included.

Following successful completion of the training program, Kristin Lambert was sworn in as a Peace Corps Volunteer on May 5, 2007. Kristin also participated in three additional In-Service Training Workshops to further develop her language, technical, and cross-cultural skills.

### ***PRIMARY PROJECT***

As a volunteer in Peace Corps Romania's Community Economic Development sector, Kristin Lambert was primarily assigned to Ovidius University in Constanta, Romania. The University has one of the first certified American Studies academic programs in Romania. In her work at the University, Kristin Lambert helped the organizational strength and development, and provided support to the staff of Ovidius University for this new program that has been in existence only for the past two years. During the course of her service, Kristin Lambert worked with the University's program and other local and regional agencies in various areas as listed below:

#### **Direct Classroom Teaching:**

Kristin Lambert instructed graduating students in practical seminars for American Studies, including detailed curriculums covering all aspects of cross-cultural information, including such classes as:

- American Geography
- Comparative Cultures
- U.S. History
- Journal Writing and Structure
- Volunteerism
- Globalization
- Influences of the European Union
- Cultural Diversity and Tolerance
- Housing and Demographics
- American Politics and Local Government
- Economic Theory, Credit and Banking
- Business and Personal Ethics
- Separation of Powers
- Spheres of Influence, Laws and Justice
- Educational Systems,
- Fitness and Health
- Culture Shock in the USA
- Social Interactions and Lifestyles

- Religious Groups
- American Arts
- U.S. Wars
- The New Deal
- Nuclear Power

Students gradually embraced a creative style of learning that included participation, doing independent analysis, forming and defending their own opinions. This dynamic style of learning is not the tradition in Romanian education, but quite soon the students enjoyed it very much and said they eagerly anticipated these classes. As an added benefit, their English skills, both verbal and written, dramatically improved along with their understanding and appreciation for the United States. There were some 45 classes, usually with 20 students in each one.

In her initial assignment, Kristin Lambert was sent to Targu Jiu, in Gorj county of southwest Romania, where she worked with the NGO organization Asociatia Regionala pentru Dezvoltare Rurala (ARDR – The Regional Association for Rural Development). In this assignment she worked directly with leaders of local governments and acted as facilitator to solicit inter-community support for programs to develop local action groups. She also assisted with training for youth volunteers from Western and Eastern Europe in cross-cultural communication and participatory planning for community project development, in 14 sessions with from 15-40 participants in each.

#### **Office Management and Computer Training:**

At every location, and even on vacations, Kristin worked with NGO staff, university students and colleagues, and other volunteers to upgrade their office management skills. Achievements in this area include:

- Provided tutoring in the use of Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, and Powerpoint software.
- Trained six students and volunteers with data management and spreadsheet analysis.
- Trained four students and others to utilize cross-cultural networking for academic research and business development.
- Provided training in computer trouble-shooting, analyzing and repairing hardware and software problems, and actual repair of personal PCs, in one-on-one sessions with ten people.
- Provided assistance in setting up and maintaining computer networks, and protection programs for viruses and malware for two organizations.

#### **Website Development:**

In her first assignment in Gorj County, Kristin provided direct website development and computer training for three NGO staff to implement an interactive website presence and international promotion for the NGO organization ARDR. The volunteer staff also received training in order to maintain and update the site. In Constanta, she was also able to offer individual tutoring for five students and two volunteers in website design and use of Dreamweaver software, develop international online marketing, and to create personal websites.

#### **Business Planning:**

Kristin taught several budding entrepreneurs how to write a detailed business plan. She also provided individual consulting for three individuals as they acquired funding and completed the implementation of their new businesses. Unfortunately because of the local political climate one of these soon folded, but the experience proved valuable on the next efforts.

#### **Volunteer Coordination Project:**

A major goal of ARDR is to become a center for promoting volunteer services throughout Gorj County. To assist in this effort, Kristin met with many local city officials and residents in the 14 communities of Baia de Fier, Balteni, Bumbesti-Jiu, Bustuchin, Hurezani, Motru, Musetesti, Novaci, Rovinari, Tantareni, Targu Jiu, Ticleni, Tismana, and Turceni. Important meetings to cement support from the Gorj County President and the County Council, and with their European Integration staff. The cooperation of these local government officials was largely successful, but the NGO responsibility for completing the work as promised and treating staff fairly was not. As the staff finally began to quit the program it gradually disintegrated and important funding was apparently diverted. Even this project that started out so hugely optimistic was an important lesson in how

things work in Romania and with European Union funding, so it was a big help in Kristin's future work in the country.

### **Environmental/Youth/Economic Development Education:**

- Presented more than 20 audio video presentations followed by discussion groups for area students and the public on many topics, including Earth Day, the Peace Corps and Volunteerism, U.S. Independence Day, American Culture, Life in the Arctic, Black History Month and Civil Rights, and other topics. These presentations were made at Ovidius University, at the American Corner Library, in local grade and high schools, and at the county library, with 15-45 participants at each.
- Assisted with organizing and implementing programs at the Natural Sciences Museum Center for school children from more than ten area schools, totaling more than 150 kids.
- Participated with field research and coordination for an international Task Force developing an environmental analysis model to be used for rating regional development projects, in coordination with the Natural Sciences Department of Ovidius University and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. This task force included eight professionals working with the local governments in six communities.

### ***COMMUNITY PROJECTS***

Kristin Lambert collaborated on several community projects with other organizations in the community and throughout Romania. Some of these activities include the following:

#### **CEEWeb (The Central and Eastern European Web for Biodiversity):**

Kristin Lambert participated in the international organization CEEWeb in the effort to assist with sustainable tourist programs in the area of Romania south of the Carpathian Mountains. She attended a five-day workshop in the Apuseni Mountains funded by the organization and attended by 24 representatives from Hungary, Latvia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, and Poland. They worked together on public participation methods and developed expertise for completing community development projects.

Other workshops:

- Marine Management on the Black Sea
- Romania in the European Union – The First Year
- Public Participatory Process and Methods that Work

#### **Teaching English:**

Inevitably, Kristin spent many hours tutoring students and a dozen members of the public in English speaking skills, creative writing, and compiling reports.

#### **Celebration for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, American Independence Day:**

Kristin coordinated the Natural Science Museum Complex for the first big 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration outside Bucharest. She managed to get \$500 worth of donated decorations and supplies from the Rotary District 5010 in Alaska and Russia that were shipped in to Constanta at their expense, and obtained agreement from the American Embassy in Romania to send a driver with a special representative to speak at the event. There was also support from the County Council, the University, and visiting research students and faculty. About 60 people attended and the entire program was televised and reported in the newspapers. The belief of the agency is that each year such a celebration can be continued, in the hope that Romanian host country nationals will feel inspired to feel national patriotism and celebrate their own national day in more parts of the country.

#### **Wheelchairs for the Disabled:**

In connection with the Romanian Rotary International Clubs in Constanta and Mangalia, which is comprised of host country nationals who are leaders in business and industry, along with NGOs and economic development consultants, in collaboration with partner Rotary International Clubs in England and the United States, Kristin Lambert engaged in the following activities:

- Delivery of over 100 wheelchairs in the Dobrogea regional area of Romania, many in small rural communities to disabled people who have been confined for a long period of time.

- Obtaining eight wheelchairs specifically targeted for PCVs who serve children throughout Romania, and obtaining a donated van and driver to deliver them to their organizations and directly to the children and parents who would be the final recipients. This was an important contribution, because it is especially difficult for small children with severe disabilities to obtain appropriately sized little wheelchairs.

**Judging Youth Volunteer of the Year:**

PCV Kristin Lambert was invited to be a judge for Youth NGO Volunteer of the Year in Constanta, selecting from some 50 volunteers from 15 NGOs.

**Networking with Children’s Home Services:**

Participated with 20 people in a week-long artists’ workshop in Ostrov, for benefit of Children’s Home in Mogosoia, and continued to develop network contacts to provide for future funding of this children’s home after returning to the United States. Was also able to connect several other NGOs so they could network and assist each other for future projects and created collaborations that will last far into the future, including a new “Tina’s House” for Unwed Mothers, Charity for Children of Romania, Placement Center School #1, and other religious and secular charities. Perhaps this was the most rewarding and long-lasting of her accomplishments in Romania.

***OTHER EXPERIENCE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS***

**Public Relations for Peace Corps Romania and the American Corner Library:**

A number of Kristin’s activities related to public information and continuing education for participants and the public:

- Television broadcast on daytime local production related to American Corner and the Peace Corps in Romania.
- Presentations about Alaska, Black History Month, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Valentine’s Day, Prohibition, the 2008 Election Process, with 10-25 attendees in each session.
- Numerous newspaper articles about the above presentations

**Peace Corps Romania Administration:**

Some of Kristin activities related to operation of the Peace Corps program in Romania.

These included:

- Work on the Peace Corps Romania website committee, from initial concept for the website through development and to final implementation. Romania is now one of the few Peace Corps countries with a functional website.
- Intensive work on the Pofta Buna cookbook, including testing many recipes and editing the entire publication.
- Participation in the “Older Volunteers” group for Peace Corps Volunteers over 50 years of age.

**U.S. GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY:**

The information requested herein is collected pursuant to Section 5 of the Peace Corps Act (22 USC 2504) (f). The information will be used exclusively to prepare the Description of Volunteer Service Statement, which will be permanently retained by the Peace Corps. The Statement will be used to verify service performed.

Pursuant to Section 5(f) of the Peace Corps Act, 22 USC no. 2504 (f) as amended, any former Volunteer employed by the United States Government following his/her Peace Corps service is entitled to have any period of satisfactory Peace Corps Volunteer service based on length of government service. Peace Corps service shall not be credited toward completion of a probationary or trial period or completion of any service requirement for career appointment.

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 PCV Signature  
 Kristin Lambert

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 Reviewed by Country Director  
 Ken Goodson