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DURHAM, N.H. -- Every year college graduates from across the country answer the call to service, leaving behind family and friends to become Peace Corps volunteers. This year, the University of New Hampshire moved up four spots on the top 25 list for medium-sized schools with 28 alumni currently serving as volunteers. Since Peace Corps' inception, 589 alumni of UNH have joined the ranks of the Peace Corps, making the university the 61st producer of volunteers of all time.

"The typical UNH student graduates with student loans to repay, but they have an incredibly strong commitment to wanting to make the world a better place to be," said David Holmes, UNH's Peace Corps representative and a former Peace Corps volunteer and administrator. "UNH has consistently produced students eager to make a difference."

"The willingness of so many people to use their degrees and life experiences to share with other cultures is a commitment no one should overlook," said Peace Corps Director Gaddi H. Vasquez. "There is no single path to success. But those who leave a legacy in a rural village in Madagascar or a city in Ukraine know the impact that Peace Corps can have not only in that community but also on the remainder of their own careers."

Although it is not a requirement for service, the majority of volunteers who have served in the Peace Corps over the past 44 years have been college graduates. Currently, 96 percent of volunteers have at least an undergraduate degree, with 13 percent of those also possessing a graduate level degree.

Schools are ranked according to the size of the student body. Small schools are those with less than 5,000 undergraduates, medium-size schools are those between 5,001 to 15,000 undergraduates, and large schools are those with more than 15,000 undergraduates. To view the entire 200 "Top Producing Colleges and Universities" list, visit <http://www.peacecorps.gov/news/resources/stats/pdf/schools2006.pdf>. Last year's rankings, for comparison purposes, can be found at <http://www.peacecorps.gov/news/resources/stats/pdf/schools2005.pdf>.

Since 1961, more than 182,000 volunteers have served in the Peace Corps, working in such diverse fields as education, health, HIV/AIDS education and prevention, information technology, business development, the environment, and agriculture. Peace Corps volunteers must be U.S. citizens and at least 18 years of age. Peace Corps service is a 27-month commitment.

