



## SEAPAX 2020 Annual Report

Dear SEAPAX Members,

2020 is a year we will not forget any time soon. It began with the emergence of COVID-19, a once in a century global pandemic. The pandemic forced us to cancel not only the Peace Corps Connect 2020 Conference that was going to take place in Seattle, and for which we were co-hosts, but also the majority of our in-person events. We also witnessed the evacuation of all serving PCVs, effectively shutting down the Peace Corps—a first in its nearly 60-year history. On top of all of this, the killing of George Floyd, following a way too long list of unnecessary killings of Black individuals, ignited national protests calling for racial justice. The year ended with one of the most divisive and contentious presidential elections in modern U.S. history.

As difficult as this past year has been, I would like to thank you—the SEAPAX community—for all that you do. Your work and contributions have provided much needed support to our local RPCV and Seattle communities. Your actions and engagement have made a real difference.

In early 2020, we launched a Mentorship Program, and shortly thereafter, we witnessed an outpouring of support from members who rose to the call and volunteered their time to assist those who were looking for some sort of guidance. A significant number of mentors were paired with individuals who had recently been evacuated from their Peace Corps service due to COVID-19.

A number of members also provided invaluable input on actions our Board could take to help our organization and its associated events become more inclusive to minority groups. We deeply appreciate your recommendations and we are better off because of them. The recommendations helped us decide to create a Diversity and Inclusion Chair position.

I would also like to give special recognition to our local RPCV community for its effort to help fight COVID-19. A collaboration between the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA) and SEAPAX members led to the creation of the NPCA Emergency Response Network (ERN). In its current form, the program is designed to organize teams of COVID-19 contact tracers, composed of RPCVs. The teams are contracted to work with public health organizations. As of early November last year, the pilot NPCA ERN contact tracer team is working with the Seattle and King County Department of Public Health.

None of this would have been made possible without the local effort of SEAPAX member, and new Board-member, John Berry, who is now the NPCA ERN Director. We owe tremendous gratitude to John for his vision, perseverance, and effort to help make our local communities a safer and healthier place. Because of his work and dedication, paid positions were created specifically for RPCVs during this difficult economic time (half of the pilot contact tracer team members were evacuated last year). I would also like to thank all those who stepped up to become contact tracers. Your work is critical for improving and maintaining the well-being of our communities.

These are just several examples of how our community came together and responded to a specific challenge of 2020. To me, they reflect the true spirit of what it means to be a PCV, not just for a two-year period, but rather over a lifetime. A large part of our identity is helping individuals and communities in need, whether abroad or domestically. Your contributions are truly inspiring and uplifting.

We hope that you will continue to keep up the good work in 2021, and remain being the supportive community that you are. Unfortunately, we have not been able to host many of our normal activities (i.e., in-person social events) due to COVID-19, but we remain optimistic that we will be able to resume “normal” operations sometime during the second half of 2021. Until then, we will continue to explore alternative options for connecting and sustaining our vibrant SEAPAX network.

Stay safe and healthy.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brad Cleveland".

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Brad Cleveland  
SEAPAX President  
South Africa 2006-2008

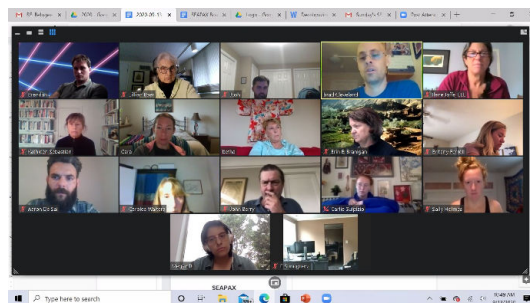
SEAPAX is a group of former Peace Corps volunteers whose mission is to support, connect, and engage Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) in the greater Seattle area. We do so by supporting RPCVs' transition back to life in the United States through social, professional, and service opportunities, while also offering a forum for communication and connection. We are dedicated to improving international understanding at all levels, drawing on the lessons we have learned from living in the countries where we once served to promote awareness of the social, political, and economic circumstances, as well as the global interdependence, of people worldwide. This dedication stems from our aim to fulfill the Third Goal of the Peace Corps: help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans. SEAPAX also provides opportunities to advocate for Peace Corps and supports community-based local and international organizations in the form of small grants and contributions.



In addition to the Seattle group, there are several informal satellite RPCV groups in other cities, which are part of the SEAPAX network. In the Bellingham area, Cat McIntyre coordinates social and service opportunities for RPCVs. Events are publicized through the SEAPAX website, social networks, and newsletter. The groups in Everett, Olympia, the Kitsap Peninsula, and Wenatchee hold activities periodically, which are also publicized by SEAPAX.

## Governance

SEAPAX is run by a volunteer Board of Directors. This includes annually elected Officers and Directors-At-Large who serve one year terms, which run from January 1st through December 31st. Elected board members have board-voting rights and appoint non-elected Directors (i.e., Chairs and Coordinators) to help oversee specific programs and activities.



## **Elected Directors\* January – December 2020**

### Officers

- President – *Brad Cleveland (South Africa 2006-2008)*
- Vice President – *Vacant*
- Treasurer – *Brendan Chiesa (Mongolia 2011-2013)*
- Secretary – *Cara Sandquist (The Gambia 2013-2016)*

### Directors at Large

- *Ilene Jaffe (Costa Rica 1979-1982)*
- *Carolee Walters (Belize 1996-1998)*
- *Joshua Jackson (Paraguay 2005-2007)*

*\*Voting members*

## **Non-Elected Directors\* (appointed)**

- Book Club Chair - *Darien Luce (Costa Rica 2011-2013)*
- Community Service Co-Chairs - *Britany Ferrell (Ghana 2010-2012), Andrea Shelton (Ethiopia 2012-2014), Aaron Luce (Costa Rica 2011-2013)*
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair - *Megyn Rodriguez*
- Events Co-Chairs - *Aaron De Sal (Costa Rica 2015-2017), Megyn Rodriguez (Colombia 2016-2018), Hillary Abrams (South Africa 2009-2011)*
- Grants Committee Chair – *Ilene Jaffe*
- Happy Hour Coordinator - *Garrett Morkill (The Gambia 2014-2016)*
- Calendar Chair– *Carolee Walters*
- Membership and Communications Chair – *Kim Arent (Lesotho 2012-2014), Kathleen Sebastian (Benin 1975-1977)*
- Mentorship Co-Chairs - *Jenn Ritchey (Swaziland 2008-2010), Lillian Baer (Cote d'Ivoire 1966-1968)*
- Newsletter Editor – *Sally Holmes (Zambia 2014-2016)*
- NPCA Advocacy Co-Chairs – *Beth Ahlstrom (Senegal 2002-2004), Erin Branigan (Morocco 1986-1988), Carlie Sulpizio (Burkina Faso 2013-2015)*
- Speakers' Bureau Chair - *Katy Kaltenbrun (Philippines 2009-2011)*
- Webmaster – *Evangelina Sundgrenz (Uzbekistan 2000-2001)*

*\*Non-voting members*

## **Board Meetings held in 2020**

SEAPAX Board meetings are held regularly and are open to all interested parties. Locations are varied, and are announced on the SEAPAX website, [www.seapax.org](http://www.seapax.org), and in the monthly newsletter. In accordance with CDC and Washington DSHS safety protocols in response to Covid-19, meetings after March 16 were held via Zoom. Minutes of the meetings are available through <https://www.seapax.org/cpages/docs-reports>.

The following board meetings were held at Antioch University, Seattle:

- January 12
- March 1

The following board meetings were held via Zoom:

- May 3
- June 20 (Special Session on diversity and inclusion)
- July 12
- September 13
- November 1 (2020 Board Retreat)

## **Social and Service Activities**

### **January**

- 15: Happy Hour at McMenamins in Lower Queen Anne
- 20: Refugee Community Garden Work Party with United Way King County and World Relief Seattle

### **February**

- 4: Seattle Global Networking Happy Hour with GlobalWA, Pangea, World Affairs Council, and WGHA at Optimism Brewing Company
- 9: Book Club meeting and Boon Boona Coffee
- 19: Happy Hour at Tin Room Bar
- 22: Annual Peanut Stew Cook-Off at a private residence with presentations from the following local organizations: Pangea Giving, Refugee Artisan Initiative, Sahar Education for Afghan Girls, Global Child Nutrition Foundation, & Schools for S'loane

### **March**

- 5: NPCA's National Day of Action in Washington, D.C.
- 28: Welcoming Livestream for recent evacuees and all RPCVs held via Zoom

### **April**

- 12: Virtual Book Club meeting

### **May**

- 7: Virtual Happy Hour - Siete de Mayo

### **June**

- 14: Virtual Book Club meeting

### **July**

- 18: Virtual screening of documentary "A Towering Task" and Q&A with director Alana DeJoseph

### **August**

- 9: Book Club meeting at Macrina Bakery (socially distanced)

### **September**

- 12: Virtual Writer's Workshop with SEAPAX member and author Susan Greisen, Part I
- 26: Virtual Writer's Workshop with SEAPAX member and author Susan Greisen, Part II

### **October**

- 11: Book Club meeting at The Station (socially distanced)

## **Peace Corps Connect 2020**

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, NPCA and SEAPAX decided to cancel the Peace Corps Connect 2020 conference, which was scheduled to take place in Seattle in July. The decision, made in April, was not taken lightly, and it was made in accordance with CDC and WHO guidance for public health and safety. SEAPAX inquired if it would be possible to host the 2021 conference instead, but it had already been determined that the 2021 conference, being the 60th Anniversary of the Peace Corps, would be held in Washington, D.C.

The PCC2020 steering committee wishes to extend their sincere thanks to everyone involved in the planning!

## **Mentorship Program**

On March 28th, SEAPAX launched a new mentorship program aimed at connecting RPCVs to resources in the following areas:

- Finding housing
- Job/career/professional development
- Social networking events
- Reintegration and readjustment
- Graduate school
- Service/volunteer opportunities
- Navigating Seattle
- Talking about the Peace Corps experience

The program was an immediate success, with fifteen mentee applicants immediately following the launch. Mentors were initially recruited by Board members, but many other SEAPAX members stepped forward after the program launch. Overall, 29 mentors served 50 mentees throughout 2020.

## **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

The SEAPAX Board released a statement on June 6 in support of Black members of our Peace Corps community to affirm that Black Lives Matter, recognize past and present harm, and create awareness around areas of complacency in our community.

A group of SEAPAX Board members met on June 13 to begin a conversation around racial justice, privilege awareness, and awareness of colonialist legacies, along with current forms of imperialism. A working group then convened and generated a list of suggestions for the Board, including the creation of a Diversity and Inclusion Chair. Megyn Rodriguez became our Acting Chair in July, and was formally appointed in November, and set forth to create a Diversity and Inclusion Committee. This committee is active in discussing which topics to bring to the Board, suggestions for Board and SEAPAX member action, and the role and trajectory of the Chair and committee moving forward.



## SEAPAX International Book Club

The Book Club discusses books with themes and authors with an international focus. It meets every two months on Sunday afternoon at rotating locations. Coordinated by Darien Luce, meetings are held at coffee shops and other locations around the city. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, some meetings after March 16 were held via Zoom. All interested parties, whether or not they have read the book, are welcomed.

Following are the titles discussed this year:

- **February 9:** “Small Country” by Gael Faye
- **April 12:** “On the Plain of Snakes” by Paul Theroux
- **June 14:** “What Truth Souths Like - Robert F. Kennedy, James Baldwin, and Unfinished Conversations about Race in America” by Michael Eric Dyson
- **August 9:** “Midst of Winter” by Isabel Allende
- **October 11:** “The Prison Letters of Nelson Mandela” by Nelson Mandela



## Communications

### Social Networks

SEAPAX connects with its members in several ways. We have a Facebook page, a Facebook group, and a website, [www.seapax.org](http://www.seapax.org). Garrett Morkill took charge of posting events to keep our members informed.

### SEAPAX Newsletter

The monthly newsletter provides news and information including job openings, reports on SEAPAX activities and information, and events and news of interest to the RPCV community. Sally Holmes published and distributed the monthly and mid-monthly newsletters by email to 1000+ people. Archive copies of the newsletter can be found through the website, <https://www.seapax.org/cpages/newsletter>.



## Advocacy

Beth Ahlstrom, Erin Branigan and Carlie Sulpizio stayed apprised of NPCA legislation by participating in bi-weekly NPCA advocacy Town Hall meetings throughout the year, as well as the annual summit in October, done virtually. Carlie left the team in November to work overseas, and new team members Jerome Siangco and Kenney Tran came on board.

Before Covid-19 precautions were put in place, Erin represented SEAPAX and participated in the NPCA Day of Action on the Hill on March 5, 2020. The Washington State delegation, including Jerome Siangco, visited Senators Cantwell and Murray and Representatives Jayapal, Smith, Heck, and McMorris-Rogers.

In part due to the pandemic and worldwide evacuation of PCVs in mid-March, 2020 ended up being a busy year for NPCA legislation. Major initiatives included the financial and health needs for evacuees (extension of health insurance, access to unemployment funds, etc.) and adequate (level) funding for PC as the agency prepared for the re-deployment of Volunteers. The team successfully gained co-sponsorship of Peace Corps legislation by 6 legislators (K. Schrier, A. Smith, D. Heck, D. Kilmer, R. Larson, and P. Jayapal), and the SEAPAX president wrote to Senators Cantwell and Murray requesting their support for level funding of PC's fiscal year '21 budget. The team sent Peace Corps calendars and thank you notes to the WA delegation, thanking them for their continued support of PC.

In addition to March's in-person meetings, the team organized two virtual meetings with local congressional staffers for Congresswoman Jayapal and Congressman Smith and participated in another with Senator Cantwell's staff as part of a cross-state collaboration with Eastern Washington's RPCV group in support of Peace Corps funding and reestablishment of overseas operations.

More visibly, Erin worked with Jerome to compose a Letter to the Editor, published in the Seattle Times: [Peace Corps: Missions interrupted](#). Beth also obtained sponsorship funds for the Peace Corps Connect Conference from Pacific Lutheran University. The team maximized use of the SEAPAX newsletter and Facebook private group to encourage area RPCVs to contact their elected representatives.

Recordings of the virtual Peace Corps Connect conference can be found [here](#).



## Membership

SEAPAX is open to all RPCVs and friends. Our membership, numbering more than 1300, represents volunteer service in an astonishing 109 countries, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, and ranging from the first year of Peace Corps in 1961 to those evacuated in 2020. In 2016, we moved to a dues-free membership model. We made this change in concert with a similar transition by NPCA, to promote a broader, more diverse, and more inclusive community. But we still depend on donations to fund our events and advocacy work as well as to cover website and newsletter costs. We suggest a \$15 annual contribution, but any level of support is welcome. Thank you for your continued participation!

## 2020 Donor List

Beth Ahlstrom	Susan Greisen	Dave Perrin
Sue Ann Allen	Suzanne Griffin	Brian Peterson
Ralph Archung	Rita Hackett	Bob Peterson
Keith Arnold	Donald Hartline	Kim Peterson
Anne Arquette	Marsha Hedrick	Michele Plorde
Maggie Aspland	Christian Helfrich	Jenn Ritchey
Lillian Baer	Richard Hervey	Lorelei Robinson
John Berry	Sally Holmes	Josh Russell
Glenn Blumhorst	Stephan Hosler	Gregory Schaffer
Eunice Bonaparte	Carl Ingram	Kathleen Sebastian
Erin Branigan	Carol Ingram	Ricardo Sitchin
Peter Bunin	Frederick Kaplan	Judy Sohl
Willis Cady	Michael Keenan	Tim Suchsland
Janet Callis	Kip Keener	Evangelina Sundgrenz
Megan Carley	Debbie Kutsal	David Swan
Mike Carney	Robin Lee	Chris Thomsen
Judith Cederblom	Sherry Manning	Shelley Fairweather-Vega
Sharon Chiang	William Marcouiller	Virginia (Gina) Wallace
Brendan Chiesa	Ann Mauney	Carolee Walters
Jacquelyn Clark	Sara McCormick	Jennifer Wetter
Brad Cleveland	Patricia McGovern	Joel Wingard
Joelle Cook	Arlene Mitchell	Michael Yadrick
Rebecca Errera	Garrett Morkill	Andrea Yajko
Aurora Ann Fox	Eugene Nutt	Kristina Zawisza
Marilee Fuller	Jonathan Olds	

## Grants

Money for SEAPAX grants are generated by calendar sales and merchandise, though general funds may also be used by vote of the SEAPAX Board. Ilene Jaffe chaired the Grants Committee, whose meetings are open to anyone and held as necessary at rotating locations in the city. The grants committee decided to let the available \$450 roll over into 2021, as there were no grants submissions that met criteria.

## In Kind Support for other Nonprofits

This year we have continued to put special efforts into connecting with other groups with similar goals of international understanding and global community. We have used our newsletter and social media to spread the word of events and efforts of these groups which include:

- Coalition for Homelessness
- Global Child Nutrition Foundation
- GlobalWA
- Pangea Giving
- Refugee Artisan Initiative
- Sahar Education for Afghan Girls
- Schools for Salone
- United Way King County
- Washington Global Health Alliance
- World Relief Seattle
- World Affairs Council
- Village Bicycle Project

## Financial Activity

### 501(c)(3) Status

In June, SEAPAX was officially registered as a 501(c)(3) Charitable Nonprofit. Beginning April 20, 2020, depending on your filing status, individuals may be able to deduct their contributions to SEAPAX when they file their federal income taxes.

This status also enables SEAPAX to collect a portion of Amazon sales via AmazonSmile. To register, go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and search for “SEAPAX.”

### Calendar Sales and Member Donations

SEAPAX uses donations from supporting members and revenue from calendar sales to execute our local activities and projects, distribute grants, and donate to local and international organizations. In years past, SEAPAX would bulk-purchase calendars and sell them at SEAPAX events. In July, the Board approved a decision to no longer purchase calendars, but to instead promote online calendar sales, with proceeds still going towards SEAPAX activities and grants.

To purchase a calendar or note cards, visit <https://www.rpcvcalendar.org/shop/> and use the code **PC4SEAPAX** at checkout.

### Merchandise

SEAPAX continues to offer merchandise through an online retailer. Seventy-five percent of the proceeds from these sales benefit the SEAPAX grant committee to provide funding for local and international non-profits that align with the core values of



SEAPAX. You can find all of our merchandise at <https://www.seapax.org/cpages/merchandise>.

### Financial Report

Brendan Chiesa, our treasurer, has provided a detailed report of this year's expenses and financial position:

#### Statement of Financial Position As of December 31, 2020

	Total
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Business Basic Checking (7766)	\$3,195.89
Business Member Share Savings (7758)	\$5,275.32
Total Bank Accounts	\$8,471.21
<u>Total Current Assets</u>	<u>\$8,471.21</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$8,471.21</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	
Total Liabilities	\$0.00
Equity	
Retained Earnings	\$7,623.70
Net Revenue	\$ 847.51
<u>Total Equity</u>	<u>\$8,471.21</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$8,471.21</b>

#### Statement of Activity January - December 2020

	Total
<b>Revenue</b>	
Benevity Donations	\$ 100.00
Calendar Sales	\$ 270.00
Donation	\$ 384.33
Interest	\$ 2.16
Membership Dues	\$ 1,139.63
Special Event Revenue	\$ 717.25
TeeSpring Profits	\$ 20.14
<u>Total Revenue</u>	<u>\$2,633.51</u>
Gross Profit	\$2,633.51

**Expenditures**

Calendar Expenses	\$ 7.35
Calendar Purchase	\$ 60.00
Meals & Entertainment	\$ 0.00
Picnic	\$ 210.00
Total Meals & Entertainment	\$ 210.00
Office Supplies & Software	\$ 927.42
Postage And Delivery	\$ 168.00
Special Event	\$ 138.23
Taxes & Licenses	\$ 275.00
<u>Total Expenditures</u>	<u>\$1,786.00</u>
Net Operating Revenue	\$ 847.51
Net Revenue	\$ 847.51

**Guest Presentations - Board Meetings**

SEAPAX hosted two presentations following open Board meetings. Pangea Giving presented after the January meeting, and Antioch University presented on their graduate programs following the March meeting. Members were informed of these presentations in the monthly newsletter.

**Public Health – Seattle & King County (PHSKC) Contact Tracers**

In late summer, we helped recruit a 9-person team of COVID-19 contact tracers. The team, composed entirely of SEAPAX members, became the inaugural group of the NPCA Emergency Response Network (ERN), contracted to work with PHSKC.

The effort to organize a local RPCV response to COVID-19 has both local and national origins. John Berry, a SEAPAX member and a new 2021 Board-member, began working on a local effort to combat COVID-19 almost as early as the first reported case in Seattle. He soon connected with NPCA, leading to the creation of NPCA ERN, with John serving as its Director.

The inaugural group of contact tracers continues today to work with PHSKC. Efforts are ongoing to establish additional teams of contact tracers.

We would like to give a special thanks to John Berry and those who joined the first cohort of NPCA contact tracers.

## Look Ahead to 2021

In accordance with CDC and Washington DSHS Covid-19 public health and safety protocols, SEAPAX continues to suspend in person events. We will monitor the situation, follow public health guidelines, and host online and outdoor events as deemed appropriate.

## Contact



Website: [seapax.org](http://seapax.org)



Facebook: [@seapax](https://www.facebook.com/seapax)