

U-M is Top 10 among Peace Corps Prep Universities

The University of Michigan ranked eighth among schools preparing students who would like to serve as a Peace Corps volunteer.

Despite the challenges during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the university's [Peace Corps Prep Program](#) [1] trained 19 students in the class of 2021.

Alum Hannah Kuriakose was one of them. In May, she graduated with a double major in international studies and environment (law, policy and justice) and completed a minor in writing.

"The PCP program encouraged me to think critically in my chosen intersection of study while ensuring that I grow my intercultural competence and skill set in elective courses," Kuriakose said. "Additionally, it geared my interests to obtain an International Leadership Certificate, which I believe, well positioned me for the job I have today as a student administration associate for the Barger Leadership Institute at the U-M."

[Kelly Nelson](#) [2], interim assistant director for global engagement and education abroad at the International Center, said the fact so many students completed their Peace Corps Prep certificates during a global pandemic is a testament to the commitment that U-M students have to future international service.

"We are thrilled to see the University of Michigan's long-standing legacy with the Peace Corps continue with the Peace Corps Prep Program," Nelson said. "The program has been a significant complement to our recruitment efforts. It's been a great way to engage students early on in their academic careers and encourage them to have experiences in and outside of the classroom. It will prepare them not only for future Peace Corps service but also for life beyond their bachelor's degree."

Established in 2007, Peace Corps Prep aims to meet the demand for [Peace Corps](#) [3] volunteers with broad and relevant areas of expertise and to support schools' efforts to provide substantive, globally focused experiences for their students.

Students learn about leadership, intercultural competencies, foreign language, and a professional sector of their choice such as education, health or the environment. While having a Peace Corps Prep certificate does not guarantee acceptance into the international service agency, enrolling in the program helps them be more competitive during the selection process.

Peace Corps works with more than 150 partner institutions nationwide to deliver programming that underscores a commitment to global citizenship, intercultural competencies and a sense of service

among students. Despite a global evacuation of Peace Corps volunteers because of the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 700 undergraduate students completed the Peace Corps Prep program in the 2020-2021 academic year.

For Peace Corps acting director Carol Spahn, today's students understand the immense challenges of the era and are energetic advocates for change.

"Through the program at the U-M, students can develop the transferable skills necessary to influence change, advance global equity and be an effective Peace Corps volunteer," she said.

Elise Pelletier graduated in December 2020 and majored in environment and earth and environmental sciences. She also received a minor in chemistry and food and the environment. She plans on pursuing service in the agriculture sector in the Peace Corps.

"Joining the Peace Corps and going to a foreign country for two whole years can be full of a lot of uncertainties, but the program helped prepare me for anything that may come my way and gave me a better idea of what life in the Peace Corps really looks like," she said. "My favorite part of the program was all of the opportunities it offered to connect with returning Peace Corps volunteers. I hope to apply in about a year when the pandemic is a bit more under control."

Source: [Global Michigan](#) [4]

Source URL: <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/u-m-top-10-among-peace-corps-prep-universities>

Links

[1] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/abroad/prep>

[2] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/about/staff/kelly-nelson>

[3] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/abroad/peace>

[4] <https://global.umich.edu/newsroom/u-m-is-top-10-among-peace-corps-prep-universities/>