



April 13, 2012

Amy Potthast
7007 N. Columbia Way
Portland, OR 97203

To Whom It May Concern:

The attached copy of a memorandum entitled "Description of Service" describing the activities of Amy M. Potthast while serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer is currently on file in Volunteer Financial Operations. In addition, our computer records indicate that Amy M. Potthast was a Peace Corps Volunteer in The Peoples Republic Of China from 26-Jun-1998 to 26-Jun-2000.

Nicolette Fertakis (202) 692-1784

Certifying Officer

Peace Corps Volunteer & PSC Financial Services



DESCRIPTION OF PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Amy Marie Potthast

[Full official name]

[Volunteer SSN]

China

[Country]

After a competitive application process stressing applicant skills, adaptability and cross-cultural understanding, Amy Potthast was invited into Peace Corps service. She was assigned to teach English as a Foreign Language at Fuling Teachers College in Chongqing Municipality, People's Republic of China.

Amy Potthast entered training on June 28, 1998 participating in an intensive 9-week training program in Chengdu, China. Language training included 163 hours of Chinese spoken and written language. Area studies training included 22 hours in the history, economics and cultural norms of China. Technical training included 72 hours in the methodology of teaching English as a Foreign Language. As part of the technical training, Amy Potthast completed two and a half weeks of practice teaching in a model school.

Amy Potthast successfully completed training and was sworn in as a Volunteer on 28 August 1998. She was responsible Fuling Teachers College during her service in China. Amy Potthast served as a full time professor of English assigned to Fuling Teachers College where she was one of 350 faculty members. The school offered three grades of study and had an enrollment of approximately 4,000 students. Amy Potthast reported directly to the vice-chair of the English Department of the school Mr Zhao Hongyi. Instruction was set in formal classroom settings exclusively for Chinese students.

Amy Potthast was responsible for teaching the following courses:

<u>Date</u>	<u>No. Mos.</u>	<u>No. Wks.</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>No. Students</u>	<u>Hrs./Wk</u>
Fall 1998	4.5	20	speaking	1	74	08
Fall 1998	4.5	20	extensive reading	2	61	04
Fall 1998	4.5	20	writing	3	53	04
Spring 1999	5	21	speaking	1	75	08
Spring 1999	5	21	extensive reading	2	60	04
Fall 1999	4.5	20	extensive reading	2	62	04
Fall 1999	4.5	20	speaking	2	33	04
Fall 1999	4.5	20	extensive reading	3	49	02
Fall 1999	4.5	20	writing	3	51	04
Spring 2000	5	21	speaking	2	33	04
Spring 2000	5	21	extensive reading	2	62	04
Spring 2000	5	21	extensive reading	3	49	02
Spring 2000	5	21	American literature	3	51	04

Days in school year: 200

Number of months taught during school year: 9

Total number of weeks taught: 78

Additionally,

She initiated the Two Rivers student writing anthology project, soliciting submissions and editing short stories, essays, and poetry of Chinese students from all Peace Corps China sites. She designed the project with the aims of both giving the students a place to publish, outside of the Chinese academic system, as well as creating a forum for collecting and sharing the life stories of those students---who were born as Deng Xiaoping came to power, and whose young lives have been spent bridging China's decades of rapid opening and modernization. The first anthology was printed in January 2000.

She expanded the Fuling Teachers College English-language, Volunteer-maintained library, requesting donations from international non-profit book-donation organizations, friends, and family. She acquired videos and texts from Teaching Tolerance, an organization based in Alabama that encourages classroom discussions of xenophobia and tolerance. She acquired funds that enabled her to purchase a popular series of locally-available audiotapes and magazines for students's listening and reading practice. She also initiated a search for donated computers to be housed in the Volunteer library and used by all English department faculty. She worked with college administrators and her PCV sitemates in researching a grant to solicit funds for a computer, printer, and other audiovisual equipment.

She founded the China RPCVs Group, a forum for Returned China Volunteers to connect, share personal and professional resources, and help to educate the American public about Chinese perspectives and values that are not adequately covered in the mainstream media.

She studied standard Chinese (speaking, reading, writing, and listening) for an average of 4 hours each week with tutors from the Chinese and English departments of Fuling Teachers College. In the summer of 1999 she attended an intensive, 4-week language course at Beijing Language and Culture University.

She won the Peace Corps China-sponsored Chopsticks translation contest, having successfully translated a series of six short folk tales and cultural essays. The contest was open to all of Peace Corps China's 50 volunteers and was judged by a professor at Sichuan Normal University and Peace Corps staff member.

She held weekly office hours to meet and discuss academic and cultural questions with students.

She taught in the pre-school of Fuling Teachers College for two semesters, spending 1-2 hours a week introducing 3 and 4 year olds to English, through songs, story books, games, and simple conversations. She organized the Pinyin Children's Book Project, in which her students from the college created books and donated them to the pre-school. The students translated tales from the West, illustrated and bound the storybooks, and then wrote the

narratives using both Chinese characters and pinyin (or, spelling the characters using the English alphabet). She designed the project with the aims of both increasing the pre-school's storybook library as well as to help small children and their foreign teachers read the books more easily

She taught French for two semesters, spending two hours a week on speaking and grammar with two ambitious English majors.

She participated in a two-week summer pilot program on the campus of Sichuan Normal University in Chengdu in the summer of 1999. She taught English and teaching methodology to teachers of English from rural Sichuan high schools.

During the summer program, she also presented a lecture on the educational philosophies of Jean-Jaques Rousseau and his influences on Western education practices. She repeated the lecture at the U.S. Consulate in Chengdu, at Xichang Teachers College, and back home at Fuling Teachers College.

Other lectures Amy gave during her two years of service included such topics as: American community theatre, Betty Friedan and the U.S. Women's Movements, American colleges and universities, American public schools, Peace Corps Around the World, African American history since 1863, Western Perspectives of the Cold War, and the Holocaust, with an emphasis on its xenophobic origins and on Hitler's *Mein Kampf*

At the all-Volunteer in-service training conference of November 1999, she co-facilitated session on using theatre games and improvisation in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. In conjunction with the session, she wrote a four-page "Guide to Using Theatre Games in the EFL Classroom."

At the same conference, she facilitated an open-space session on Volunteer secondary or "community-based" projects.

At the China 5 Close-of-Service conference in March 2000, she co-facilitated a session on Peace Corps's Third Goal" which states that Volunteers should help to educate Americans at home about their host countries (in this case, China).

She participated in a site-exchange program at Xichang Teachers College, in the Yo Minority region of southern Sichuan. She spent the week guest-lecturing and helping the Volunteers there prepare students for a gala Christmas performance.

Pursuant to Section 5 (f) of the Peace Corps Act, 22 U.S.C. 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 credited for purposes of retirement, seniority, reduction in force, leave or other privileges 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.

Volunteer Amy Potthast Group China 5
Signature

Reviewed by Donald McKay APCD/ED June 28, 2000
Peter Foley Date
for Country Director