

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE

Michelle Ervin
Social Security No. xxx-xx-xxxx

Republic of Cape Verde

After a competitive application process stressing applicant skills, adaptability and cross-cultural understanding, Michelle Ervin was invited to Peace Corps service. She was assigned to teach English as a Foreign Language at the secondary level in the West African nation of Cape Verde and in her third year was assigned to work as an education consultant at the primary level for an international Non-Governmental Organization (NGO).

Ervin entered training in June of 1999 and participated in an intensive ten week program in Praia, which included the following:

- ▶ 120 hours of language training in Portuguese and 60 hours of the national language, Crioulo.
- ▶ 120 hours of technical training, including linguistics, grammar review and methodologies for teaching English as a Foreign Language, followed by three weeks of practice teaching in a model school.
- ▶ 70 hours of Cross-Cultural training
- ▶ 30 hours of Health Maintenance, Safety and Security

In the end of September of 1999, Ervin successfully completed training and was sworn-in as a Volunteer. For two years she taught English at the Secondary School of Santa Cruz with seven other English teachers. The school accommodated 2,000 students from the 7th-12th grades. Key duties included:

- ▶ Taught 20 hours/week the first school year (1999-2000) and 18 hours/week the second year (2000-2001).
- ▶ Daily design and implementation of teaching materials and lesson plans following the mandatory English curriculum at four levels (second, third, fourth and sixth year English)
- ▶ Constructed and administered exams, including the national exams; prepared students for these exams.
- ▶ Evaluated students
- ▶ Helped develop AIDS Day Lesson Plan Book, an HIV awareness curriculum and teaching manual for Cape Verdean secondary school English classes (2000)
- ▶ Organized activities for the high school students around World AIDS Day 2000, in conjunction with the Cape Verdean Red Cross, including a community-wide march, poster contest and soccer game (2000)
- ▶ Established a resource bank for use by all English Department teachers; trained each teacher on the use and responsibility of the resources (2000)
- ▶ Developed and executed a one-day workshop to train inexperienced English teachers on materials development, lesson planning, creative teaching strategies, grammar, discipline, exam writing, and basic computer skills (1999-2001)
- ▶ Designed and implemented curriculum for 12th grade (6th level of English), topics included: human rights, the environment and writing skills (2000-2001)
- ▶ Co-coordinated the English Department: coordinated and reviewed lesson plans and exams of all English teachers, held weekly coordination meetings, observed English teachers, and interviewed applicants (200-2001)
- ▶ Served as an administrative liaison of a 10th grade class, responsible for handling and maintaining discipline problems, grades, final exams and discipline problems; holding meetings with parents/guardians and teachers, including home visits (2000-2001)

In September of 2001, Ervin extended for a third year (2001-2002) to work with the basic education project *Pró-Ensino*, a collaboration between the Cape Verdean Ministry of Education and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ). As an education consultant for the NGO at the primary school level, she successfully completed the following tasks:

- ▶ Created a teaching manual in English and Portuguese on Creative Teaching Strategies (“Games and Activities to Make Class Fun”)
- ▶ Edited the GTZ publication “Strategies and Experiences”
- ▶ Worked as part of a team of five in visiting primary schools throughout the country four times during the school year; met with representatives of the Ministry of Education, pedagogical coordinators and school principals at each location to discuss problems and ideas to better the primary education system, to monitor each area’s progresses and assist in resolving problems.
- ▶ Observed more than 100 classes, gave feedback and aided teachers in finding active teaching methodologies to use in the classroom
- ▶ Planned and executed a 3-tier Earth Day 2002 project with two primary schools in Praia, consisting of a workshop on lesson planning and planning field trips (theme: water), a field trip with the teachers of both schools to the local desalinization plant, and a contest between the two schools for the best and most active lesson plan planned and carried out on Earth Day, culminating in a school-wide Earth Day celebration

In addition to her primary assignments, Ervin participated in several secondary projects:

- ▶ Organized and conducted English night classes for adults in the community of Santa Cruz (2000)
- ▶ Corresponded with an 8th grade class in Cincinnati, Ohio through the World Wise School Program (1999-2000)
- ▶ Trained new Volunteers during Pre-Service Training (PST)
 - Assisted the TEFL component (2000): instructed 13 TEFL trainees and helped program two two-week model schools
 - Helped develop curriculum and design materials for the ten week health and safety component based on active teaching methods (2000)
 - Co-coordinated the TEFL component (2001): instructed 11 TEFL trainees; managed a 10-person technical training staff; programmed and managed two two-week model schools with over 500 host-country national participants; conducted entrance and exit interviews with technical staff and trainees
- ▶ Assisted in the planning and implementation of Peace Corps Life Skills Training to over 50 host country nationals (2001)
- ▶ Conducted three sessions during Peace Corps’ Training of Trainers for PST on teaching methodologies, giving and receiving feedback, classroom observation and cross-culture (2002)
- ▶ Revised the Peace Corps/Cape Verde cookbook for Volunteers (2002)

Pursuant to section 5(f) of the Peace Corps Act, 22 U.S.C. & 2504 (f), as amended, any former Volunteer employed by the United States Government following his Peace Corps Volunteer service is entitled to have any period of satisfactory Peace Corps service credited for purposes of retirement, seniority, reduction in force, leave, and other privileges based on length of Government service. This is to certify in accordance with Executive Order 11103 of April 10, 1963, that Ms. Michelle Ervin served successfully as a Peace Corps Volunteer. Her service ended on August 14, 2002. Her benefits under the Executive Order extend for a period of one year after termination of Volunteer service, except that the employing agency may extend the period for up to three years

for a former Volunteer who enter military service, pursues studies at a recognized institution of higher learning, or engages in other activities which, in the view of the appointing agency, warrants extension of the period.

Volunteer

Country Director