

## *Serendipity*

I was 19 years of age in late 1963. I had recently begun my second year at a community college in Modesto, CA.

My roommate at college was anxious to join the Peace Corps. He convinced me to join him in taking the test for entry into the Peace Corps.

About six weeks after taking the test, I received a telegram from the Peace Corps telling me to report to New York City in the next couple of days to begin training (a ticket would be waiting for me at the airport).

My roommate was unhappy that he did not receive the same invitation.

The college semester was just ending. There was some question whether my finances permitted me to continue college. I had never been on an airplane. I had some interest in becoming a Peace Corps Volunteer. For all of these reasons, I got a ride to the airport; I flew to New York City; and, eventually, I found myself in the Republic of Panama.

The above serendipitous circumstances allowed me to experience the most fulfilling and educational time in my life.

My assignments in Panama were community development followed by teaching at the National Institute of Agriculture. I quickly learned that my existing skills were inadequate to the tasks.

However, I also learned that one can accommodate to circumstances. I found that the ability to analyze and determine alternatives can substitute for initial inadequacy.

The skills learned in the Peace Corps have served me well throughout my life.

If I have succeeded in life and career, the credit belongs in large part to the Peace Corps.

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