

## Amy Marshall Clark, Peace Corps Volunteer, Nepal\* (2003–2004)

### Biography

My name is Amy Marshall Clark, and I'm a Peace Corps Volunteer serving in Nepal. I grew up in Roswell, Georgia, which is just outside of Atlanta. Because I belong to several mixed families, I have many siblings. The family in which I did most of my growing up consisted of my mother and stepfather, an older stepsister, two stepbrothers, my older brother, and me. I come from a family of educators; in all, there are 10 teachers among us, including my husband and me.



Amy Clark

To join the Peace Corps, you must have a college education or 10 years of specialized work experience. I took the college route. I attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where I was an

English major. Deciding that I wanted a change, I transferred to the University of Georgia in Athens, where I finished my bachelor's in English just three years out of high school. At 21, I moved to Ireland, where I lived in a seaside town and spent my time studying and working at a local hotel. Within six months of returning to the United States, I was married and on my way to Fort Collins, Colorado.

I went there to earn my master of arts degree in English literature at Colorado State University, where I also taught

college composition. While we were there, I learned to love all kinds of outdoor pursuits. Between studying, backpacking, teaching, cycling, writing a master's thesis, reading, writing, learning yoga, and skiing, I kept very busy. So busy, in fact, that I was working right up until we left to come to Nepal, where we've been living happily for the past 16 months.

As a Peace Corps Volunteer in a Nepali city, I work as an English language teacher trainer. This job requires one year of teaching primary-level English in a government school, followed by a second year of conducting teacher trainings and classroom visits in many local schools. For my teaching year, I was very lucky to be assigned to Kanya High School, an all-girls' public school, where I taught classes and loved almost every day of it. Since April 2004, I've been working out of an educational resource center where I give my teacher trainings. These happen about twice a month, so while I am not training, I visit all of the 21 schools in my resource area and work individually with the teachers of English. The work is demanding and requires many hours of cycling and hiking around the area, but going to all those different places and getting to know so many people is also exciting, as I never know what I am going to find at a new school. Also, it has been challenging and refreshing to change my work at the midpoint of my service and shift my focus to include working with teachers as well as their students.

Besides working as a teacher and trainer, I have been involved in several other

projects. Both my husband and I are establishing libraries at our schools; this work keeps us busy with collecting materials and helping the school staff to operate the library efficiently. With some students and another teacher, I also helped to create a large world map that is now on display at the library. We started an English club last year that helped some of the older students to use their English in a fun way while learning something about my culture in the United States. I hope to continue that project this year in the form of a girls' club that will correspond with my World Wise Schools partner class. Outside of school, we teach a business English class

at a nearby organization that helps disadvantaged women to develop working skills. With some other community projects under way (including providing clean drinking water and a decent trail for a small, nearby village) and our training work, I lead a very active life here in Nepal. Still, it remains important to me to spend time with my husband and Nepali friends, as it is from them that I learn about life in this beautiful place.

\*In September 2004, the Peace Corps suspended its program in Nepal and withdrew all Peace Corps Volunteers from the country for their personal safety because of political violence.



Amy (second from right) and Greg (far right) with host family



Amy's primary-level English class