Global Network of Good Guys

Governments, academics, business people, even terrorists, have organized well-connected global networks. But the non-profit sector? Not so much. "The heroes of the world should be at least as well-connected as the villains," says Atlas Service Corps CEO and founder Scott Beale.

Scott's organization aims to do just that: bring rising non-profit leaders from across the globe to DC for a year of volunteering and cultural exchange. Above, the most recent group. Scott calls the fellowship program a "reverse Peace Corps." (To which, a friend in India replied, "I like your idea, but why are you against peace?") Non-profit leaders from Pakistan to Brazil to Zimbabwe come to DC and volunteer at one of a dozen organizations, from the Grameen Foundation to CentroNia, a local non-profit which provides education and family-support services to bilingual, multicultural children and their families. Many of the fellows, average age of 29, live together in group houses. The host organizations pay about 75% of the fellowship costs, and Atlas covers
the rest. Scott tells us applications are accepted on a rolling basis and they're constantly seeking host organizations interested in receiving fellows.

Scott, who previously worked on anti-human trafficking issues at the US embassy in New Delhi, says Americans tend to see developing countries as the recipients of resources, not partners or providers. But why not bring an HIV/AIDS leader in Africa to volunteer at an organization tackling the disease in DC? He says the non-profit leaders bring just as much knowledge to their host organizations as they get back. The program is growing quickly. Atlas Corps already sends a few American non-profit leaders to Colombia and has plans to open a New York office this year. In the fall, he plans to honor the Peace Corps' 50th anniversary by bringing 50 non-profit leaders from other countries to DC. By 2017, Scott hopes to have 500 fellows in cities across the US and the world. It now has a 1% acceptance rate, with 1,500 applications pouring in each session.

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