

# 2010 Success Story: Alison Driver

PCAL, YMCA Earth Service Corps, Peace Corps Volunteer, Volunteer to support Haiti



*(Alison, bottom left, with other PCAL staff, summer 2008)*

The Metrocenter YMCA often refers to itself as a rock thrown into the water, with countless ripples emanating from it. Occasionally, we get to hear about what shores those ripples, which often have become waves, broke upon the shore. **Alison Driver** is one of those rare ripples whose story has returned to us.

Alison first became a participant of the Metrocenter YMCA with the **Patsy Collins Adventure in Leadership for Girls of Promise program (PCAL)** in the seventh grade in 1998. She went only because her mom forced her to, but came back transformed, empowered and ready to take on the world. Through High School at Nathan Hale, Alison joined her local YMCA Earth Service Corps club and by her Senior year was leading her school's club, as well as serving as a primary leader of the regional **Youth Leadership Council for YESC**.

During summers throughout college, Alison returned from Bowdoin College in Maine to be a cabin leader, then Assistant Director for PCAL. Her path with Metrocenter had come full circle.

A little over a year ago, Alison joined the **Peace Corps** and was assigned to the **Dominican Republic** where she had spent time during a study abroad program during college. She quickly adapted and was noticed by Peace Corps leadership and has returned in a role overseeing other new volunteers. Alison spoke at the December Metrocenter board meeting and had the following to share about how lessons learned at Metrocenter are impacting her work in the Dominican Republic:

- **An Ethic of Service** is a lifelong priority: Alison learned this lesson from the service learning components of PCAL and YESC, and continued leading and participating in service learning through college. Her Peace Corps service is the next step on this journey, and developing an ethic of service in others is one of her missions in this role.
- **Youth are critical when implementing change:** Young people are capable and their contributions should be valued. Alison found this to be very empowering as a youth, and now communicates the message to the youth she works with in the Peace Corps.
- **The ability to collaborate and work with others:** Alison attributes her experience with YESC in coordinating regional service projects as being an important lesson and practice in getting things done. Sometimes collaboration can be exhausting, it pays off every time.

Shortly after Alison returned to finish her commitment to service in the Peace Corps, the earthquake that has devastated Haiti hit, changing the current work that Allison is participating in. With the Dominican Republic sharing the island that is also home to Haiti, Alison has been spending sleepless nights and long days supporting relief efforts in Haiti. To follow her blog, go to: <http://lilliputian.wordpress.com/>

Your contribution to the **Partners with Youth Campaign**, helps the **Metrocenter YMCA** provide programs for kids like Alison who turn into adults who give back to their communities and the world. You never know where that ripple will find land.