

Haoran (Ken) Li
UArizona Class of 2022



Can you tell us a little about yourself?

I am an international student from Beijing, China. I decided to come to The University of Arizona because the Management Information Systems (MIS) program at the Eller College of Management is nationally renowned. Also, I loved communicating with the accounting department staff when I was in high school. I am double majoring in Accounting and MIS.

Why did you want to join the Peace Corps? When did you first start thinking about joining?

I want to join the Peace Corps because I want to be challenged and find opportunities to grow continually. I first started thinking about joining the Peace Corps during my freshman year. I attended a workshop given by UArizona's Peace Corps Recruiter, Hannah Martin. She shared her experience in Benin, and that inspired me to think about my future plan. I hope to use my knowledge to help others who cannot afford the education I have right now.

So, I started my journey by joining UArizona's Peace Corps Prep Program. I talked to Tammy Orr, the Peace Corps Prep Program Coordinator. We had a pleasant conversation, and I was thrilled that she was my coordinator. Then I met Jacy Woodruff, Prep Program Assistant, at an open house event. She introduced me to her experience in Panama, and I knew I wanted the opportunity to be fully immersed in another culture someday in the Peace Corps. The Peace Corps Prep Program is the perfect starting point for me.

What do you consider the main benefits of being part of the Peace Corps Prep Program, and receiving the U. S. Peace Corps Prep Certificate?

For me, the main benefit of being part of the Peace Corps Prep Program is making connections. I met with Hannah and Jacy and learned about their experiences, serving in the Peace Corps. I obtained a better understanding of my strengths and my weaknesses as a Peace Corps candidate during the conversation with Tammy. This conversation made me reflect on creative solutions around my weaknesses and motivate myself to pursue improvements.

What other steps did you take to be a strong applicant for the Peace Corps?

I feel that being humble makes me a better person in most situations. During my Peace Corps service, I would need to integrate into another culture to navigate my daily life. I do not have all the answers, and I will face challenges and situations. I need to maintain a sense of humility and stay respectful.

Can you describe your volunteer work and extracurricular activities during your time at UArizona?

I have volunteered for *Tucson Meet Yourself* for two years. During this time, I developed a better understanding of multiculturalism and diversity. *Tucson Meet Yourself* is a folklife festival that focuses

on presenting artists and communities that carry on living traditions rooted in a group's definition of identity and cultural significance. I was part of the traditional Chinese calligraphy team with Tina Liu of the *Tucson Chinese Cultural Center*.

What are you most looking forward to as a Peace Corps Volunteer?

I am looking forward to learning about other people, developing language and career skills, and improving the quality of life for people in developing countries. I am also a massive fan of food. I want to join family dinners and learn the culture associated with their daily dining.

Are you worried about anything?

The former Peace Corps motto says, "the corner office can wait. Some corners of the world can't." The only thing I am worried about is obtaining my U. S. Citizenship so I will be eligible to serve in the Peace Corps once they start sending volunteers into countries again.

What do you hope to learn from your Peace Corps experience?

I want to prove that those two short years in the Peace Corps will give me the strength I need to move through the tough times and the awareness to cherish the good times. I hope my service can also show me that I could accomplish anything if I put my mind, heart, and soul into it.