

Rebecca Madden-Sturges Oral History Interview
Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection
Administrative Information

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Biographical Note

Rebecca Madden-Sturges served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Georgia from 2005 to 2007 on non-profit development projects.

Access

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Oral History Interview

with

Rebecca Madden-Sturges

August 25, 2018

Shawnee on Delaware, Pennsylvania

By Evelyn Ganzglass

Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection
John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum

GANZGLASS: [00:00:01] This is Evelyn Ganzglass, I was a Peace Corps volunteer in Somalia from 1966 to 1968. Today is August 25th, 2018, and I am interviewing Rebecca Madden-Sturges, who was a Peace Corps volunteer in Georgia from 2005 to 2007. And she was in a program doing nonprofit development. We'll talk about that. Rebecca, why did you join the Peace Corps?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:00:37] Oh, I joined the Peace Corps because my mother was a as a Return Peace Corps Volunteer from Peru. She went to the University of Michigan as an undergraduate and heard Kennedy speak and became involved in the formation of the Peace Corps and then ended up serving from 1964 to 1965 in Peru. So I grew up aware of what the Peace Corps was. And then I also had a personal interest in learning more about international development and living. I wanted to live in

another country and explore other cultures and to be able to travel. So I applied to the Peace Corps year after graduating from the University of Michigan and. Yes, so that's why I joined.

GANZGLASS: [00:01:25] So I don't have to ask the questions about the what your parents thought about this. No, there was there was support there. What did your friends think about this?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:01:36] My friends, I grew up. I knew I wanted to go into the Peace Corps. I had mentioned it in high school. So, yeah.

GANZGLASS: Wasn't a big surprise.

MADDEN-STURGES: No, not a big surprise in my case.

GANZGLASS: [00:01:49] Yes. And what did you study in college?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:01:51] I studied economics. So I was I have an interest in economic development and still want to go on and get a master's degree in economic development. So I felt the Peace Corps was a way to kind of experience that firsthand. I also had a professor that I was doing independent study for. She was she's an economist and she was in the Peace Corps as well in South America. So that was another influence, too.

GANZGLASS: [00:02:18] When you applied, did you ask for a certain part of the world?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:02:23] I thought open ended. I don't speak Spanish, so I wasn't sure about I wanted to go to maybe to Peru, like my mother, or South America. But I felt open ended and I maybe I was leaning towards Eastern Europe. I had taken what they called in my high school German history. So I learned a lot about Eastern Europe through through some history courses

in high school. And I was interested in exploring learning more about Eastern Europe. So that's where I ended up.

GANZGLASS: [00:02:57] But you hadn't applied for it? They just came back with you?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:03:00] With my interview, they mentioned. She asked me and I may have said in the end, maybe I'll choose Eastern Europe.

GANZGLASS: [00:03:09] Ok, so you were selected and then where where was the staging, or was it staging at that point?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:03:19] And yes, it actually took me a long time to be selected. It took me two years. So I did volunteer work at a Beverly Beverly Bootstrap thrift store for the Peace Corps. And I also was a receptionist at Heifer Learning Center Overlook Farm. So it took me a long time to actually become a nominee and be selected for whatever reason.

GANZGLASS: [00:03:38] And do you know why it took so long?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:03:42] They were looking for more work experience to be a nonprofit developer, I think. And so I also worked at Bank of America as well. So once I was selected, the staging took place in D.C., so that's where I met my G5, we were the fifth group in Georgia and there are probably close to 50 of us.

GANZGLASS: [00:04:06] All in nonprofit development?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:04:08] No, the majority were TEFL English teaching volunteers. And then there was about maybe I don't really know, actually a 20 or so out of that or nonprofit developers.

GANZGLASS: [00:04:27] And what happened in D.C.?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:04:30] We just had the general staging that the Peace Corps must do. Nothing, nothing outstanding. You slowly meet people in your group and um, we moved on to, you know, flying out of D.C. and going straight to. We stopped in Amsterdam, so I got to see a little of Amsterdam with some other volunteers. We went around and then we we flew into Georgia. And it was in the middle of the night. It was like 3:00 a.m. or something. So it was pitch dark and it was their old airport. So that's kind of, you know.

GANZGLASS: [00:05:12] Where did you fly? Directly to Tbilisi?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:05:18] To Tbilisi and we all got on a bus. They had handed out snacks and took us to sort of a resort area. I don't remember what it was called, but it was it was also like an old palace there and everything. And so we hung out there for a few days and we started our training. So we got like, ah, understood more about what the language was, what what our jobs were, and and structure to the Peace Corps is what they really provided. So I had a roommate, Carol Kimlin, and that went fine. You know, we weren't near anything. So all we had was this like compound out in the wilderness of Georgia. It was cool for what I thought the summertime was. And and then after that, that was a few days, then we went to our training sites. My training site was Gori, and in Gori there were 15 of us. And I was in a group of five. Two of the men were married and their wives were serving in the Peace Corps, but they were in different language classes. And then there was Elise Pizzi and Chris Mandic. And we were we had language courses in the mornings and then.

GANZGLASS: [00:06:48] And what is the language?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:06:49] The language is Kartuli, Georgian. So they didn't teach us Russian. But Russians have very fluency, fluent in that part of the world and in Georgia. So we started learning Georgian. I lived actually with a host family, who I'm still friends with on Facebook, for two months. This is during my training. Mya and she took care of me. She was close to my age, early 20s, and I think I was 26 when I joined, when I actually got into the Peace Corps. She had two brothers and then her two parents, but Mya spoke fluent English, so she really took care of me. They gave me the master bedroom to sleep in. And so they were my first experience in Georgia, I guess. And in my case, it was it was kind of a culture shock. So it was less food change and changing food. A lot of bread, wine, wine, which is a Georgia specialty.

GANZGLASS: [00:08:06] Yeah. Yeah.

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:08:07] In Georgia. So, you know, the Peace Corps gave lots of warnings about not drinking, but of course, you're going to try the wine. Right. And I don't know. And then we would so I go to my trainings and then I come back and I have dinner sort of on my own, aside from the family. And then they all watch TV. And what they love to watch was America's Funniest Home Videos reruns from like 20 years ago. So they thought that was a riot. So it was kind of, here I was in this.

GANZGLASS: In Georgian, dubbed?

MADDEN-STURGES: I don't think it was, it could have been Georgian. I wasn't even sure. I didn't understand it. So here I was in this Gori apartment, you know, just stereotypical Russian high rise and. You know, it was kind of it was very run down like holes in the floors and no running water, really, and and they were watching America's Funniest Home Videos for fun.

GANZGLASS: [00:09:08] Just so describe the apartments.

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:09:12] The apartment was a two bedroom. Kitchen, eating kitchen and a living room, I guess there was running water I could do I did laundry a couple of times and bathed a couple times.

GANZGLASS: So there was water.

MADDEN-STURGES: Yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:09:30] And electricity?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:09:30] It is for heating. There was there was electricity. Yeah. So.

GANZGLASS: [00:09:39] What was that what was the shock and you mentioned food, less food and different food, what was the food?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:09:46] Maybe just different tastes, you know. Um, so, you know.

GANZGLASS: [00:09:58] But you got used to it?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:09:59] I got used to it, yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:10:01] Yeah. OK, so you stayed with them and what, what was the language training like, every day?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:10:09] Yeah. We had it every day in the morning. Elza Carelli was my language teacher and she would she you know, it's just basic Georgian like how are you, *rogor xar*, and these things. And then in the afternoon was our nonprofit development training. So we had a trainer named Tango and

he went on to work for the Peace Corps and now he works for the World Bank. So he's fluent in English. And he would go out to different non-profits like youth centers and stuff like that as part of our training to get a sense of it. So we learned about grant writing, so structures of nonprofits and different structures of grants and stuff like that. So it was new to me.

GANZGLASS: [00:11:06] Yeah, what was, what is the nonprofit development? What does it mean?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:11:11] Our job is was to we were assigned to nonprofits and it was to kind of find funding for the, for different projects that the nonprofit does. So after my training in Gori, I went. We had another staging event and then we went off to our site. So at the site I met my counterpart Sopico Mansulla Schwilley and she she, uh, she is kind of like a like an old communist type. I don't know how to, very strict, very, very hierarchical kind of woman. And so I met her and she was trying to work with she was trying to start a nonprofit called Spectry in the city of Sagarejo. So that was my final site, was Sagarejo. Sagarejo is a city of 20,000 people about half an hour outside of Tbilisi. Yeah, you get there by *marshrutkas*.

GANZGLASS: What's *marshrutkas*?

MADDEN-STURGES: *Marshrutkas* was just a van that they drive. They had *marshrutkas* all over the country, so you pay like one or two *lari*s to take it and they drive you around.

GANZGLASS: [00:12:43] So like taking a bus?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:12:44] Like taking a bus, but it's a shared van. And so I got to site. So when I got to site, Sopico took me to my site from training shall we stopped at her house and she had two children, a boy and a girl and they're like mid teens. And so

she had a very nice house and we had like a snack lunch at our house. And then she and her husband drove, drove me to her, to my host family. So my host family I lived with for two years. She, so there was Dolly, my host mother, and she was probably around 50. There was Mari, my host sister, she was eight years old when I first moved there. And then there was my host brother. He was twenty four when I first moved there. It's in this beautiful large farm home, probably as big as any American home. It had three bedrooms, a living room on the second floor. No running water in this case and then a very large dining room and a living room and a kitchen and then a bathroom area, but there was no running water. So we get water like every week through a hose and she put it into big barrels.

GANZGLASS: [00:14:17] So was there no water because it was out in the country and there was no well?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:14:22] There's infrastructure for water, there was just so the house had two bathrooms and even a shower installed, but there was just no the infrastructure had run out. So there was also no heat in the winter because of the, um, I guess Russia doesn't pump gas to Georgia. So there was also no heat. So the for the first winter, I actually slept in the living room with my host mother and host sister. I had my own bed and they had another large bed. And so I lived like that for.

GANZGLASS: [00:14:58] Did you have a fireplace?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:15:00] They had a wood stove that they put in our living room. So it heat the kitchen and the living room and the rest house is freezing cold. Yes, and then and then I met the woman, Tom Ricoh, who runs the youth house, and she's a lovely lady and I'm with her on Facebook too, and the women at the youth house. So there were two English teachers.

GANZGLASS: [00:15:28] So you stayed with the family. You met the woman who started the nonprofit. Did you work at the nonprofit?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:15:33] Yes, I did. But it wasn't like it was. It was it was not like a job I went to every day. So I met with her maybe like once a week initially. And then there were some times when I never saw her. And then by the end of my service, we were doing some projects and I saw some more.

GANZGLASS: So it was very loose?

MADDEN-STURGES: Yeah. Where I spent all my time at the youth house, I went to the youth house every single day.

GANZGLASS: [00:16:01] Do you want to develop that or was that developed by Peace Corps, the Youth House?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:16:05] The youth house was, I was assigned.

GANZGLASS: [00:16:07] Oh you were assigned to that. And so what was the youth house?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:16:12] Youth who say they had school aged children, probably from first grade to the end of high school, show up and they do they teach languages, so they would teach Russian and English and they would also do like put on plays and Georgian dance. So it's kind of like a cultural youth center.

GANZGLASS: [00:16:46] And what was your role there?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:16:48] My role was to teach English, but it was also just to experience you know, I sit with the women every day. They would have snacks like hot chicory or even animal crackers out. And it's not like there's a whole lot to do.

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:17:08] So it's a lot of sitting and talking. And I think my first year oh, they want to know about Halloween. So I showed up in the fall, at the end of August. And so they thought Halloween was great. So I carved, um, they don't have, they call them *gogras*. They're green pumpkins. I don't know what they're called here. No orange pumpkins, but so I carved one for them and they thought that was the best thing ever because they they were so curious about this Halloween holiday we have. And two of the teens dressed up in costumes. And I thought that was the best thing ever.

GANZGLASS: [00:17:53] So when you were assigned to the youth house, what for what purpose were you assigned there?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:18:02] To to write grants and to to teach English or to help them out in any way.

GANZGLASS: [00:18:09] So who would you write grants to?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:18:11] So when I did write grants, I got them funding through the Peace Corps. Let me just look up what I did. There's two Peace Corps grants.

GANZGLASS: [00:18:29] So you got funding from the National Peace Corps, or was it local?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:18:33] Local, I think. Yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:18:37] And that were there other sources?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:18:40] Peace Corps Partnership Program. I got some small computers my second year and I also got them donations of English books from a place in Connecticut. And they would come every like four months or so, a box of English

books. And so in the computer lab, I got them two computers plus bookshelves and. And they thought that was great.

GANZGLASS: [00:19:12] Was that the idea, to go to Peace Corps in the United States for funding, or other sources in Georgia?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:19:18] That was a source in Georgia, Peace Corps Georgia. And then I did other funding for respect for for the non profit Spectry. I was able to renovate the regional hospital's gynecological department. I got funding. I, I wrote a grant for the gynecology department. So I interviewed the doctor there and the director of the hospital. And Sophico was there for that.

GANZGLASS: [00:19:56] And where did what kind of funding did you get for that?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:19:59] So I ended up meeting the with some Peace Corps get together the like. I think he was assistant ambassador for the embassy and he said they were looking to renovate hospitals. So we got ten thousand dollars from the State Department and Counterpart International donated medical equipment and also did the renovation of the hospital. So I included a bathroom, new beds, a surgical table, paint, you know.

GANZGLASS: [00:20:33] So you guys had funding from State Department and who was the local?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:20:37] Counterpart International.

GANZGLASS: [00:20:38] Counterpart International. And you did this all in English or in English?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:20:45] Yeah, it was in English. I had the English teacher from the U.S. translate for me to the doctor because he didn't speak any English or my Georgian wasn't good enough. So that was a great success and that took that took like a year and a half and in the process and I just communicated with the doctor at the hospital, he sat there looking at more kind of renovation projects on their own. I thought it was what a wonderful idea. They never thought of looking for funding for their hospital before. So they thought that was great.

GANZGLASS: [00:21:24] And you just happened to find out about that?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:21:26] And so I, I was looking to do community development projects with. So because she thought of I thought it was like one of the hospitals. And so she, she thought the gynecology department there needed some, some assistance because wealthy Georgians in Sagarejo would just go into Tbilisi. But the poor population doesn't, can't afford to do that to go to the with the hospitals. So it ends up serving the poor Georgians in Sagarejo, as well as small Azeri population that resettle near there, so it was badly needed, you know, like the windows were broken and everything, so, yeah. Very pleased.

GANZGLASS: [00:22:19] So that's great. Yeah. So that's what you did. And that's why a big project. So that took quite a bit of time.

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:22:26] Yeah. And a lot of waiting too. But I also taught English at the youth house and to about first graders and I also taught an English class to adults, to medical doctors for the first year that I was there.

GANZGLASS: [00:22:46] You lived with another Peace Corps volunteer you said?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:22:48] No, I lived with a host family, with a host family. So like my first year, they had a vineyard. So my first year, they took me out to the vineyard to pick grapes. And they showed me the process of how they put the grapes through the machine that squashes them. And then it goes down into this huge, huge, huge barrel and they're in the basement of the house and it ferments there and then they drink it.

GANZGLASS: [00:23:11] Was it good wine?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:23:14] It was fine. Not the best wine, but it's what it was there to drink. So, yeah. And they also had what they called dinner party supras. And somehow my house mother would have them for birthdays or for different occasions. And so that's when they bring out the national dishes like *khinkali* and tons of food.

GANZGLASS: What's that?

MADDEN-STURGES: *Khinkali's* a meat dumpling. My other favorite food was *khachapuri*, cheese bread, so cheese baked inside bread. But otherwise I ate a lot of cheese and a lot of bread and a lot of soupe, which was, and potato. So that was kind of my meal. It would take me. I lived on the main road and I'd walk up this huge hill to get to the center of town of Sagarejo and that's where the youth house was and everything. So I had my own little routine in in Sagarejo in the village, so people would wave to me on my way to work and stuff like that.

GANZGLASS: [00:24:28] Did you get to be friends with other folks or mostly the family you were with?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:24:30] Mostly the family. And that's probably because of the language barrier. I found Georgian hard to study. I did pay

a tutor. But it was all right. Nobody expects the American to know Georgian.

GANZGLASS: [00:24:47] Is Georgian like Russian?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:24:48] It's actually. I looked it up yesterday. It's closest to Greek.

GANZGLASS: [00:25:00] So did you what did you do during vacations? Did you have vacations?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:25:05] Yeah, yeah, I did some trips with other volunteers. My first winter, I went to Ukraine with a group and we did Ukraine.

GANZGLASS: By train or how did you get there?

MADDEN-STURGES: We did it by train. We flew and then we we went by train to different places. And I mostly followed one of the volunteers. He was a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer from Russia. So he had lived and been to all these places. He was fluent in Russian. So he was sort of like our tour guide and I just kind of tagged along. But it was I thought Ukraine was beautiful with the churches and in the wintertime is a really great. And then I went out on another trip. To I went to Azerbaijan on a trip a year, a year through my service with a different group of volunteers, and they always stayed with expats who worked for, I think, BP, is that the oil company? And so we had a nice place to stay and that we saw Baku and we went out to even stayed at another Peace Corps volunteer's site. I can't remember where it was, but we stayed with her and then we went off to this village that had one of those windy roads. You know, you see the bus in the bottom of the hill. So it's kind of scary.

GANZGLASS: [00:26:31] So you traveled around the whole area?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:26:40] I went to I also took a trip to Armenia for a long weekend. And I went I went to Riga and then at the end of my service, I went with Christina Jones through Turkey. We spent like three weeks in Turkey and we did eastern Turkey. And then went around the bottom of Turkey and then we ended up in Istanbul and then we went to Bulgaria and we went to Hungary.

GANZGLASS: [00:27:17] So you saw a lot of Eastern Europe?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:27:22] Saw a lot of it, yeah. So that's what I did for travel.

GANZGLASS: [00:27:24] Yeah, so that was to, and this is on the way home. You did all of that. So as you think back, was it a good experience?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:27:36] Oh, yeah, I absolutely loved it. It was probably the happiest. My first year in service was the happiest year of my life so far I think. I loved living with that host family. And I loved, loved Mari, the little girl. I loved spending time with her and her host mother. And it was just a beautiful place to live. And, you know, it's difficult, like there's no place to shower. There's always those kind of hardships. But it was a beautiful, you felt a real sense of community. And just, yeah, it was great experience.

GANZGLASS: [00:28:09] Good experience.

MADDEN-STURGES: Yes.

GANZGLASS: Do you think you contributed to the community?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:28:14] I wish I, I wish I had been more effective in teaching English, I think. That was kind of new to me, but so it was I think I did a good job, but I think if I had more like too much teaching experience, I would have been more effective. But I was very proud of myself for renovating the regional hospital's gynecology department. I thought that was, that's my biggest achievement. And then I enjoyed living with my host family and I hope to go see them maybe in a couple of years. Oh, well, it's been 10 years since I've been there.

GANZGLASS: [00:28:51] So are you still in touch with them?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:28:52] Oh yeah. Through Facebook and Skype, I call. I started calling them and my host sister, now she's like 19 and fluent in English. So she can.

GANZGLASS: [00:29:03] You teach her the English?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:29:04] No. And so that was kind of my my regret. Now that I see how fluent she she is, I wish I had been able to teach her more. But she's kind of young. When my parents came to visit near the end of my service, they gave Mari English children's videos, VHSs of cartoons and stuff like that. So I don't know if she ever used them. But, you know, that may have helped her learn. She loved them at the time anyway.

GANZGLASS: [00:29:38] And have you kept up with Peace Corps since you've come back?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:29:43] Yeah, yeah. I've been a member of Boston Area Peace Corps volunteer since about 2011. And I'm right now I'm the secretary for the club this year. So I go to their different events. And I this is my third Peace Corps Connect NPCA event. I come with my mother because she's also Returned Peace Corps Volunteer.

GANZGLASS: [00:30:06] And what have you done since Peace Corps?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:30:08] Oh, I did AmeriCorps in Syracuse, New York. Right now I work in medical imaging. In the last two years, I've done a lot of different temp jobs. I was a proctor for a few years testing students for education research, testing new types of curriculum. So I work for two different nonprofits doing that. And, um, I, I've done like different data entry work for Mathematica Policy Research in their nutrition department. But I ended up in medical imaging and I hope to go on and maybe get a graduate degree in economic development. So I plan to take some online courses on that and prepare for that to keep to keep up my economic development.

GANZGLASS: [00:31:01] And go back overseas?

MADDEN-STURGES: Yeah, I might. I might, yeah.

GANZGLASS: So it was a good experience for you.

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:31:11] Yeah, oh, yeah, it's very positive. It was a wonderful experience. Yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:31:16] That's good. I'm just trying to think. You were you were in your 20s.

MADDEN-STURGES: Late 20s.

GANZGLASS: Were you the first, no, you were Georgia 5.

MADDEN-STURGES: Yeah.

GANZGLASS: So is Peace Corps still in in Georgia?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:31:34] Yeah, there was the conflict between Georgia and Russia in 2008. So they did pull out Peace Corps then. But they returned. And I don't I don't actually know what G they're at now, but they have a new group every year.

GANZGLASS: [00:31:48] Yeah, but are there other things you want to talk about, about your Peace Corps experience?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:31:53] Um. No, just that I I really loved that Peace Corps connected me with this host family because I plan to go back and visit them and they took care of me in the wintertime in Georgia. And I really wanted to have survived on my own. And I truly love them. And I'm so glad for that friendship.

GANZGLASS: [00:32:14] So it was a good experience for you?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:32:16] Oh, yeah. Yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:32:18] Was it a good experience for them?

MADDEN-STURGES: I hope so!

GANZGLASS: But I mean, not just you, but the whole exposure to Americans.

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:32:26] I think so. Yeah. I think it opened their world up.

GANZGLASS: [00:32:29] Have many Americans been around?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:32:31] So there was only, I think I was the fourth volunteer at my site. So that's my host family. My host mother didn't speak a word of English, so they knew. All volunteers and networking at the youth center so Tamiko was maybe more familiar with Americans and having them over. But for my host

mother, I think it was a great experience, too. And for my sister and host brother. Yeah.

GANZGLASS: [00:33:03] And you got the kind of support you needed from Peace Corps?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:33:07] Yeah, I didn't really reach out to them. Maybe I should have more. I did get funding through two projects. I and I also did a women's, oh I forgot. I did a women's information center through Spectry so I got her a computer and we, we published some material that we tried to distribute and we went to different went to the Azeri village and so was on, about women's health. I got some information in Georgia and on women's health and stuff like that from John Snow. So that was another project I did. And I got funding through the Peace Corps. So I think the Peace Corps was very supportive of work when I did reach out.

GANZGLASS: [00:33:51] But you didn't need them that much.

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:33:53] No, maybe I didn't. Yeah, I would go to the Peace Corps office just for comfort, maybe like every other week or so on the weekend.

GANZGLASS: [00:34:00] Into Tbilisi?

MADDEN-STURGES: [00:34:01] Into Tbilisi, because I was so close. But there I just check my email and maybe see some other volunteers and then go on my way to through Tbilisi and go home. So, yeah, I'd say I had a very nice room, a very nice view out onto. So it was a very nice place. Like some volunteers, they changed flights and stuff like that. I actually stayed at site most nights because I was so close to Tbilisi and I had this beautiful bedroom and very nice, hospitable host family. So it was a great experience.

GANZGLASS: [00:34:34] Great. I don't have any more questions.

MADDEN-STURGES: OK.

GANZGLASS: So thank you for the interview.

MADDEN-STURGES: Great. Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]