

# PEACE CORPS CELEBRATION



## CHRIS CONZ LESOTHO, QACHA'S NEK DISTRICT

I taught English and Math at Tsoelike High School in the rural Qacha's Nek district for two years. These were some of the most exciting times in my life, especially learning the local language, Sesotho. The school was located in a village called Ha Makhaola where I lived with a host family. While serving as a PCV, I developed many friendships with my fellow teachers, students, and people in the village. The Kingdom of Lesotho is a mountainous country and I took advantage of this in my spare time by hiking extensively, visiting villages, talking with people, and experiencing the highland environments.

Shortly after returning from my PC service, I began my PhD studies in African History here at BU. My dissertation, which I will complete in March 2017, examines ninety years of environmental and agricultural history in Qacha's Nek, Lesotho (1880-1960s). During my time at BU I have traveled back to Lesotho twice: once for two months for advanced Sesotho language study (2012); and once for nine months of dissertation research on a Fulbright Grant (2014-2015). During a rural phase of my research, I stayed with my old host family in the very same home where I had lived as a volunteer! My relationship to the people and environments of Lesotho have deepened through my research and writing and I aim to continue to develop these relationships far into the future. Not least, I also met my wife while I was a PCV in Lesotho. She was also a PCV there at that time. Indeed, you might say that Lesotho, and my initial experiences there, have come to play an important part in my personal and professional life!



On Dissertation Research, Lesotho, 2015



With colleagues at Tsoelike High School, Lesotho, 2008



With my host mother and sister, Ha Makhaola, Lesotho, 2012