



Jonathan Vance

Alena Wenker

Kim Decker

A World of Opportunity: International Service Corps Update

From the Czech Republic to communities around the world, ISC creates opportunities for YMCA Alumni members to share their experience, talents, and passion while building lasting friendships.

Alena Wenker is from the Czech Republic. She spent over 30 years in the United States working for the YMCA and teaching Russian at a university in Middle Tennessee. After retiring, Alena became involved with the YMCA Alumni International Service Corps (ISC).

She connected with the YMCA in the Czech Republic and helped establish a relationship in the small, picturesque town of **Starý Plzenec**, where the YMCA hosts a day camp and welcomes volunteers to serve as counselors.

Through Alena's leadership, ISC has sent **three volunteers over the past two years** to help children learn English through immersion in fun, engaging daily activities conducted entirely in English.

This year, **Jon Vance and Kim Decker** joined Alena in Starý Plzenec, spending a week as counselors at the day camp. For Kim, returning for a second year made the experience special: Here's what she said:

"Returning to Starý Plzenec for my second year was especially meaningful because I was no longer a stranger—I was returning to friends, familiar faces, and campers who remembered me. I loved watching the children grow in confidence, not only in their English, but in their willingness to try, help one another, and step outside their comfort zones. Being back at camp also reminded me how much I love working with children and creating experiences that bring people together. I came to share my love of camp and English, but I left feeling that the Czech campers and leaders had given me just as much in return."

This is what the International Service Corps is all about: *sharing our skills and experience while learning from others and building relationships that reach across borders.*

***Our ISC 2026 Support Campaign* is underway through November 30, 2026.**

Your financial support helps ISC make experiences like the one in the Czech Republic possible. We hope you will contribute soon.

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