

## NYSSPE/PEC Meeting, 5/15/11 at El Dorado West Diner, Tarrytown, NY

Attendance: Kate Sajduk <[ksajduk@brookerengineering.com](mailto:ksajduk@brookerengineering.com)>; Rudi O. Sherbansky <[mailrudi@yahoo.com](mailto:mailrudi@yahoo.com)>; Jeff Lamond <[lamtech2@yahoo.com](mailto:lamtech2@yahoo.com)>; Djohan Hadiprawira <[djohan@brookerengineering.com](mailto:djohan@brookerengineering.com)>; Kaspal Thumma <[kthumma@yahoo.com](mailto:kthumma@yahoo.com)>; Brian Brooker <[brianb@brookerengineering.com](mailto:brianb@brookerengineering.com)>; Dr. James J. Yarmus <[drjamesiyarmus@yarmusconsulting.com](mailto:drjamesiyarmus@yarmusconsulting.com)>

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:20 AM
2. The Draft Resolution distributed by Kelly Norris for discussion at the Annual Meeting was reviewed as previously discussed with the XCOM and The Trustees. Also reviewed were amendments to the resolution proposed by PEC. Various proposed solutions were discussed to alleviate the administrative burden on the nysspe staff in accounting of PEC membership and funds, as noted in the resolution. It was agreed that a clear counter proposal to the resolution would be drafted by Rudi as a structured response to the original draft resolution.
3. A concept discussed at the NYSSPE Trustees meeting, suggesting removing voting rights from inactive practice divisions was reviewed. It appeared logical to PEC, instead of eliminating all Practice Divisions. The removal of the penalty for joining a State Practice Division by PEC subsidy seemed logical also as a response to the suggestion in the Draft Resolution.
4. Jeff Lamond agreed to head a PEC sub-committee to continue serving the portions of the state north of the Lower Hudson Valley with PEC activities. He will start by serving the counties on both sides of the Hudson (Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan, Putnam, Ulster, Green, and Columbia) and advise the PEC Board as he adds members and activities to the committee. Keith Lashway will continue working in the areas served closest to his jurisdiction.
5. In order to recruit members to join PEC, the committee discussed the possibility of reimbursing the value of the NYSSPE cost of Membership in PEC by giving back a free PDH seminar [with admission fee of up to \$25]. The cost of NYSSPE membership in PEC is \$20. The PEC event notification will advise recipients of the offer by PEC by displaying the offer prominently in the following lecture mailing. Similar activities may provide added value to the new 140 members brought in by PEC in the last two years and to all the PEC membership now in the Division, as well as the new members.
6. The continuing resolution to pay for all expenses for PEC Executive Board members who attend NSPE or NYSSPE meetings that include PEC activities was once again affirmed as the two annual meetings approach. Some of the funds generated by this year's activities will be expended as part of our continuing policy.
7. Jim Yarmus advised the team that he will lecture on behalf of PEC and NYSSPE at the national meeting in Las Vegas. Also speaking with Jim will be David Janover of NYSSPE's PEG practice division. Kelly Norris is working on a chronology of NYSSPE's actions and positions before, during and after Jim's Presidency. He will also attend the national PEC meeting where he concentrates on issues related to industrial exemption, emphasis on young members and developing support for Engineers Without Borders. He explained that NSPE has already published support and he will introduce suggestions based on the two documents included below.

## In Developing World, Special Needs Call for Special Solutions

BY CATHERINE A. LESLIE, P.E.



The world in which we live in is forcing a change to "today's engineer." It is not enough to be technically proficient in our craft. Today's engineer is required to understand society, culture, communities, and to encourage collaboration so that the solutions they design are appropriate and remain in existence well into the future.

Recent articles have been published regarding engineers and their competence in development, such as the article in the October 2010 PE titled "Are Engineers Competent to Undertake Development Work?" The short answer is that the majority of the engineers and U.S. Development work is not equal to large scale, developed world projects. Engineers typically are not educated in working in different cultures and the developing world. Not are they educated in the human skills necessary to identify the correct problem, design the appropriate solution, and ensure that a community has the ability to maintain the solution in the long-term. These are important parts of knowledge addressing critical developing world problems.

However, there is hope. Engineers Without Borders USA has built these core competencies into its values and model for developing appropriate engineering solutions for developing communities. The EWB-USA mission clearly states this fundamental principle in that the organization creates and supports "community driven development programs worldwide by collaborating with local partners to design and implement sustainable engineering projects."

According to the World Bank, 1.2 billion people in the world live on less than \$1.25 a day, while 2 billion live on less than \$2 a day. Studies indicate that water problems, such as access to safe drinking water and reliable sanitation, affect about half of humanity. Nearly 1.1 billion people do not have access to clean drinking water, while 2.6 billion do not have access to proper sanitation.



AN EWB-USA MEMBER TESTS THE OPERATION OF A WATER SYSTEM IN BRITAIN, ROBERT DEBRIEN (LEFT) AND JAMES J. (RIGHT)

MIKE BOZEM FROM THE EWB-USA STUDENT PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH (LEFT) AND LESLIE IN SURVEYING WITH A BOY IN MALI (RIGHT)

More disturbing is that unsafe water, inadequate sanitation, and the lack of hygiene claim the lives of an estimated 1.3 million children under the age of five every year, according to the United Nations. A September 2010 report by the United Nations Development Programme stated that about 1.4 billion people lack access to electricity. It is estimated that household air pollution that results from biomass use will result in over 1.5 million deaths per year by 2032.

These challenges must be met not only for the well-being of those in need but for the





continued prosperity for all humanity. If engineers stand back and throw up their hands at the magnitude of the problems, no one wins. If they stand back and design solutions that are not appropriate or cannot be maintained in these communities, no one wins either.

EWB-USA is innovative in that it brings together students, academic, and professional practice to focus on a need in a developing community, rather than the need of a professional, student, or university. It is through this focus on service, rather than self, that is catalyzing the engineering profession to work with developing communities. This focus, while doing appropriate sustainable community development, is also creating "today's engineer."

In September 2010, EWB-USA won the National Building Museum's Henry C. Turner Prize for Innovation in Construction Technology for its work in connecting engineering students with international

## About Engineers Without Borders-USA

EWB-USA is a nonprofit humanitarian organization established to support community-driven development programs worldwide through partnerships that design and implement sustainable engineering projects. EWB-USA members comprise professional and student engineers or other disciplines, work with local communities and NGOs in over 45 developing countries around the world on projects such as water, renewable energy, sanitation, and health.

Dubbed the "Blueprint Brigade" by Time magazine, EWB-USA has grown from little more than a handful of members in 2002 to over 12,000 members today and has over 400 projects worldwide. EWB-USA maintains over 225 dedicated chapters, including university chapters on 180 campuses in the United States, and has touched the lives of more than one million people. For more information about EWB-USA, please visit [www.ewb-usa.org](http://www.ewb-usa.org).

development projects. NBM President Chase Wynd noted that "In each village, EWB-USA typically completes two to three major projects, and the organization's team stays five years to ensure they can build local capacity needed to keep projects running smoothly after they leave."

Two such examples are:

The EWB-USA University of Florida chapter has been working in Pursat, Cambodia, on an anaerobic digestion system. David Barten, the project leader states, "We have learned how keen the villagers and village leaders are in community development. Working with village leaders to promote villagers on the benefits of our project is the key to the successful adoption. Any project that we wish to implement must generate excitement in the villagers. No matter how important we think these projects may be, if the villagers do not also believe in them, then it will not be a successful venture."

Jonathan Yeh, president of the EWB-USA Yale student chapter, which is working on water supply and distribution in Ekono, Cameroon, states, "Full community support is essential to success. Involving the community in planning, design, construction, monitoring, and maintenance builds a sense of community ownership and responsibility.... Developing a governing structure for the project and using it to define and formalize the roles and responsibilities of the chapter, partner NGO, and community are crucial."

EWB-USA is uniquely poised to unite all engineering disciplines and define

humanitarianism for the engineering profession as well as train the next generation in culturally appropriate sustainable design. The EWB-USA program focuses not only on the technical aspects of the engineering project, but also on the systems required in the community to ensure that these projects remain viable and operational for the long term. By firsthand experience, the EWB-USA member understands that they must have nontechnical skills in order to create a successful community program.

An EWB-USA member is not only competent in engineering principles, but also can meet the needs of developing communities. This is a new, special, and valuable breed of engineer that is sorely needed in industry, academia, and the developing world. It is this type of engineer whose knowledge will help to fill three gaps in addressing critical developing world problems.

The EWB-USA program is one of long-term commitment and partnership with the community. Working with communities over a period of time, EWB-USA programs design and implement low cost, small scale, replicable, and sustainable engineering solutions to problems identified by the community. The problems in today's world are immense and complex and require organizations, like Engineers Without Borders USA, to be able to work collaboratively across cultures, disciplines, and technologies.

Ostienne A. Leeds, P.E., is executive director of Engineers Without Borders-USA.



March 4, 2011

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Dear ASCE Section and Branch Presidents:

On November 9, 2010, you received a request from the Chair and Vice-Chair of the ASCE/EWB-USA Joint Committee to identify an ASCE/EWB-USA liaison to serve your Section and/or Branch. Our records indicate an appointment has not yet been made. I encourage you to offer your members new opportunities to enrich their lives and provide a public service by designating such an individual.

EWB-USA supports community-driven development programs worldwide through the design and implementation of sustainable engineering projects in developing countries. A majority of the projects are civil engineering related, and many civil engineer volunteers have shared the excitement of working with engineering students and practicing professional engineers to help communities around the globe.

The EWB-USA Liaisons provide the link between the local EWB-USA professional and student chapters and their ASCE counterparts by promoting opportunities for members of both local organizations to become involved in joint projects, mentoring, technical input, and activities.

Accompanying this letter is a copy of the liaison job description for your review and that of your liaison designee. Preferably, the liaison you select should be a joint member of ASCE and EWB-USA since they already have knowledge of both organizations. However, a dedicated ASCE-only member will also be welcome if he or she has the interest and time to become involved.

How you go about selecting an EWB-USA Liaison is, of course, up to you. We hope you could find the opportunity to select someone for this important position—if possible by **April 1, 2011**—using the attached designation form.

To learn more about EWB-USA, go to [www.ewb-usa.org](http://www.ewb-usa.org). For access to an ASCE/EWB-USA liaison "tool kit" (consisting of the liaison job description, possible liaison activities, and outreach PowerPoints), go to <http://www.asce.org/Content.aspx?id=30273> (found at the bottom of the Web page). And overall, note that because of our partnership, ASCE members receive a discount on EWB-USA membership.

We appreciate your service to ASCE and the profession and look forward to hearing from you by April 1st.

Sincerely,

Kathy J. Caldwell, P.E., F.ASCE  
ASCE President 2011

Enclosures

The meeting ended at 11 AM. We will meet in Rochester in June, Westchester in July.  
Submitted by Jim Yarmus, Secretary of NYSSPE/PEC