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Engineers Without Borders-USA, University of Maine Student Chapter Newsletter

Engineers Without Borders

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Ruth, Rita, Dan, Joanna and four fabulous kids from Dulce Vivir

Mission Statement

University of Maine Engineers Without Borders strives to foster a worldwide cultural awareness and a strong sense of volunteerism in today's future leaders through sustainable and community-driven engineering projects.

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- Newman's Own Foundation
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Castillo

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**Special thanks to graduating seniors
Daniel Gerges and Rita Cooper!*

Chapter, Fundraising, and Awards Updates

Engineers Without Borders-UMaine is proud and excited to share news of our successes over the past year. **Firstly, the final implementation of our sanitation project in Dulce Vivir, Honduras was completed in March after more than four years of planning and work!** Fundraising was key to completing our project and the chapter worked hard to raise the money needed for construction materials and travel. We started to see our hard work pay off last October when we received a \$5000 dollar grant from the **Woodard and Curran Foundation**. With this boost in confidence we continued to fundraise until the beginning of March when we were thrilled to find out we won first place in the **Newman's Own Foundation** Campus Community Service Challenge! We were awarded \$25,000 and couldn't contain our excitement. We had hit crunch time and prior to hearing about the award we were fearful that we wouldn't be able to complete construction of the project during the implementation trip. Then, we were surprised with yet another honor. EWB-USA selected our project for the **Premier Project Award**, which was announced at the international EWB conference in Las Vegas in March. Four of our members traveled across the country to receive the award and celebrate our success. For years the members of EWB-UMaine have dedicated their time, energy, and money to this project. We are very proud of it and the amount of heart that has been put into it. Receiving recognition and honor for this work has been wonderful and we hope everyone who has been involved in any way will share our excitement.

BY JESSICA MURPHY

Meet a Community Member: Rigoberto Alvarado

Since EWB-UMaine started working with the community of Dulce Vivir in 2008, Rigoberto Alvarado has been right by our side. Rigoberto is the President of the Dulce Vivir Residents' Association and has been a leader in that group since the community's inception in 2005. He lives with his wife, Natividad (nicknamed Tiva), and two grandchildren, Luis and Roswel.

Rigoberto was instrumental in the completion of the newly implemented septic system. He has been the connection between EWB-UMaine and the community, local hardware stores and material suppliers. After finishing the project, he was asked how he feels about EWB-UMaine coming down to help his community. His response was that, "it is a great relief because we couldn't have waited any longer with our latrine problem. We feel good about the project. All of the connections are set and everything is running excellently."



One of the most important parts of implementing a system in a developing nation is that the community feels a sense of ownership and responsibility for the project. Along with this, it is crucial that the community's dynamics don't change for the worse. When Rigoberto was asked how he thinks the project will affect community dynamics, he responded by saying, "I don't think it will affect us in any negative way. There will be a positive impact because the help that EWB-UMaine has given us raised our quality of living. Without the project, we would continue to live in inadequate and harmful sanitary conditions, having our latrines collapsing and being faced with hazards and disease every day." Rigoberto was also asked how this project will change the lifestyles of the people in the community. Since the project was so recently completed, he said that this was hard to assess, but that, "it will lead us to a healthier future."

BY DANIEL GERGES AND RUTH CASTILLO



Daniel Gerges gluing pipe together during the recent trip to Dulce Vivir.