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Engineers Without Borders Newsletter

Engineers Without Borders

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Update on the Project ~By Alex Chasse and Gwen Beacham

Beginning in 2008, University of Maine's chapter of Engineers Without Borders (EWB-UMaine) has been working on a project in Dulce Vivir, Honduras. Dulce Vivir is a community of 120 people who have struggled with poor sanitation due to heavy flooding during the rainy season and overflowing of latrines. EWB-UMaine student members, in conjunction with professional engineer mentors and members of the Dulce Vivir community, have designed a community septic system to improve the sanitation and overall quality of life for the residents of Dulce Vivir. Last spring, five EWB-UMaine student members and three mentors traveled to Dulce Vivir for the final implementation of the new sanitation system. This spring, EWB-UMaine members and mentors will travel to Dulce Vivir to complete the final details of the system. The plan for this trip involves the use of both a shed to house the pumping equipment and a trailer to be used for hauling sludge from the septic tanks to the land application site. EWB-UMaine also plans to survey the area, perform water and soil testing, and gather health data. EWB-UMaine is currently completing the Operations and Maintenance manual (in both English and Spanish) and plans to work with the community on operations and maintenance of the sanitation project.

EWB Northeast Regional Conference

~By Whitney Chamberlain

The 2012 Northeast Regional Conference was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania from November 16th to the 18th. There were five students who traveled to the conference to represent the Engineers Without Borders at the University of Maine (EWB-UMaine). The students were: Derek Rothenheber, Emily Kelsey, Katrina Lessard, Tim Heno, and Whitney Chamberlain. The conference was a fantastic time for students to learn from other EWB organizations throughout the Northeast and to hear professionals give speeches about their experiences within the organization. There are many "breakout" sessions led by EWB student groups, mentors, and conference leaders who have important information to share with other EWB members. Examples of some of the presentations at the 2012 conference were: best practices for sustainable projects, crisis management, quality assurance and quality control of projects, chapter sustainability, and chapter recruitment. The EWB-UMaine students felt honored to be one of the groups chosen to present during a breakout session at the conference. As a group we gave a presentation about our project in Dulce Vivir, Honduras and highlighted our successes as well as our hardships. We gave advice to others such as what we would've done differently, the lack of time we experienced on each trip to Honduras, the difficulty of the language barrier, and the complications we experienced from the lack of NGOs in Honduras. The Northeast Regional Conference is a time for EWB chapters to learn valuable tips and advice from others with experience, and to network with professional mentors. The 2012 conference was a success, and next year we hope to have even more students attend from EWB-UMaine!

Meet Our Project Lead: Whitney Chamberlain

By Patrick Mckeown and Chris Marchetti

Whitney Chamberlain, a senior civil engineering major, has been an active member of EWB from the time she was a freshman. She worked on the fundraising team writing grants before she joined the design team. As a design team member, Whitney worked on the hydraulic profile of the community and also wrote the health and safety plan for the March 2012 trip to Honduras. Whitney is now the co-project lead where she has a great responsibility managing our project. Whitney travelled to Honduras in March 2012 where she worked alongside the members of Dulce Vivir. Seeing the community's devotion to the project and gratitude that EWB-UMaine was helping them have a better life was one of Whitney's most rewarding experiences since joining the group. Whitney plans to continue her involvement with EWB after she graduates, and she hopes to become a mentor for a university EWB group. Whitney hopes to help people realize how much EWB can actually do for others

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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EWB-UMaine Executives

President: Emily Kelsey
Vice President: Jessica Murphy
Secretary: Gwen Beacham
Treasurer: Derek Rothenheber
Membership Coordinator: Tim Heno
Project Lead: Whitney Chamberlain, Nicholas Oberti,
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Whitney Chamberlain with Louis, a boy from Dulce Vivir, Honduras on the March 2012 trip.