

## EWB Portland Maine Professionals

### 3/18/2014 Meeting Minutes

Matt Randall welcomed everyone and noted that the February 2014 chapter meeting had been snowed out. He reviewed upcoming and ongoing chapter activities as follows:

**Dorgobom, Ghana Water Project** – The team is regrouping and continuing to make progress on water filtration systems in the Dorgobom community. The project team meets the **2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays** of each month at HDR. Please contact Kelcy Adamec at [Kelcy.Adamec@hdrinc.com](mailto:Kelcy.Adamec@hdrinc.com) to join the project or receive updates.

**The Community Project – Ethiopia** – The school design/construction project is moving forward with an assessment team trip planned for May 2014. Rita Cooper & Scott Winchester will join Angelique Kidd Smith and members of the Portland, OR chapters on the trip. The project team meets the **1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month** 5:30PM – 6:30PM. Please contact Nadia Glucksberg at [nglucksberg@haleyaldrich.com](mailto:nglucksberg@haleyaldrich.com) to join the project or receive updates.

**USM EWB Student Chapter** – Congratulations to the USM student chapter for officially being recognized as a chapter! They are currently looking to adopt a solar project to help the Hogar Rafael Ayau orphanage in Guatemala. To support this effort, our chapter will take this on until such time EWB-US allows us to transfer the project entirely to the student chapter. If you would like to mentor or help with the project, please contact Phillip Swanson at [Phillip.Swanson@maine.edu](mailto:Phillip.Swanson@maine.edu) or Karen Arnold at [karen.arnold@arcadis-us.com](mailto:karen.arnold@arcadis-us.com). Galen Richmond noted that the chapter has a fundraiser scheduled for May 23, 2014 at The Space gallery in Portland and there are a couple of other fundraising events in the works.

**Fundraising Events** – Plans are under way as follows:

- The 2014 Ocean Gateway event planning is under way. Kathy Hillman Reed reported the event is set for November 13, 2014 from 5:30 PM – 9:00 PM.
- Matt Randall and Jessica Pierce noted it is time to start thinking about collecting items for our spring yard sale and the silent auction in November. Yard sale date TBD.
- Matt Randall reported we received \$1,187 in matching funds through EWB-US. He noted that since it was difficult to tell where the money came from that was matched, the decision is to split it evenly between the chapter and the Community Project in Ethiopia.
- Matt Randall reminded folks that Clynk bags & stickers are available for can/bottle recycling through Hannaford stores. For each Clynk bag turned in EWB receives money.

The core fundraising team needs people to help with all of these events, the largest of which is the Ocean Gateway wine/beer tasting event in November 2014. Many hands make light work – please contact Kathy Kern at [Katherine.kern@tylin.com](mailto:Katherine.kern@tylin.com) or [kkern1@maine.rr.com](mailto:kkern1@maine.rr.com).

**EWB Website** – Matt Randall reminded folks that our website is what donors or other interested parties see first and if there are suggestions for updates or additional information to be added, please reach out to David Adamec at [david@neruson.com](mailto:david@neruson.com).

### **March Presentations**

Matt Randall introduced Sally Sutton, the Program Coordinator at the New Mainers Resource Center at Portland Adult Education, to provide an overview of her program. There are two parts: the Skilled Professional Program and the Workplace English and Job Class Programs.

Sally described the Skilled Professional Program's goal of bridging the need for a more culturally and linguistically diverse workforce and the untapped resource of skilled foreign-trained professionals now living in Maine. She noted this is a pilot project approved by Maine's Legislature to help connect foreign professionals new to Maine with opportunities in their respective fields, but especially engineering. The target audience consists of skilled professionals with a bachelor's degree or above, possibly some work experience and higher English literacy. The initial focus is on providing services that people can easily access in Portland, ME. If you know professionals that would benefit from this program, please contact Sally at [suttos@portlandschools.org](mailto:suttos@portlandschools.org).

Sally also reviewed the Workplace English and Job Class Programs. The programs are designed for those with either low level or intermediate to high English language skills and exposes them to US job search practices, as well as placing emphasis on workplace writing and communication. Both levels have the opportunity to participate in computer tutorials and receive assistance with their online job search. She noted there would be a meeting for engineers new to Maine on Thurs., March 27, 2014 at Portland Adult Education, 14 Locust Street in Portland from 3:00 Pm – 4:30 PM. Contacts for these programs are Deborah Breiting at [breitd@portlandschools.org](mailto:breitd@portlandschools.org) or Bridget Kahn at [kahn@portlandschool.org](mailto:kahn@portlandschool.org).

Matt then introduced Norm Labbe to present an overview of his experiences with water treatment projects in Guatemala. Norm is currently supervisor for the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport & Wells Water District.

Norm has worked on 14 water projects since 2009 in Guatemala in partnership with Rotary International, Partners in Development and the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala. He noted that 95% of the population in the areas where he worked had intestinal parasites resulting from unclean water supplies. The role of the partnership was to design and implement water treatment/filtration projects, followed by providing education and training to maintain the filtration projects to produce cleaner drinking water.

Norm describes several cultural differences that made this work challenging. Guatemala is a male dominated culture and male chauvinism is prevalent. Guatemala is a very Catholic country where birth control is either discouraged or not widely available or practiced; therefore there are too many children in a country with too few resources/systems to support them. Norm's experience is that Guatemalans he dealt with were prone to making promises and not backing them up with action. He noted that

having a trusted relationship “on the ground” is key to getting things done. He observed that time is irrelevant to Guatemalans. He also observed that North Americans are viewed as uniformly rich.

Norm detailed the construction of slow sand filters that were designed to remove 95%-98% of fecal material in the water. He pointed out that they had better success with filters built for single families rather than a community filtration system. The problem with a community filtration system was that no one was monitoring how it was working, so it didn't work well or at all eventually. The single family filters were small and relatively inexpensive at about \$30 apiece, including labor.

He also noted that education was a major factor in the communities, i.e. teaching people to drink only filtered water and use it to wash their hands. Villages tended to have a common water containment structure that held water from the nearest source, none of which was treated. Norm reported that in a village where the filters were working well and monitored, the intestinal parasitic infection rate went down to 35%.

Sustainability is a major goal of any water treatment program. Norm reported that SMCC was developing a curriculum to be used to teach people how to build similar single family filters so that they could teach other villages how to build them, thereby perpetuating the program.

Norm observed that he may have some water treatment solutions to discuss with the EWB Dorgobom water project.

### **Other Business**

Matt Randall asked the group to give input about potentially changing our meeting space to accommodate more people. A suggestion was made that we consider a meeting room at USM. More discussion to follow, pending more information.

### **Next Meeting**

Tuesday, April 15, 2014, 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM in the event room at the Sea Dog Brewing Company, 125 Western Avenue, South Portland, ME. Please visit the Chapter Meetings page FMI at [www.ewbportlandmaine.org](http://www.ewbportlandmaine.org).

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Hillman Reed

Secretary