

## EWB Portland Maine Professionals

### 9/17/13 Meeting Minutes

#### Community Outreach

In his first meeting as President of the chapter, Matt Randall welcomed everyone and introduced three students from USM who are working on starting a student EWB chapter at that campus. He reviewed various professional chapter activities, both upcoming and ongoing, including:

- **The Community Project: Debre Birhan, Ethiopia** – EWB Portland Professionals has been approved as the lead chapter for a project in Debre Birhan, Ethiopia that includes construction of a 24-room schoolhouse, community center and community garden. We're teamed up with the Portland (OR) Professionals chapter and the Univ. of Portland student chapter. The assessment team includes Nadia Glucksberg, Brad Roland and Jake Jacobson from our chapter, who are in country. Their location and progress can be seen by clicking on Brad's location link on the EWB PMP Facebook page. Matt noted that an agreement has been signed with the Debre Birhan community, who agreed to commit to raising 5% of the costs. There will be several opportunities for travel and engineering support for the project. Please contact Nadia at [nglucksberg@haleyaldrich.com](mailto:nglucksberg@haleyaldrich.com) if you are interested in participating in this project. The assessment team will present their progress to the chapter in October.
- **Water Purification: Dorgobom, Ghana** – The pre-assessment team presented findings from their April 2013 trip at the chapter's August meeting. The team is planning the next trip to Ghana, as well as working on the design for the surface water treatment system. Monthly planning meetings will start in the near future. If you're interested in participating, please contact Matt Randall at [MatthewRandall1@gmail.com](mailto:MatthewRandall1@gmail.com).
- **Engineering Camp** – Rita Cooper is working with Pious Ali (June 2013 meeting presenter) to develop a summer engineering camp for young people (high school age) in Portland. The goal is to implement the week-long camp in the summer of 2014. If you are interested in supporting this effort, contact Rita Cooper at [rcooper@hydro-int.com](mailto:rcooper@hydro-int.com).
- **Portland Adult Ed Outreach:** We continue to support engineers from around the world who have relocated to Maine. We extend thanks to Jessica Pierce and Kathy Kern for their patience, mentoring and time devoted to this work. We will host another panel session in October 2013. If interested in working with emigrees, contact Nadia Glucksberg at [nglucksberg@haleyaldrich.com](mailto:nglucksberg@haleyaldrich.com).
- **School Outreach/STEM programs:** We're in need of a coordinator to organize school presentations at the area middle schools and high schools. There is already a lot in place, but we need someone to lead this effort. Our thanks to Nadia and Brad for helping out last year with King Middle School and Massabesic Middle School. There are possible openings in other school

distracts as well. We have a great opportunity to help our community and teach school children what they can do with a STEM background. If interested in being the liaison to Portland schools (and other towns), contact Sara Wright at [sara.wright@amec.com](mailto:sara.wright@amec.com).

### **Fundraising**

- **Ocean Gateway Wine & Beer Tasting Fundraiser** – Coming right up! **September 26, 2013 from 5:30 PM– 9:00 PM. Need ticket sales!** This is our principal annual fundraiser and is on track to be another great event, featuring the Jason Spooner Band , catering by Lake Region Caterers and beverage sampling thanks to local brewers/distributors. There will also be a silent auction and Ghanaian items for sale. Tickets are \$30 in advance; \$35 at the door. Tickets can be purchased online, in person from chapter members or at the door. Contact Kathy Kern at [Katherine.Kern@tylin.com](mailto:Katherine.Kern@tylin.com) to join the planning group or for more information.
- **Common Ground Fair** – September 20 – 22, 2013. We will have a table at the Common Ground Fair to provide information about the chapter and our projects and to sell tickets for the Ocean Gateway event. Volunteers are still needed for the table. Jay Peters sent out information re: time slots for set up, working the booth (3 hour shifts) and take down. Contact Jay at [jpeters@haleyaldrich.com](mailto:jpeters@haleyaldrich.com). Matt Randall has passes for the fair for EWB volunteers.

### **September Presentation – Jean-Claude Zasana**

Jean-Claude Zasana , a native of Rawanda, presented information about his work with CARE and the VSLA (Village Savings & Loan Association) program in Rawanda. He worked for 20 years in Rawanda for CARE, which is a microfinance program designed to target rural households where very poor people have no access to capital to start or enhance small businesses, including agriculture.

He explained that CARE provides access to financial service providers, such as the VSLA, that in turn monitors the use of loans and the repayment rate. He noted that the VSLA was modeled on a similar microfinance program that began in India to help primarily women begin small businesses to generate income for their families. Jean-Claude said the VSLA program in Rawanda was focused on “inclusive economic development”, but that loans were made to women about 2:1. He reviewed the challenges for program like the VSLA in Rawanda, a country still coping with sometimes violent tribal conflicts that undermine economic development.

There were several questions from the audience for Jean-Claude.

### **New Business**

We celebrated the recent wedding of David Nelson and Kelcey Adamec. Congratulations! Kathy Kern brought a cake we shared.

### **Next Meeting**

**Tuesday, October 22, 2013 – 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM in the event room at the Sea Dog Brewing Co.** located at 125 Western Avenue in South Portland. Please visit the Chapter Meetings page FMI at [www.ewbportlandmaine.org](http://www.ewbportlandmaine.org) .