

**EWB PORTLAND MAINE
MEETING MINUTES**

**TY Lin International, Falmouth
March 8, 2010 6:00-7:30 PM**

Attendees: Kevin McKee, Long Span Bridge & Culvert Kathy Kern, TY Lin
Scott Winchester, Winchester Mechanical Shanta Keller, TY Lin
Will Haskell, Gorrill-Palmer Dan Gerges, EWB-UM
Nadia Glucksberg, Haley & Aldrich Rita Cooper, EWB-UM
Kyle Coolidge, Woodard & Curran
Brandon Newman, MACTEC
Jake Jacobson, MACTEC
Kattie Collins, Wright-Pierce
Rebecca Saucier, Wright-Pierce

OVERVIEW

The co-presidents of EWB-UM provided an update on the student project in Dulce Vivir and their current needs. Shanta and Jake gave a presentation on Ghana and the potential for EWB Portland Maine to adopt a Ghanaian project(s).

EWB-UM

EWB-UM co-presidents Dan Gerges and Rita Cooper provided an update on their project, recent fundraising activities, and how we might be able to assist them. Dan said that two students – Brendan and Ricardo - are currently in Honduras obtaining survey data and health data; they will be there until Wed (10 Mar). The mentor that is accompanying them is Matt Verbyla, who used to live in Honduras but now resides in CT. The students are working hard to complete the EWB 525 Pre-Implementation Report (the design) which is due to EWB-USA on March 14th for Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) review. EWB-USA generally reviews 525 Reports on the first Thursday of each month.

They mostly need additional help with fundraising, grant writing, etc. Brandon and Nadia both provided some thoughts about professional skills – community outreach, etc. Rita said Jean MacRae has mentioned assisting on a women’s co-op, not just providing support on the engineering side of things. The students have raised \$13K of the \$30K they will ultimately need to complete the project. They have created fundraising packets and have reached out to personal connections and Maine engineering firms for donations.

Brandon mentioned that during Spring 2009, he and Kyle had identified and developed a list of projects for Dulce Vivir. He said the students should be able to access the file; if not, he could probably redevelop it quickly enough. The list of projects may help in the recruitment of new students and professionals.

EWB-USA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, MAR 18-21, DENVER

Shanta and Kathy will be attending. Nadia knows Jenny in EWB Public Relations and mentioned to her that we'd have two people attending; Shanta and Kathy will try to connect with her.

Shanta applied for and received one of six \$250 scholarships the Northeast Region was granting scholarship to help attend the conference. He and Kathy are fortunate in that TY Lin is covering all of their expenses for the trip, so the \$250 will be available to our chapter for other things.

EWB NORTHEAST REGION

EWB-USA has selected State Representatives (State Reps) at the regional level to help in facilitating communication between Chapter members of the respective states. Brandon Newman has been selected as the new State Representative for Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. As a State Rep, Brandon will:

- communicate with the Professional and Student chapters in these states;
- aid the chapters with information regarding professional mentoring and available resources; and
- assist in planning for training seminars as deemed necessary.

One of the things Brandon mentioned he wants to take on is having one regional website from which all student chapters and professional chapters would be linked; this would be less cumbersome and more efficient than having each chapter develop and manage individual sites. He envisions each chapter would pay a small fee to a webmaster who would manage the entire region.

GHANA PRESENTATION

Shanta Keller Presentation

Shanta gave an informal Powerpoint presentation about Ghana. He provided a general background about the country, where it's located, the larger cities, sub-Saharan Africa, the Lake Volta region. His childhood best friend is Ghanaian, as is one of his professors from UVM. Shanta has been to Ghana twice – once with his professor on a UVM-sponsored trip, and once with his friend. He said it is a wonderful country. The people are very friendly and speak English. It is relatively safe for travel (no warfare), and the food supply is safe as well. While he was there, he noted that the people in smaller villages got their water from a muddy bog. They need clean water to drink as well as for agriculture. There is a dam that was installed at Lake Volta by the British, who told Ghanaians they would have free power supply. However, they only received about 25% of the power generated from the dam. They have to ration their use of lights, etc.

Shanta has been in touch with his professor and a couple of individuals he met while he was over there, including Dr. Naana Opoku-Agyemang. Auntie Naana, as she is more popularly known, is the first woman Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Coast, and has spoken before the UN on abolition of slavery, etc. He has connected with the

director of Community Directed Development Foundation (CDDF), an NGO that was created a few years ago to promote innovative partnerships for development in Africa. CDDF's strategy is to build bridges between experts and organizations that do not traditionally work well together and create the orderly, structured environment needed to encourage local people to take ownership of intervention programs as a means of stimulating sustainable socio-economic development. CDDF is preparing a list of potential projects for us to consider as we evaluate the possibilities of pursuing a professional chapter project in Ghana.

Jake Jacobson's Presentation

Jake also gave an informal PowerPoint presentation of his three-week trip to Ghana in 2007. Jake and his two children helped teach math and English to approximately 30 children at an orphanage in Ve-Deme, which is located on the east side of Lake Volta, approximately 3 hours from Accra. The children ranged in age from 3 to 15 yrs old. He said they all spoke fairly good English, and he was quite taken by how anxious they all were to learn. Jake said they had to be careful about electricity usage as well. Lights were generally out after 6:00 PM. He noted need for better water supply. Jake noted that the food was very safe, they ate goat soup one evening. There was a water main in back of the orphanage to which the pastor wanted to connect, but there just weren't the funds or the means at that time.

Comments

- Nadia suggested that Shanta ask CDDF to provide a list of five project types that have been identified for our consideration. We can review and narrow down possibilities from there. Nadia said she knows some folks from AMEC who are doing some gold prospecting there.
- Shanta added that he will be there in late September/early October to attend a wedding. Depending on where we are at, he might be able to visit a village, make some initial assessment and maybe that could meet the requirements for an initial assessment. We agreed we need to determine what those minimum requirements are.
- Everyone seemed enthusiastic about pursuing a project(s) in Ghana. Kyle made a motion to proceed with Ghana as the country in which we want to develop a project. Nadia seconded the motion. All were in agreement.

FUNDRAISING

We discussed the need to start fundraising to support our upcoming project, the chapter, as well as some fundraising support for the students. Brandon has been in touch with Kathy and Althea Masterson, who've indicated interest in spearheading initial fundraising efforts.

We discussed possibilities for fundraising – wine tastings, becoming a sponsored organization or project with 555, a restaurant/lounge on Congress Street. They have a featured wine that is offered for an extra dollar a glass; each month proceeds go to a

different organization/project. Nadia mentioned that it would be good to tap U.S. corporations that do work in Ghana. Kathy said she would look into this.

ACTION ITEMS

- Send EWB-UM Fundraising Packet to Brandon Dan Gerges
- Provide K. Kern with list of Maine engineering firms that EWB-UM has approached Rita Cooper
- Add'l CDDF Project Information – Five Categories Shanta/Jake
- Determine Minimum Requirements for Initial Assessment Shanta
- List of Contacts – US Companies Working in Ghana Kathy

I have prepared these meeting minutes to the best of my knowledge. If you have any comments or edits, please forward them to me within the next 5 business days.

Sincerely,

Katherine Kern