

Board Meeting
January 17, 2008

APPROVE RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE STUDENT INVOLVEMENT AND
VOLUNTEERISM BY ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS, STUDENT CHAPTER,
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, CHICAGO

The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois appreciates and recognizes the dedicated commitment, leadership, and volunteerism demonstrated by student members of the Engineers Without Borders, UIC Chapter, for their service of technological knowledge and brain power, grueling manual labor, and ardent fundraising efforts to the betterment of a local school in the small, rural mountain village of Cerro Alto in Guatemala.

Engineers Without Borders (EWB) is an international non-profit organization striving to make positive changes in less developed countries. The objective of the EWB-USA chapters' activities is to design and implement new environmentally sustainable projects in developing countries with an emphasis on energy generation, safe water, public health, and security. The student chapter of EWB-USA at the Chicago campus works collaboratively on projects involving Chicago campus students, campus and Chicago area engineers, and the local communities both here and in Cerro Alto.

Traveling at their own expense, 18 people from the Chicago campus went to Guatemala from January 3 through 15, 2007, during their winter break, to help renovate the only community school in Cerro Alto which serves approximately 200 children through grade 6, by building an enclosing protective wall around the perimeter of the

school property. This wall serves as a boundary to distinguish the school grounds from the neighboring plots, prevents livestock from wandering onto the school property, provides increased security, and symbolizes an institution worthy of respect.

Planning the project took almost one year. The students and advisers designed a building strategy and raised more than \$25,000 to buy construction materials for the wall, which runs about 600 feet long and is more than nine feet high. The project was a technical challenge because the wall needed to be built on a steep terrain and actual site conditions were unknown. The Chicago campus group worked alongside village laborers forming a human chain and moving supplies one-by-one, hauling thousands of cinder blocks, and carrying endless buckets of concrete from early morning until late afternoon. By the end of the trip, about half the wall along the steepest, most challenging section was laid out, with engineering problems resolved. Villagers completed the project over the next two months, consulting the Chicago campus students on the technical points.

The Engineers Without Borders organization, in general, encourages its chapters to establish an ongoing relationship with a particular community. The Chicago campus chapter is planning another implementation trip next year and its members are already brainstorming next year's project related to water purification. A technical assessment team of six students, faculty, and staff has just returned from Cerro Alto.

The Board of Trustees hereby recognizes and commends the Chicago campus chapter of Engineers Without Borders for its exceptional example of student volunteerism, and for converting a meaningful educational experience into a better society in Guatemala.

The Board of Trustees directs that this resolution be incorporated into the minutes of today's meeting to become a part of the official public record, and that a suitable copy be given to the College of Engineering's Engineers Without Borders student group, as a permanent reminder of the esteem in which they are held.