

ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS CONTINUES ITS MISSION IN ECUADOR

By Elizabeth Cullinan



Tingo Pucara is a village sculptured deep in the Ecuadorian Andean Mountains 12,000 feet above sea level; surrounded by Nature's most aesthetic beauty, rich in culture and history. The land was inhabited by the Inca Empire during the 13th century. Several "Pucaras" (meaning fortress) were built by the Inca's as part of their colonization of the villages in the Chinchaysuyu region.

The inhabitants of Tingo Pucara (meaning small fortress) are Quichua indigenous descendants of those who populated the region during the Inca's domination and later on survived the Spanish colonization. They have lived in this arid but beautiful land surrounded by the historic "Pucara" ruins for centuries. The people preserved some of their ancestors' Inca Era traditions, and continue to farm the lands and breed llamas, sheep and alpacas.

Unfortunately, the community of Tingo Pucara is like the 2.5 billion people without proper sanitation and 1 billion people without access to clean water in our world. Moreover, their closest source of natural spring water is approximately 2 miles away from their homes.

The process of getting water for their families is long and tedious. Villagers (mostly women and children) have to carry water tubs that can hold about 10 liters or 3 gallons of water from the source. The average time it takes to bring water to their homes is about six hours each day. As a result, Tingo Pucara is stricken with poverty and battling with difficulties in getting enough water to homes and suffering water-related diseases with one in five young children fatally affected.

The Engineers Without Borders Pittsburgh Professional Chapter (EWB-PPC), with the assistance of Dr. Fernando Ortega, Director of Integrated Community Development of the Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Ecuador, is partnering with the community of Tingo Pucara on a sanitation, water supply and purification project. This partnership will last a minimum of five years, which is EWB-USA National's standard for all EWB projects aimed to improve success rates on their projects in the developing world.

In August 2009, EWB-PPC and student members of EWB-University of Pittsburgh and EWB-CMU embarked on another journey to Tingo Pucara for a second site assessment trip (initial site assessment trip occurred in the fall of 2008) with the purpose to accomplish the following goals:

- Re-establish connection with the Tingo Pucara community
- Report our first assessment findings to Tingo Pucara and get their feedback
- Provide water filter and sanitation education
- Obtain additional data on land survey, geotechnical and water
- Construct a rain catchment system to supplement the water supply

The EWB-PPC team lived with the community of Tingo Pucara for eight days. Each day the EWB-PPC and Tingo Pucara worked side-by-side on the construction of the rain catchment system and data collection. Each night Tingo Pucara invited EWB-PPC to have a closer look at their rich Quichuan culture, singing traditional songs and cooking potato soup meals from agriculture crops, herbs and spices grown on their land. Each tradition reinforcing the heart of Tingo Pucara: Family,

Continued on page 3...





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Continued from page 1...

Community, Future.

Now returned 2 months, EWB-PPC data evaluation, analysis and design work for a sustainable solution continues. The project is not without its complexities; besides the distance to water, the elevation to water is 1,000 feet down requiring energy to pump the water up. Tingo Pucara's economic resources are extremely limited (living on an average of 2 dollars a day for a family of 5). This requires EWB-PPC to incorporate design criteria which practically eliminates the costs of maintenance. An error here would result fiscally in a bankrupted community or an abandoned system, ultimately a failed project.

EWB-PPC is focusing research and design work on renewable energy solutions, such as solar energy or a hybrid solution like combining solar and wind power. This is the largest "green project" the Tingo Pucara have ever been part of. The challenges and complexities make the task seem daunting; however, the benefit will be everlasting.

"We have a dream, and our dream is not for ourselves but for our children. We want to provide our children the means to be able to grow up healthy and happy. Live on the land of our ancestors and have happy and healthy children of their own", people of Tingo Pucara told us through our translator.

In the end, our work and its success will be measured by our ability to realize Tingo Pucara's dream. The world can look at what has been done here and learn that the challenge is not in development through sustainable technologies, but to have the courage and passion to do so.



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Practitioners: Look for the Resume Exchange Book in early February 2010. This book will feature resumes from students interested in all disciplines of civil engineering, searching for full-time, internship, and co-op positions for the summer and fall of 2010. This book will be distributed upon request via email or a DVD.

Students: Get yourself involved by emailing your resume to Bradley DiCola at dicola@pbworld.com. Submit the file with name or initials(e.g. bjd_resume.pdf), and include with the email preferred disciplines (Choose 3 Max: Construction Management, Environmental, Geotechnical, Structural, Transportation, or be placed in the General Civil category) and type of employment sought (Full-Time, Internship, or Co-op).

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The Pittsburgh Section, on an annual basis, has the great honor to provide up to 11 awards to its members in recognition of their outstanding achievements and accomplishments in the field of civil engineering. A list of these awards is shown below. This awards dinner during Engineer's Week in February 2010 is our biggest banquet of the year and allows us to celebrate our talented members. We strongly encourage each of you to consider at least one candidate for a 2009/2010 award. The awards banquet also allows you to nominate your clients and companies to be recognized by the Pittsburgh ASCE Chapter.

The award selection criteria are posted on our Section's website at www.asce-pgh.org. To learn about the available award categories and to view the past winners, follow the link http://www.asce-pgh.org/asce_file.htm and click on Operations Manual, Chapter 8 entitled "Section Awards".

Please note that some of the most prominent Civil Engineering personalities and the most significant engineering projects in Western Pennsylvania are among the previous winners. Please take a moment to pass this information on to others within or outside your organizations. Be sure to include your designated company public relations person.

Please email a few short paragraphs documenting your nominee's achievements to the Chair of the Awards Committee:

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Nominations are due no later than December 11, 2009, but don't wait until the last minute. The first round of reviews will take place in November.

Pittsburgh Section Awards:

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Your Help is Needed for Manual 45! ASCE Consulting Engineering Practice Survey 2008 - 2009

This is a reminder that **ASCE** needs your help to finish improving Manual No. 45, *How to Work Effectively With Consulting Engineers*, which provides guidance on procuring engineering services for a quality project. In order to provide the most accurate information on compensation for engineering services, it is critical that we obtain a broad response of actual project data. We are asking principals and project managers to submit one survey per office, but to provide information on several of your projects. The survey is available at <http://www.asce.org/m45>. Please share this link with others in your office who may need to provide information to complete this survey.

The survey is completely confidential and only ASCE staff will have access to individual survey responses and contact information. **Each respondent who submits a completed survey before November 30, 2009 will receive a \$10 discount on the purchase of any ASCE publication.**

If you have any questions or would like information on an alternate method to submit the survey, you may call Becky Waldrup, Manager, Professional Practice at 800-548-2723, ext. 6281 or send an e-mail to rwaldrup@asce.org.

Thank you for your help, and thank you to all of you who have already submitted your completed surveys. Previous respondents were entered into a drawing for an iPod Nano, which was awarded to ASCE member Timothy Granata.

For more information on the current edition of Manual 45 and other ASCE Manuals of Practice visit [ASCE Publications - Manuals of Practice](#).

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PA SECTIONS TO UPDATE THE PA INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT CARD IN 2010

The four Pennsylvania Sections of ASCE will be updating the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Report Card that was completed in 2006 (www.pareportcard.org). The update will focus on progress made in the sections that were previously graded and will include several new sections that were covered in the National Report Card that was updated in 2009. In order to accurately grade Pennsylvania's Infrastructure as a whole, we are requesting members from across the state to volunteer to either lead or assist in the writing of a section. The following list of Sections shows the Champions that have already volunteered and their location:

Category

Aviation
Bridges
Dams/Levees
Drinking Water
Navigable Waterways/Inland Waterways
Rail
Roads
Transit
Wastewater
Schools
Public Parks and Recreation
Energy
Hazardous Waste
Solid Waste

Topic Champion

Pat Kane (Pittsburgh)
Rob Victor (Pittsburgh)
TBD
Ryan Mastowski (Central PA)
John Menniti (Pittsburgh)
Chris Menna (Philadelphia)
Pete Terry (Lehigh Valley)
Joe Fecek (Pittsburgh)
Larry Lennon (Pittsburgh)
TBD
TBD
TBD
TBD
TBD

We are planning on presenting the finished report card in May during our annual visit to Harrisburg. If you are interested in taking on any of the champion positions, or would be willing to join a specific topic's committee, please contact Greg Scott (gscott@chesterengineers.com) by email or phone (412-809-6031) to sign up.

PITTSBURGH SECTION MEMBERS PLAY KEY ROLES IN NATIONAL COMMITTEES

The Pittsburgh Section is proud to highlight the significant roll its members play on numerous national technical committees. The following members are involved in the listed committees to lend their advanced knowledge and expertise in keeping ASCE on the forefront of the Civil Engineering field in numerous disciplines:

- Irving Oppenheim:** Aerospace Division (Editorial Board)
- Ronald Neufeld:** Energy Division (Awards; Environmental Effects; Publications)
- Lucio Soibelman:** Computing & Information Technologies (Intelligent Computing; Publications; Database and Information Management)
- Rafael Quimpo:** Computing & Information Technology (Administration; Education)
- James Garrett:** Computing & Information Technology (Administration; Publications; Database and Information Management)
- Richard Deschamps:** Forensic Engineering (Publications)

NEW ASCE PITTSBURGH WEBSITE UNVEILED

The ASCE Pittsburgh website has been renovated, revamped and improved and is up and running at www.asce-pgh.org. With the upgraded website, members are able to access information on important section news, upcoming events and past activities of its members, including announcements from the Young Members Forum and the technical institutes and groups of ASCE Pittsburgh. Top news stories impacting the engineering industry are also available for review. In addition, the homepage includes links to key industry websites, such as those of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, PennDOT, the City of Pittsburgh and ASCE National. For those seeking networking or new employment opportunities, there are job postings and classified information, as well as blogs and Facebook links. With the wealth of information and resources, the website should serve as a valuable tool to ASCE Pittsburgh members - please take the time to acquaint yourself with the new website and become a frequent visitor to www.asce-pgh.org. The website and transition are a work in progress – so stay tuned for updates and changes as we work out kinks!



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IN THIS ISSUE

EWB Continues Its Mission in Ecuador	1
Board of Directors	2
EWB Continues Its Mission in Ecuador (cont.) ..	3
Annual Resume Exchange.....	3
Taking Nominations For Western PA's Finest ASCE Members	4
ASCE Consulting Engineering Practice Survey 2008-2009	5
ASCE National Call For Papers	5
PA Sections to Update the PA Infrastructure Report Card in 2010.....	6
Pittsburgh Section Members Play Key Roles	7