

## **EWB volunteers get national nod**

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Members of Waterloo's EWB chapter celebrate their successes at the organization's national conference last January.

The University of Waterloo received national recognition again at the annual Engineers Without Borders Conference that took place from January 18-22 in Ottawa.



The UW chapter of EWB took home some of the most prestigious awards from the conference, including "Chapter of the Year," an award shared with the University of Western Ontario chapter this year. The UW chapter was hailed for its active voluntary contributions, expansive high school outreach program and professional chapter structure. Other noteworthy awards to Waterloo students include the "Volunteer of the Year" award presented to Sarah Lewis, the president of the UW chapter and a recent volunteer in Cameroon. Another member, Catherine Denis, received the inaugural Ontario Society of Professional Engineers EWB scholarship for \$1,000. She will be representing the chapter during her upcoming internship in Burkina Faso to work on development projects for EWB.

Engineers Without Borders started as a glimmer in the eye of two Waterloo engineering graduates in a coffee shop over five years ago. Presently EWB has 25 chapters in various universities across Canada and over 5,000 members. The main credo of the organization is to bring technology to the aid of developing communities across the world and to educate Canadians about the need to support sustainable development.

With this in mind, the UW chapter is holding "EWB Day" on March 1. This event is intended to raise awareness across campus about the projects that the UW chapter is involved with, while having some fun at the same time. For a small fee, students will be able to "wash away poverty" by throwing buckets of water at EWB members sporting the word "poverty" written in paint on their backs. All the proceeds from this and other events will go towards supporting EWB activities such as sending three students on international development internships in Burkina Faso, Ghana and the Philippines this summer.

Along with raising funds and awareness on campus, the group also plans to get the attention of the newly elected government with the help of the Waterloo student body. From March 1-3, UW students will be able to sign cards addressed to local MP's, meant to enlighten them on issues that EWB wishes to bring to light. As Sarah Lewis put it, "The EWB Day political campaign encourages Canadians to use their political voice by signing cards that welcome our local MP's to office and that ask for policy change to support international development." Some of these goals for the Canadian government include increasing the nation's foreign aid budget to a promised 0.7 per cent of the GNP, having Canada support developing countries in international trade negotiations and untying the rules governing spending of aid.

In addition to the EWB Day activities, the group will be holding an educational campaign on March 3 to make the campus aware of the student-run second annual International Development Student Conference (IDSC) that takes place in the Davis Centre from March 3-4. EWB general meetings run every two weeks on Tuesday evenings in the Davis Centre, the next one being March 7. General meetings are open to the public and encourage attendees to discuss various issues of international development.