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UCSB's Engineers Without Borders Awarded the "2007 Project of the Year" for its Project in Araypallpa, Peru

Presented at the Engineers Without Borders-USA 2007 International Conference

Santa Barbara, Calif. ? April 30, 2007 ? The University of California, Santa Barbara chapter of Engineers Without Borders-USA (EWB-USA) was awarded the "2007 Project of the Year" at the EWB-USA 2007 International Conference in Amherst, Massachusetts, for its ongoing project in Araypallpa, Peru. The award comes with a \$5,000 prize donated by BoldeReach, a community of women dedicated to supporting organizations that aid those in extreme need around the world.

The UCSB chapter was asked by the rural community of Araypallpa to help implement sustainable engineering projects to improve health, education and quality of life in the farming village of about 300 people. Chapter members first visited Araypallpa in July, 2004 to install a solar-powered lighting system for two classrooms at the local school and to perform community water, sanitation, and health assessments. The team returned the following summer to install a pilot slow sand filter and provide training to the community to maintain and monitor the system. The team also conducted a more detailed health survey and met with community leaders to prioritize future projects.

Last summer, the chapter members helped establish a library to provide educational resources related to agriculture and started a gray water recycling pilot project. This summer, the team will do a final evaluation of the pilot slow sand filter and construct a full-scale system. The chapter members will also develop an improved water chlorination device and evaluate ways to improve the water system's efficiency and develop irrigation and water conservation techniques.

EWB at UCSB, now with about 40 active members, was founded in October, 2003 and has partnered with communities in Peru, Mali and Thailand on projects including solar power, water purification, sanitation, and bio-fuel production. Membership is open to all, including students, staff, and community members. Student members of EWB at UCSB are majoring in engineering, geography, environmental science and management, anthropology, physics, biology, and other fields. Managed by volunteers, all donations go directly to cover equipment, supplies, and travel required for each project.

EWB-UCSB won the "Sustainable Legacy Award"• and the Thomas P. Waters Foundation Grant last year for their efforts in Peru.

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