

2015 CORNERSTONE AWARD

CHRIS BORDLEMAY



Chris Bordlemay pictured with a class in Honduras

Chris Bordlemay, winner of the Cornerstone for Campus and Community Service Award, has volunteered to help create safe drinking water systems in Honduras, Central America, for a number of years and the last year has been especially significant and warrants his nomination. His work started with the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department in the college of Engineering here at Cornell assisting with the AguaClara program. Chris' initial work with students on campus has led to a significant commitment over many years to help investigate community needs, plan water systems, engineer water storage, treatment and distribution systems, construct the systems, train new generations of and existing operators, and troubleshoot/optimize systems.

Chris spends hundreds of hours per year while in Ithaca supporting students at Cornell and now the University of Illinois via electronic tools. These students are studying and learning about rural water systems in poor countries. During the year, Chris provides lectures and serves as an advisor to students as they pursue their coursework and projects.

For his vacation time in past years, Chris has gone twice to Honduras for over a week each time and helped engineer and build new water systems as well as a local youth classroom where he assisted in teaching about water and water conservation there.

His ability to create, operate, and improve water systems, as well as educate the citizens of all ages who use them, especially the children, will help to ensure health and wellness for the rural communities he has touched. He even went so far as to find a coconut shell "dealer" in Tela and obtain cascaras de coco for biocharring the inner shells to create carbon for filtration systems and taught the students how to biochar. Chris' contribution to the rural communities in Honduras is truly noteworthy and will help the people of Honduras whose lives he has touched with safe water for generations to come. Over the years of service in Honduras, he has become bi-lingual and is well-known locally in the communities and not-for-profit organizations he is volunteering through. Chris' efforts are helping to educate the next generation of global engineering citizens at Cornell and the University of Illinois. The knowledge and exposure to service they are receiving will provide them with a foundation from which to grow on as they leave their college years and enter the world of work and volunteerism.

Chris was nominated by Lanny Joyce.



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