THE NORTH AMERICAN TUNISIAN ENGINEERING GROUP

ANNOUNCES

THE FIRST ANNUAL PRIZE FOR

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE

What is Community Service?

Community service is any amount of work or project completed by an individual or a group of people in order to benefit a community. Community service is unpaid and is usually done on a purely voluntary basis, simply for the desire to make things better for those in need.

Why does NATEG want to promote Community Service?

As a non-profit and non-governmental organization, NATEG recognizes the importance of community service as a means for bringing about positive change in Tunisia. NATEG was itself a Community Service project, and as such, NATEG is taking this initiativeto promote the culture of community service within the professional and engineering student communities in Tunisia. Specific aims of this initiative include:

- Recognizing the community service work done by engineers and engineering students above and beyond their normal duties.
- Encouraging social responsibility and social engagement by young engineers and engineering students.
- Helping, through recognition andawards, the winning teams to continue and expand their work and increase its impact.

What does Engineering have to do with Community Service?

Engineers use math and science to solve problems and their work actually benefits humanity. Our lives have become easier, safer, and healthier thanks to many inventions and advancements done by engineers. Examples include agricultural equipment that resulted in the abundance of food, electricity that provided for safer lighting, and countless other inventions. When faced with a problem or a challenge, Engineers use their creativity and systematic thinking to come up with and implement a solution. We might never know all the motivations behind each invention, but one thing for sure is that there is a desire to make things better for the community.

This attitude and way of thinking can start with the simple problems we see every day. Use your critical thinking and problem solving skills to organize a group and work together to make something in your community better. Doing community service projects not only helps the community, but also teaches you valuable information about yourself, your passions and strengths. In addition, it builds your leadership skills and (working with) people skills. These are very valuable skills that are very important to engineers but are not taught in the classroom. Doing a community service project is also a way to develop your entrepreneurial skills: the skill of seeing a need around you and coming up with a way to meet that need. Who knows? Maybe your idea would eventually turn into a business!

Volunteers building a ramp so that a handicapped person on a wheelchair can access a certain location.

Competition
The Outstanding Community Service Prize is awarded annually during NATEG Days and winners are chosen through an open competition. You may enter the competition if you are already involved in Community Service activities or if you have a project in mind. You may also check out some of the project ideas at the end of this document.

Interested teams must meet the eligibility criteria and must fill and submit the intent to compete form through NATEG's website (competitions.nateg.org/NPOCS)**before May 31st 2015**. Successful submissions (finalists) will be notified of by **June 15th 2015** and will be invited to present their entry at NATEG Days. Each finalist's entry will consist of a short presentation at NATEG Days and must include, in addition to any other material, a short video not exceeding 3 minutes.

Team Eligibility Criteria
The eligibility criteria are as follows:

- Teams must consist of least 3 members. There is no set maximum.
- At least two thirds of the team members must be engineering students, recent engineering graduates (within the last 5 years) or students at a preparatory school for entrance into an engineering program.
- The work done must be an unpaid service to the community.

Judging and prizes
Judging will take place at NATEG Days 2015 following the presentations by the finalists. The jury will consist of a panel of NATEGers, keynote speakers, sponsors and honorary guests. The top 3 teams will be recognized and the winning team will receive the top prize.

Community Service Project Ideas

So where do you start? Each community is different and will have different needs. It is up to you to look around your community and think "how it could be better". It is also important to look inside you and try to figure out what are you passionate about? What moves and makes your heart beat? For example, some are passionate about nature and the environment. When they see part of nature polluted by humans, they know that it could be better. Why not organize a group of colleagues and spend an afternoon cleaning a park or another public place? Or organize a bottle recycling drive? If that is not your passion, do not do it. Maybe you are passionate about children, and recognize that some children go to bed hungry or cold, or cannot afford the school supplies they need, etc. Why not organize a collection effort to collect food / supplies from families who no longer need them and orchestrate their delivery to those who need them. Maybe you are more of the intellectual type? Why not form a Chess, Math, Science, Movie, or English club for High School students? Help elderly people? Organize a sports league or a tournament? Work with abandoned animals? Plant trees? The list is endless….

Volunteers working on food collection for distribution to the hungry

Volunteers working to plant a public garden

Your project does not have to be engineering focused, but it can be. Here are some examples of engineering focused community service projects: Design a low-cost lightweight playground kit for elementary school students and simulate its strength characteristics before building a prototype. Or, computer scientists? Develop an app to help working parents find child care centers with openings.

A children's playground built from basic materials

What if my project will require money that I don't have?

This is where creativity comes in as well. Can you use scraps? Find people to donate old unused items? Get people to donate money? Use Kickstarter?