



Westminster
Presbyterian Church

Meisel Reflection 2019: Kurt Krautmann

What links, if any, are you making between your summer internship, your college classroom, and other extracurricular learning experiences?

I have discovered many connections between my university activities and my summer Meisel experience with Engineers Without Borders (EWB). Currently I am in a fluid mechanics class. In this class I have learned about the physics of fluid flows through pipes. I enjoy this class because I have my previous experience with water flows with the EWB water distribution project I worked on as a Meisel scholar. In my other classes, we discuss decision making and practice problem solving skills through homework. In Guatemala, I got to apply my decision and problem-solving skills to our actual project such as working through an English-Spanish language barrier or figuring out how to connect PVC around complicated turns though the community. I have also made the connection of how teamwork relates to the success of a project. At college, I often work on teams for homework or lab reports. In Guatemala, our project implementation was successful because of how well we worked together. Not only did our EWB team have strong teamwork but we also worked very well with the local community members. Working with our team and the community ensured that we finished the 3 miles of PVC and 170 water faucets together in the short time period we had.

How did this experience help you define the meaning of community and your place/role within it?

As an engineer, I want to make a lasting impact on the health and development of my communities. During the trip one of the community members explained that his parents had dreamed of a project like ours and

that now his community would have water for generations. Working with our community in Guatemala, where clean water was not easily accessible, I have seen the importance of proper water resources management. Proper resource management has positive health and development effects on a community. As an Engineer, I will strive to continue using my education to benefit my community.

In what ways did this experience help illuminate for you what it means to be a person of faith?

This trip helped showing me the importance of faith in my engineering experiences. One aspect I felt most on the trip was the naturally shared love people of faith have. Even though we only spent a short time together I loved the community members we worked with and the children of the community. We also had a shared goal of providing clean drinking water to the for many years to come. With this shared goal and the love for each other the project was successful. I also saw the importance of faith in my work and future professional endeavors. I felt I was working with a project I was meant to be on and using my education as a follower of my faith in Christ. I will continue to uphold my values of using my skills to help others and benefit my communities.

How did you find yourself integrating your Meisel internship, and your study abroad experiences, if at all?

I am working to continue integrating my internship and study abroad experiences. Our EWB team continues to be in contact with Paraxaj to make sure the system is operating successfully. I personally became friends with a community member named Eliseo and we still check up on each.

I value learning from different perspectives and new and challenging experiences. I learned so much while in Guatemala and had so much fun that I have decided to pursue more study abroad opportunities. Next semester I will be studying abroad in Norway at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. While abroad I will gain new perspectives as

they relate to my education as I did in Guatemala.

What next steps do you plan to take toward discerning, refining, or implementing a vocational direction?

During my travel to Guatemala and the planning leading up to the trip I got practice on what a water resources project is really like. I had so much fun working on our project that I am seeking to continue work related to water resources. I am excited to continue my environmental engineering degree process with the motivation of becoming a water resources engineer. I am currently applying for water resource engineering internships for the Summer of 2020. I will also join the EWB professional chapter once I graduate from college.