

Puente Matagalpa: 50 Meter Bridge

Matagalpa, Nicaragua



FUNDS NEEDED

\$30,000

CHAPTER

EWB-USA Rice
University

PROJECT PHASE

Implementation

EWB-USA VISION

Our **VISION** is a world in which the communities we serve have the capacity to sustainably meet their basic human needs, and that our members have enriched global perspectives through the innovative professional educational opportunities that the EWB-USA program provides.

MISSION

EWB-USA supports community-driven development programs worldwide by collaborating with local partners to design and implement sustainable engineering projects, while creating transformative experiences and responsible leaders.



THE NEED

The communities of Lucidia Mantilla and Sor Maria Romero are in the outskirts of Matagalpa, one of Nicaragua's largest cities. In order to access work, school, and medical care, hundreds of residents must cross the Matagalpa River to get to the nearest bus stop. The closest bridge crossing is about 2 miles upstream; so many community members choose instead to wade through the river. This is not only a major inconvenience, but also poses an injury risk, especially during the rainy season. For decades, the communities have expressed a strong desire for a safer and more convenient bridge crossing.

THE RESPONSE

The EWB-USA Rice University Chapter began working with the communities in the summer of 2011. After assessing the need, a bridge site was agreed upon, and planning began for the implementation of the project.

Engineers Without Borders-USA (EWB-USA) is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization established in 2002.
<http://www.ewb-usa.org/>

PROJECT CONTACT

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In the spring of 2011, the Rice chapter successfully implemented a cable suspension bridge in Jinotepe, Nicaragua. This new project will pose additional challenges, such as working in a floodplain and dealing with different urban social issues. However, the chapter is confident that with the support of community members, professional mentors, and Bridges to Prosperity, this project will be a success.

THE FUTURE

Throughout the academic year of 2011/12, the chapter plans on finalizing the design and implementation of the 50-meter cable suspension bridge. Following the completion of the project, the chapter will maintain frequent contact with the community to ensure sustainability. Discussions will also begin about plans for future projects, which may include water distribution and purification.