Engineering for Change Ambassador Awarded for Global Engineering Efforts

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Recently, the Society of Women Engineers, along with the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), honored Noha S. El-Ghobashy with the Kenneth Andrew Roe Award. El-Ghobashy is a prominent engineer and ambassador for women and change. As the current president of Engineering for Change, LLC (E4C), El-Ghobashy is an inspiring humanitarian working tirelessly to bring opportunities and advancement to underdeveloped nations.

E4C is an important international alliance, comprised of 15 organizations dedicated to promoting sustainable and accessible technologies to communities in need. The technologies being implemented by the alliance focuson the improvement of critical lifeline infrastructures, particularly accessible healthcare, clean water, sanitation, and sustainable energy solutions.

El-Ghobashy also currently serves as the director of engineering for global development at ASME in New York, where she leads the development of new programs in emerging technology areas and markets. El-Ghobashy's work has succeeded in fostering important lines of collaboration between international communities in the engineering field. "She has been instrumental in catalyzing the broader engineering community to connect, solve challenges and share knowledge that will improve the quality of life all over the world," saidThomas G. Loughlin, executive director of ASME. Through implementing meaningful partnerships, the coalition is able to offer more opportunities for impoverished communities.

The real challenges facing the underdeveloped communities E4C targets are a

general lack of opportunity and education. “We noticed that the engineering perspective and rigor was often missing in the development and implementation of technology-based solutions—leading to ineffective, unreliable and unsustainable solutions,” said El-Ghobashy. Therefore, the focus of E4C is to bring knowledge and opportunity to certain areas, and ultimately, to give a voice and platform for those with valuable insight. Through opening the lines of communication between practitioners in the field, communities are now able to better share their knowledge across boundaries. By bridging the communication barriers, communities are better able to collaborate towards greater technological innovation. “E4C’scoalition of organizations is banding together to do our part in solving some of the world’s greatest challenges, says El-Ghobashy.

As a multidisciplinary, compassionate engineer, El-Ghobashy and her team believe that it is imperative to take a user-centered approach to design. In order to accomplish this, communities must be involved to ensure outcomes are appropriate for their culture and needs. By doing so, the adoptability of such technologies is realized. The continued education of users on how to implement products also ensures the technology remains a successful mainstay in the community.

El-Ghobashy summarizes that the real drive of engineering in general should be to remain both flexible and culturally savvy. “I think Engineering as a profession needs to change and adapt much quicker than our institutions of learning and professional development are willing to keep up with. The risks are high if we don’t.”In fact, as El-Ghobashy points out, the prosperity of society as a whole depends upon the ability of engineers to collaborate across traditional boundaries. It is with this mission in mind that the organization strives to support opportunity and innovation.

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