



Giving back

Money makes the world go 'round, as they say. However, the same might be said of volunteerism. In fact, the idea of giving back is so central to us as humans that the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2001 the International Year of Volunteers. That year, the UN chose to highlight the achievements of millions of volunteers worldwide and to encourage more people to engage in volunteer activity.

For a self-regulating profession like engineering, volunteers are quite literally the lifeblood. Without them, self-regulation just couldn't work—or it would cost a lot more to work. That means our volunteers are very much involved in the organization—not in the answering phones kind of way, but in the sleeves-rolled-up kind of way. We put their skills and professional knowledge to work on all kinds of committees, task forces, and in the chapters. Even the skills of peo-

ple who aren't part of the profession are pressed into service—on Council and on committees—to make sure that we're fulfilling our mandate of keeping the public safe and of making the process of gaining the P.Eng. licence a fair one.

At PEO's AGM last April, President Bob Goodings said: "Many [volunteers] make outstanding and often unreported contributions, including chapter members, Councillors, members of task forces and committees. The life of PEO Council would be unproductive without their selfless dedication to the profession."

No truer words have been spoken. And it's not just dozens of volunteers we're talking about...it's more like almost 700 of them!

So, it's clear that a great many of our members are involved in some way with PEO. But why? After all, they could be spending those hours perfecting their golf swings or playing with their kids. We've pro-

filed a cross-section of PEO volunteers who have all made giving back to their profession (and often their communities as well) a way of life. They cite the opportunity to challenge themselves, to improve their profession, and the feel-good aspect of giving back, among the personal benefits they get from volunteering. And through them we see it's not impossible to juggle everyday demands and still give of your time.

Now, doesn't all of this inspire you to sign up*? Thought so.

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*Contact Tom Chessell, manager, volunteer management, at 416-840-1107 for more information about volunteering at PEO.

