



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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SpawGlass establishes non-profit foundation

With employees, donates more than \$100K to sustainability initiative in Africa

(San Antonio) – Last year, commercial contractor SpawGlass established its nonprofit organization, SpawGlass Foundation, and in 2010 – in partnership with its employees – awarded the foundation’s first substantial gift to benefit a sustainability initiative across the world.

Together, SpawGlass Foundation and the employees of SpawGlass donated \$104,000 to the Center for Renewable Energy and Appropriate Technology for the Environment (CREATE!), to help combat the local effects of global climate change, reduce poverty, increase water provision and food production, and improve livelihoods in Senegal, West Africa.

“The purpose of SpawGlass Foundation is more than the alignment of an overall corporate giving strategy,” says SpawGlass Foundation President Bobby Friedel. “By involving our employees on the foundation board, they are more aware of the money we spend and the impact it has in the community; and more importantly, they become a part of our charitable giving process.”

In fact, when SpawGlass employees sat in on a presentation given by their former chairman and CEO, Ron Taylor, last year, they were about to become awakened to the potential impact they could have on a community across the globe.

Taylor once earned the respect of SpawGlass employees as the individual who was essential in helping them attain 100 percent employee ownership in the mid 1990s. Since his retirement in 2002, Taylor was introduced to the plight of the people and environment of West Africa. He travelled to Senegal and learned about the application of human scale, appropriate technologies that would address the effects of climate change and the severe reduction of the rainy season in the country.

Thereafter, Taylor helped to co-found CREATE! and visited his SpawGlass family to impart the organization’s mission. He called on each SpawGlass office and shared his personal experience, detailing all the ways they could help to transform a people and a land. Ultimately, the employees contributed \$54,000, and SpawGlass Foundation gave \$50,000.

“The employee participation really demonstrates Ron’s influence on the company,” says SpawGlass Foundation Chairman Robert Blalock. “If Ron is passionate about it, the employees are passionate about it. The Foundation gift is a testament to his leadership.”

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Today, the gift from 550 SpawGlass employees in Texas is making a difference in the lives of 20,000 people in West Africa. “SpawGlass and their employees are a great inspiration,” says CREATE! Director of Development Louise Ruhr. “It’s one thing to send off a check with the right motivation, but SpawGlass has provided other non-financial assistance – industry knowledge and IT assistance in developing our website. They’ve been a great help to the long-term sustainability of our organization.”

Ruhr says the gift from SpawGlass and their employees has enabled CREATE! to hire a full-time, Senegalese country director, Ibrahima Kebe, who has worked with the local beneficiary population to select sites for community gardens, develop community gardening associations, and plant 8,500 seedlings. Kebe currently is working to assess water gaps in each of the area villages and on upcoming projects such as the procurement of solar water pumps and the construction of demonstration centers and fuel-efficient, wood-burning stoves.

SpawGlass has established a corporate-wide giving goal of 1.5 percent of pre-tax income – with some contributions made through the foundation and others through corporate giving. To date, SpawGlass and its foundation also have made sizeable scholarship endowments to Texas universities, including Rice University, Texas A&M University, Texas State University-San Marcos, The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College, The University of Texas-Pan American and University of Houston.

“Rather than reach the end of the year and see where we spent all of our money in the regions, we want to be focused on what we support, be more intentional and engage our employees as we do so,” says Friedel. “Community involvement is a way to get our employees actively involved in what we’re supporting, and we all benefit from the involvement.”

SpawGlass is a Texas-based general contractor, construction manager, design/builder and civil contractor - with expertise in green building and Building Information Modeling (BIM), serving clients in corporate, higher education, healthcare, government/public, senior/campus living and more. Founded in 1953 by Louis Spaw and Frank Glass, the company has a lasting commitment to provide: the highest standards of quality and service to clients; a safe and enriching work environment to employees; and support and involvement in the community. With more than 550 employees statewide, SpawGlass is 100 percent employee owned and has regional offices in Austin, Houston, San Antonio and South Texas. www.spawglass.com

CREATE! is a 501(c)(3) organization helping people living in poor rural villages in developing countries to respond to the increasingly disastrous effects of climate change on their lives, livelihoods, families and communities. Founded on the principle that all people have a right to the basic requirements of human life necessary for a becoming existence: water, food, shelter, health, energy, and a means of earning a livelihood, CREATE! is committed to assisting village populations in developing countries in meeting these basic human needs through a culturally respectful and participatory process of self-development. www.createaction.org

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Photos, Captions:



- 1) *Caption: Laurie Dralle, Robert Blalock, Dan Hinson, Amer Al-Nahhas, Bobby Friedel, John English and Chuck Calvin are part of SpawGlass Foundation, which was founded to further SpawGlass' commitment to community involvement and ensure all charitable donations are coordinated and aligned with the corporate giving objectives of the company.*



- 2) *Rehabilitation of the well in the village of Ouadiour is underway.*



3) *Five varieties of vegetables appropriate for rainy season planting were identified and seeds were distributed and planted in communal sites in four villages.*



4) *Community work sessions were organized in Fass to clear project sites and prepare planting operations.*