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Ottawa Consulting Engineers Recognized at National Awards Gala Delivering exceptional projects in Canada and around the world

(OTTAWA) October 24, 2017 – From providing clean water and improving sanitation services for small towns in Ghana, to enhancing Canada’s transportation infrastructure, consulting engineers from the Ottawa area were celebrated for these outstanding achievements Tuesday night at the 2017 Canadian Consulting Engineering (CCE) Awards gala. Recognized as the industry’s highest honours, the awards are presented to projects by Canadian firms that showcase the most remarkable engineering feats.

“These awards not only provide the opportunity to recognize the valuable contributions that consulting engineers make to our local communities, they showcase these outstanding achievements on a national stage,” said ACEC President and CEO John Gamble. “They bring focus to the important role that these projects, and consulting engineers in general, have on the social, economic and environmental quality of life of all Canadians.”

Well deserved awards are presented in a variety of categories, ranging from buildings and transportation, water and natural resources, to special projects, international, and community outreach. Consulting engineers from Ottawa took home two **Awards of Excellence** from the International and Transportation categories.

Providing access to essential resources and improving quality of life on the other side of the world

For their *Northern Region Small Towns Water & Sanitation Project (NORST)* in Tamale, Ghana, **Cowater International Inc. and Norda Stelo** were recognized for their role in implementing new community-managed water supplies, bettering the health and quality of life for over 165,000 residents, and improving the capacity of stakeholders to continue delivery of these services. “[We are] thrilled to be recognized for the important success of the NORST project in Ghana,” said David Baron, CEO of Cowater International.

“Through this project, residents of 20 Ghanaian towns will have access to improved water supply and sanitation services.”



The Northern Region Small Towns Water & Sanitation (NORST) Project was implemented between 2008 and 2016, and was funded by Global Affairs Canada at a cost of \$30 million CAD. At the project’s outset, less than 25% of northern Ghana’s rural population was estimated to have access to clean water supplies. The project was based in Tamale, over 600km north of the capital city of Accra. Most towns were only accessible through unpaved dirt roads which had a tendency to become impassable during the wet season. Construction supplies and equipment were procured from Accra, and timely distribution to the various work sites was a substantial challenge. Wherever possible, procurement was done in bulk well in advance of schedule, and transportation to sites was done during the dry months.



The Project was co-implemented with Ghana's Community Water & Sanitation Agency (CWSA) and District towns, who were responsible for procurement of construction services. For this project, Cowater International Inc. and Norda Stelo provided engineering design, technical assistance, training, and management support.

Capacity building and knowledge transfer were essential to the project's success

Capacity building and the transfer of knowledge were at the cornerstone of the NORST Project and were the foundation for long-term sustainable results. Over the eight-year duration, the project strengthened counterparts at the local, regional, and national levels, targeting District towns, CWSA, the Environmental Protection Agency and numerous other government agencies and departments. Capacity building was delivered through various means, including on-the-job training, workshops, and formal courses from learning institutions (Bolgatanga and Tamale Polytechnic).

By December 2016, NORST had substantially achieved all project goals, exceeding one of their original targets of providing new services to residents across all towns by 29%. As a direct result of this project District towns are now better able to manage, operate and maintain these services, and are more satisfied with the level of support received from government counterparts (i.e. CWSA and the regional governing council).

Overcoming construction and environmental challenges to deliver safe and reliable infrastructure

For the *Sir Ambrose Shea Lift Bridge Replacement* project, **Parsons** was retained by the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Transportation and Works to replace the existing 50-year-old structure.

Located in Placentia, NL, the project presented complex design requirements which included the desire for an aesthetically pleasing structure that would celebrate the community's local heritage, while at the same time provide reliable and safe access to the harbour. A robust structure was also essential due to the harsh environment which involves high winds, changing tides up to three times daily, and a fast current. Although this was accounted for in the design to ensure that the structure was stable during all stages of construction, it added construction complexity and limited crane operations. Furthermore, because of silty and poorly graded sand and lack of bedrock, pier foundation design relied on friction piles or shallow foundations where limited bearing capacity was located. Parsons managed to design two foundation options, allowing contractors flexibility to bid on an option based on their experience level, available equipment, and cost.



Reliable and sustainable construction methods increase service life

The bridge design incorporated reliability, long term durability and sustainability features to achieve a 100-year bridge service life while minimizing future maintenance costs and associated impacts to the environment. This was achieved by a combination of durable material selection, resilient detailing, designs aimed at simplifying maintenance tasks, and thorough quality control during construction. Other sustainable design features included specifying materials with reduced corrosion potential that resisted degradation processes. Examples include the use of galvanized rebar in the deck and provision of a superior coating system that was more durable in the harsh Placentia environment. The coating system



involved metalizing the steel surface and the application of two additional coats to provide extended service life.

For their success in designing a reliable, sustainable, and aesthetically pleasing structure, Parsons was “pleased to receive an Award of Excellence” for this project, said Mike Johnson, Parsons Group President. “We’ve been committed to enhancing the transportation infrastructure of Canada for more than 70 years. This important award testifies to not only our engineering expertise, but also our understanding of the needs of Canada as well as the environmental and historical nuances of the country.”

In November, follow the [#20DaysOfExcellence](#) in engineering campaign on Twitter and at www.acec.ca/20daysofexcellence to watch videos of other award-winning projects like these and to learn more about the impact of consulting engineering on our quality of life.

About award-winning firms

Cowater International Inc. is Canada’s leading firm in international development project management. Cowater’s primary focus is on improving the public, social, economic, and infrastructure challenges of developing and emerging countries. Since 1985, Cowater has provided internationally recognized and award winning experience to over 800 projects in more than 80 countries, establishing itself as a world leader in state modernization, economic growth, gender equality and respect for the environment. www.cowater.com

Parsons is a technology-driven engineering services firm with 70+ years of experience. A leader in many diversified markets, the corporation focuses on infrastructure, defense, security, and construction. Parsons delivers design/design-build, program/construction management, systems design/engineering, cyber/converged security, and other professional services packaged in innovative alternative delivery methods to federal, regional, and local government agencies, and private industrial customers worldwide. www.parsons.com

About Awards co-sponsors

ACEC represents companies in Canada that provide professional engineering services to both public and private sector clients. These services include the planning, design and execution of all types of engineering projects, as well as providing independent advice and expertise in a wide range of engineering and engineering-related fields. For more information about ACEC and the 2017 Canadian Consulting Engineering Awards, please visit www.acec.ca.

Canadian Consulting Engineer is a bi-monthly magazine for engineers in the construction industry. It is a division of Annex Publishing & Printing Inc. The award-winning projects are described in full in the October-November 2017 issue of *Canadian Consulting Engineer* at <http://www.canadianconsultingengineer.com/digital-edition/>.

Multimedia (includes project description, video, photo)

[Cowater International Inc. and Norda Stelo project photo](#)
[Cowater International Inc. and Norda Stelo project page on acec.ca](#)

[Parsons project photo](#)
[Parsons project page on acec.ca](#)

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