



# NEWS

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## Paramedic puts “Service Above Self”

By Megan Fife, summer student, Community Safeguard Services

Level Three paramedic Bill McCracken has been awarded the “Service Above Self” award by the Scarborough Rotary Club. In addition to the honour of winning his first award outside of EMS, Bill prides himself with the knowledge that this one is the first of its kind.

To introduce this new tradition, the Scarborough Rotary Club has recognized one member of each emergency service - EMS, Fire and Police. To qualify, one must have a history of community-work both locally and internationally - being a Scarborough resident is an added asset – and Bill more than met the requirements.

In addition to his past 21 years as a paramedic, Bill has made trips to Cambodia and Laos, as well as Guatemala, to help with the Global Medic missions ([www.dmgf.org](http://www.dmgf.org)). In Cambodia, he shared his skills as a paramedic with those of the Mines Advisory Group ([www.mag.org.uk](http://www.mag.org.uk)), teaching them enough that they now have their own group of qualified paramedics. He was also able to help build a medical clinic in a remote village that had never before seen a doctor; and distributed medical equipment to the existing hospitals of the area.

He visited Guatemala after the landslides as part of a team that included fellow Toronto EMS colleagues Marvin Austin, Dave Hutcheon and Rahul Singh, with the main objective to produce useable drinking water. In a short amount of time, a new water purification system was up and running, producing 15,000 litres of water every couple hours, and 1.5 million litres a week. Along with the countless inoculations and other medications that were administered during his visit, this true act of lifesaving effected the entire town’s population, as original water sources, along with debris and sewage, had been washed into the same lake that had become their only remaining water source.

The title “Service Above Self” mirrors the Rotary Club’s own motto. Bill was “quite surprised” by the nomination, not knowing what to expect, but was put at ease by the “very nice group of people” that presented him the award.

Please be sure to congratulate Bill on his one-of-a-kind award.