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And Your Parents Shall Be Honored

Enamul Hoque

by Joel M. Horn



Civil and Environmental Engineering alumnus Enamul Hoque at his Phoenix-based company, Hoque & Associates.

He is continuing his family's tradition of community service and constantly trying to infuse it into the operation of his Phoenix-based company, Hoque & Associates.

Every night, Enamul Hoque's mother would send her children to neighboring houses to see if there were any families without food before she ate her dinner. If there were, she would share what little she had for her family. She also followed a tradition of saving a handful of uncooked rice from every meal and giving it to the poor at the end of the week.

His father, a school teacher and the only educated person within several villages, decided upon graduating from Calcutta University to return to his humble roots to help the poor in flood-ravaged areas.

It's no wonder, then, that since his childhood Enamul Hoque has volunteered his time to help the less fortunate in his native Bangladesh and later here in the United States. He is continuing his family's tradition of community service and constantly trying to infuse it into the operation of his Phoenix-based company, Hoque & Associates.

Hoque, who earned a master's degree in civil and environmental engineering from Arizona State University in 1985, recently made a \$250,000 gift to the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering in the Ira A. Fulton School of Engineering. He became the first donor to name a lab within the new ISTB2 research facility. The lab will be named the EM Hoque Geotechnical Laboratory.

At ASU, Hoque learned to "open up the mind so that I could see the bigger picture in engineering and come up with a good solution." It was as an undergraduate student pursuing an engineering degree in Bangladesh, however, that he began his volunteer work. He established and maintained an evening school for the poor and destitute in the slums of Dhaka city, and that experience led him to Mother Teresa's organization, for which he designed hospitals, women's training centers and community centers at no charge. He met Mother Teresa twice and was blessed by her at their first meeting.

The selflessness of his father, Fazlul, was motivated by a political process that swept through sub-continental India as it was struggling to gain independence from British colonial rule. He met and worked for the causes of Mahatma Gandhi, and chose to return to his home of Shapmara, a remote village on the north bank of the Meghna River, a tributary of the Ganges.

His mother, Rahima, didn't have any formal education and didn't know how to read or write, but she was extremely intelligent, kind, had an uncanny influence on people and always treated them with the utmost respect.

At Hoque & Associates, the lessons Enamul Hoque learned from his parents have resulted in technically-challenging solutions, innovations (such as the modern design technique used on the outer-loop bridges in Phoenix in 1980s and '90s, which the Arizona Department of Transportation will implement this October) and cost-effective alternatives. Continued innovation and professional contributions earned him "Fellow" status from the American Society of Civil Engineers.

"Coming from a Third World country, and about 20-30 percent of the time I did not have clothes to wear to go to elementary school, from that point to achieve this, this is something that was very unique," says Hoque, who attributes all of his success to working "for the project and for the people" and believes that he has the blessings of people that he has been surrounded by. In addition, he attributes his success to the education he received from ASU.

