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Lafayette Man Wins 2015 National Energy Globe Award

Submitted by Heather Randolph



Women and children from an Afghan refugee camp show the Trust in Education solar cooker that will help feed their families. Photos provided

Mylar bags into more than 6,000 solar cookers. TIE then distributed these cookers to 19 refugee camps in and near Kabul, affecting the health and safety of more than 25,000 people.

Howell's coffee shop brainstorm that led to helping some of the world's poorest people and the planet has been honored with the 2015 National Energy Globe Afghanistan Award. This year's competition attracted more than 1,500 entries from 177 countries. The National Energy Globe Award recognizes outstanding performance worldwide in terms of energy efficiency, renewable energy and resource conservation.

TIE's solar cookers provide many benefits to Afghans, including clean energy from Afghanistan's abundant sunshine without the cost of expensive fuels. The solar cookers also prevent the devastating effects of smoke inhalation, which annually kills more than 4 million people worldwide. In the U.S., TIE's solar cookers have diverted 50,000 Mylar bags from American landfills to serve a useful purpose.

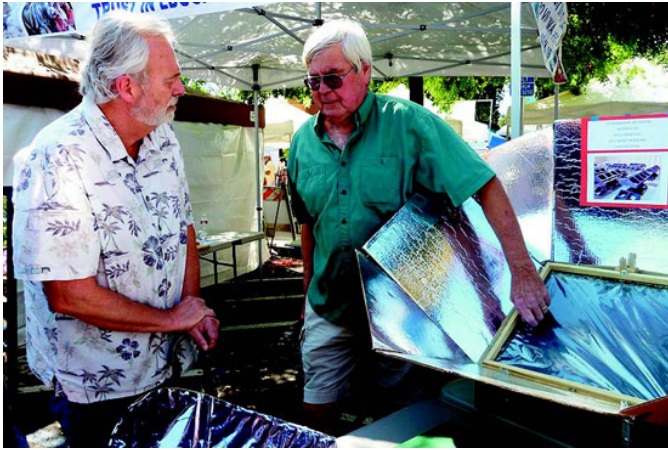
The National Energy Globe award also recognizes Trust in Education for Howell's innovative manufacturing technique for making WAPIs (Water Pasteurization Indicator), an elegantly simple device that helps Afghans determine when liquids have reached a temperature safe enough to drink. About half the drinking water in Afghanistan is contaminated. TIE has distributed more than 6,000 WAPIs with solar cookers and trained Afghans how to use them. For information about Trust In Education, visit www.trustededucation.org. For information about the National Energy Globe award, visit <http://www.energyglobe.info/afghanistan2015?cl=en&id=132566/>.

Solar cooker innovator Jack Howell, 78, wasn't thinking about Afghanistan five years ago when he stopped to buy coffee beans at his local coffee purveyor, Peet's. That changed when he spotted a barista pouring the beans from shiny Mylar bags into a bin, a common task in coffee shops all over the country.

"Mylar is durable and expensive," Howell said. "I soon discovered those used bags were ending up in a landfill. That gave me an idea."

The retired publisher and author, whose books about solar cooking landed on the New York Times bestseller lists, asked if he could have a few of the bags to experiment. His tinkering set in motion a chain of events that eventually helped people in need over 7,000 miles away.

Working with Trust in Education, a Lafayette nonprofit that provides education, healthcare and economic assistance in Afghanistan, Jack led a TIE effort involving hundreds of volunteers, from children to seniors, that transformed discarded



Solar cooker inventor Jack Howell, right, explains his device's construction.



Afghan refugees show their new Trust in Education solar cookers at a training event in Kabul.

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