

Two Boston attorneys replant swath of Costa Rican rainforest with Greenberg Traurig donation

by Jennifer Rosinski

As a blanket of drizzle cast down, Boston attorney Jeffrey Glassman kneeled in the lush green of Costa Rica's Esquinas Rainforest and dug up the rich soil. It became a pattern Glassman repeated for hours as he and more than a dozen others planted hundreds of tree seedlings in hopes of returning a cow pasture to its former glory.

Made possible by an \$8,000 donation from Greenberg Traurig LLP's Boston office, Glassman and his team — which included transactional associate Robb D'Ambruoso of WilmerHale in Boston and local residents — spent five days planting seven varieties of trees in November.

When the work was done, 2,500 trees had been planted and a grove was erected in Greenberg Traurig's honor.

"Where we planted was a perfect area because it was alongside an eroded embankment on the river. And it was between

two sections of rainforest," said Glassman, who embarked on the project as part of his non-profit RainforestMaker. "Not only will we bridge the two rainforests, but it will also stop the erosion along the embankment."

Glassman, who runs a downtown firm that bears his name, has been environmentally conscious for years and has visited Costa Rica countless times. Recently, his firm became a Signature Signer of the MBA Lawyers Eco-Challenge and he sits on the MBA's Energy and Environment Task Force, which oversees the initiative.

The Greenberg Traurig Grove was dedicated with a sign in a portion of the newly planted rainforest to commemorate the donation.

That was a pleasant surprise for the firm, which offered the funding after hearing Glassman explain that each year, the average lawyer consumes 24 trees worth of paper. A simple calculation determined Greenberg Trau-



Boston attorney Jeffrey Glassman, left, and Robb D'Ambruoso of Boston's WilmerHale with a tree sapling.



Boston attorney Jeffrey Glassman smiles while taking a break from planting tree saplings along a river embankment in Costa Rica.



Photos courtesy of Jeffrey Glassman

Volunteers work on planting tree saplings along an eroded river embankment in a Costa Rican rainforest.

rig's 85 Boston lawyers use the paper equivalent of at least 2,000 trees each year.

"I had no idea that our contribution would result in a grove being named after us. It's really amazing," said Jay Farraher, a shareholder in the litigation department. "It was a no-brainer for us to get involved."

Farraher said the Boston office, which is also a Signature Signer of the Eco-Challenge, raised the \$8,000 through collections from attorneys and staff as part of an Earth Day celebration.

The seedlings were purchased from the University of Austria, which grew them at a field station in La Gamba. The field station, located in the southern zone of Costa Rica on the edge of a national park, conducts research, teaching and education fo-

cused on the rainforest and its conservation. Two members of the field station sit on the RainforestMaker Board of Directors, and several volunteers from the field station participated in the planting in the rainforest.

The Esquinas Rainforest is an area that has been deforested and turned into cow pasture, Glassman said. "That's one of the most devastating effects on a rainforest, a cow pasture," he said.

Seeing the beauty and devastation of the rainforest firsthand will help D'Ambruoso get the word out among attorneys and others that the rainforest, as well as the environment, needs our help. His firm, WilmerHale, is also a Signature Signer of the Eco-Challenge.

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