

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Denver Sister Cities International, Inc. wins *Sister Cities International's*  
Innovation: Youth & Education Award**

WASHINGTON, DC – Denver Sister Cities International, Inc. has won *Sister Cities International's* 2011 Innovation: Youth & Education Award for a city with population more than 500,001. The Innovation awards recognize the accomplishments of outstanding community and individual sister city programs that promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation.

The Denver-Axum, Ethiopia sister city partnership won for their multifaceted youth and education project to benefit sister city Axum, Ethiopia. It began with the Ethiopia Partnership Support Committee consisting of Denver/Axum Sister Cities members, Metropolitan State College of Denver (MSCD) students, faculty, and administrators and other interested community members. The MSCD faculty and students with the assistance of Denver/Axum collected 9 tons of books in a drive for University of Axum. In 2011, a MSCD professor was also a visiting faculty to the University of Axum.

The collaborative ventures between Denver/Axum, MSCD and other organizations also led to the building of the Gessoso School in Ethiopia. The four-room school was possible with financial support from U.S. and Colorado-based organizations.

In 2011, MSCD's partnership with Axum University was awarded the Building Sustainable Study Abroad Capacity grant for \$272,425 from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. 15 MSCD students were selected to spend summer 2012 at the University of Axum.

MSCD, using a videographer, recorded its faculty visits to Axum. These educational films will now be distributed to colleges and universities through Films for the Sciences and Humanities, Princeton, N.J.

The *Sister Cities International* Annual Awards are awarded in several categories. Award winners will be honored at a special luncheon ceremony on July 14 during the *Sister Cities International* 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Jacksonville, Florida.

**About *Sister Cities International***

*Sister Cities International* facilitates nearly 2,000 partnerships in 136 countries on six continents between 600 communities in the United States with similar municipalities abroad. *Sister Cities International* represents citizen diplomats who work tirelessly to promote the organizations' mission of creating world peace and cultural understanding through economic and sustainable development programs, youth and education projects, arts and culture, and humanitarian assistance.

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