

**DENVER SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL WINS SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL'S
INNOVATION AWARD (HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE)**

WASHINGTON, DC – Denver Sister Cities International (DSCI) won Sister Cities International's 2015 Innovation Award (Humanitarian Assistance) for a city with a population greater than 500,000. The 2015 Sister Cities International Innovation Award (Humanitarian Assistance) recognizes the accomplishments of outstanding community and individual sister city programs that promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation.

The effort to secure a sanitation truck for Axum dates back to the year 2000 when Denver hosted the annual Sister Cities International conference. Thanks to a generous offer from Ethiopian Airlines, DSCI was able to bring the Mayor of Axum, a medical doctor, and a young girl who needed prosthetics for an arm she lost during the civil war in Ethiopia to Denver. While in Denver, the Mayor and the doctor discussed and prioritized the needs of Axum with DSCI Committee members. Among the needs expressed were an adequate and safe municipal water supply and improved sanitation.

Fortunately, Axum's water supply needs have been largely met, although proper sanitation has remained a serious issue. Many pit latrines are still in use in schools, hospitals, clinics, hotels, other businesses, and residential areas. To ensure continued use of these pit latrines, the city indicated that a sanitation truck would be extremely valuable to them. In 2014, Denver raised funds and worked with local leaders and community members to donate a septic pumping truck to Axum. This truck will enable the servicing of pit latrines to provide for their continued effective functioning. The truck will be a much needed start toward a healthier environment for all.

Sister Cities International's Annual Awards are awarded in several categories including Best Overall, Innovation (Arts & Culture, Economic Development, Humanitarian Assistance, and Youth & Education), Volunteer of the Year, and Youth Leadership. Award winners will be honored at a special ceremony on Saturday, July 18 during Sister Cities International's 59th Annual Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Sister Cities International 59th Annual Conference will bring together elected and municipal officials, engaged citizens, diplomats, and business leaders in Minneapolis, Minnesota to discuss, "Building Generations for Peace." Conference sessions will provide attendees with opportunities to learn about strengthening their sister city programs through informative sessions led by experts and industry leaders. For more information on the 2015 Sister Cities International Annual Conference, please visit: www.SisterCitiesConference.org.

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About Sister Cities International

Founded by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956, Sister Cities International serves as the national membership organization for over 545 individual sister cities, counties, and states across the United States with relationships in over 2,100 communities in 145 countries. This sister city network unites tens of thousands of citizen diplomats and volunteers who work tirelessly to promote peace and understanding through programs and projects focusing on arts and culture, youth and education, economic and sustainable development, and humanitarian assistance.

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