

Eldoret Kenya to receive fire truck from Sister City Minneapolis

Written by

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After many visits to the Twin Cities by the Eldoret City Council and three years of conversations between Sister Cities' Minneapolis and Eldoret Kenya, the International Leadership Institute announced that Minneapolis had donated a Fire Engine Pumper Truck to Eldoret from their relationship developed during the past 10 years. The Pumper Truck was presented to the Institute and ILI Sister City Committee for the City of Eldoret Kenya August 17, 2009 at Minneapolis Fire Station #17 (4th Avenue and 38th Street) with city official and Kenyan community members present.

After tragic post-election events in 2008, Eldoret was highly affected by the loss of lives and property destruction. One area in which Eldoret could have done better in rescuing lives and properties burned during that time was being able to extinguish fires. By not having a proper Fire Engine or Pumper Truck, the City of Eldoret was not as effective in fighting fires.

The leadership of the ILI, City of Minneapolis and Peter Ole Sabay, ILI Eldoret Program Coordinator, has worked for months on the details necessary to bring all parties together and to arrange for shipment of the truck. Coventry Cowens, ILI volunteer Sister Cities Int'l Coordinator, "We hope that the truck arrives in time for City of Eldoret's observance of their 50th anniversary this October. This has been an incredible project and opportunity for Minneapolis and Eldoret Kenya, and the local Kenyan communities."

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Since 2000, International Leadership Institute (ILI) has been the sponsor and facilitator of the Eldoret Kenya to Minneapolis Sister Cities program. The ILI is a non-profit based in Minnesota since 1994. Peter Ole Sabay, also a member of the ILI, was exciting to see this project reach this point. "This project began with a simple request by the City of Eldoret; however the tragic chaos after the 2008 elections, having equipment to put out fires and to save lives became even more critical. Now we can say we have helped make a difference in Eldoret." Also representing the local community were Mr. Wilfred Chepkwony and Esly Kania of the EMO Kenyan organization.

The group hopes to raise funds to bring members of the volunteer Eldoret fire department to Minneapolis to participate in local fire department training. Coventry Cowens indicated that it is hoped that the local Kenyan communities will again support this continued effort to improve life in their home country.

As an organization that is also licensed in Kenya, the Institute has developed several partnerships and projects over the past 15 years which have been constructive and have produced many positive and professional relationships connecting Minnesota and Kenya. The ILI provides opportunities for professionals to use their expert skills in developing countries and people in transition. This includes technical missions and local events in the Twin Cities. The ILI can be seen at website www.internationalleadership.org .