Asheville/Raleigh awarded Sister Cities International's Sino-African Initiative Grant

WASHINTON, DC – Sister Cities International announced today that an Asheville/Raleigh Sister Cities team has been awarded a Sino-African Initiative grant to create a pilot Sino-African-US trilateral sister city project that targets urban poverty alleviation and economic development in African cities by increasing resources for the urban poor. Asheville and Raleigh will be working with its sister city partners in Osogbo, Nigeria and Xiangyang, China to implement the project.

The Asheville/Raleigh Sister Cities team is one of three sister city organizations to be awarded the SAI grant. The two others selected are: Denver, Colorado and Urbana, Illinois. The grantees were selected after a formal call for proposals in August 2012. The applications were then judged by a panel of five distinguished judges each providing a specific perspective from their experiences in the U.S., China, and Africa. Asheville/Raleigh Sister Cities will plan and implement their project in 2013.

SAI is a two-year $1.5 million program designed to address the manner in which Chinese, African, and U.S. cities can collaborate on economic development and urban poverty issues in Africa. By working with Chinese, African, and U.S. public diplomacy networks, local municipal governments, and businesses, this initiative seeks to create strategies that ensure development and poverty alleviation projects address community needs, safeguard human rights and safety, and promote transparent business practices and government accountability.

SAI will conclude at the end of the second year with a feasibility report that draws from the three pilot projects. The focus of the report will include best practices in creating Sino-African-U.S. trilateral sister city partnerships and multilateral cooperation for economic development and urban poverty alleviation programs.

SAI builds upon Sister Cities International's African Urban Poverty Alleviation Program (AUPAP), designed to address urban poverty in 25 African cities through water, health, and sanitation projects developed collaboratively by U.S. and African sister city programs.

About Sister Cities International

Sister Cities International facilitates nearly 2,000 partnerships in 136 countries across six continents between 550 plus 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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