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Police officers help build community, trust, partnership

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Three representatives from the Fairfield Police Department recently returned from the first of many planned partnering programs with law enforcement and other community partners in Granada, Nicaragua. Those who traveled were Chief Dave Peck (RET), Officer Craig Ervin (RET) and Sergeant Jim Perez.

Granada has long been a center of commerce in Nicaragua and is becoming the national tourism hub. Thousands of tourists from the United States and the world visit each year and its listing among the top two places to retire on a fixed income is rapidly increasing its ex-patriot population. Despite this growth it is highly regarded for preserving some of the finest colonial-era architecture in the country. The Granada Police Department was chosen because of its stature as one of the most open and progressive in Nicaragua, run by a Chief of Police who embraces new ideas and continually seeks to build trust and ties with the community.

Fairfield Police Chief David Peck and Partners International Foundation Founder Bob Morris partnered with Police Departments throughout the United States and other volunteers to start the first leadership training program with the Republica de Nicaragua Policia Nacional in Granada.

Fairfield representatives were involved in conducting leadership training and providing team building and other group development instruction. The effort culminated over two years of coordination by Morris and Peck as well as the local government in Nicaragua and their Police. The need for this leadership training was identified by the Granada Chief of the Police Department.

During the visit Partners International Foundation donated a new motorcycle to the tourist patrol division in honor of the late Granada Police Officer killed in the line of duty. In making the dedication Fairfield Retired Chief Peck stated, "On behalf of the men and women of the Fairfield Police Department and the officers who came on this delegation, I would like to say it has been an honor and a pleasure to meet your second chief and your first chief. They made us feel like the brothers and sisters that we are in the police service."

In addition to the motorcycle, Partners International Foundation donated enough repair parts to put four other of the department's aging fleet of cycles back into service. Said Morris, "This is a gift not for the Police but for the community of Granada and their Police in support of the strong ties they continue to form not only in public safety but in innovative programs to help Granada's youth."

Morris went on to praise the community programs to engage young boys and girls in sports and other

programs that advocated gender equality and peaceful resolution of conflict while reducing gangs and other destructive groups.

Partners International Foundation paid the cost and expenses of the students in Nicaragua, addition training expenses, and the cost of both the donated motorcycle and repair parts. Partners International Foundation hopes to make this an annual event as well as expand the initiative throughout Nicaragua and Latin America.

Said Peck of his experience, "Although we may live and work in different countries, the work we do is the same, and the danger and the calls for service that we handle are not at all different." representatives from the Fairfield Police Department recently returned from the first of many planned partnering programs with law enforcement and other community partners in Granada, Nicaragua. Those who traveled were Chief Dave Peck (RET), Officer Craig Ervin (RET) and Sergeant Jim Perez.

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