

Buettner, Baxton, Caribou Coffee 2012 International Award Recipients



Keynote Ambassador Odembo with TCICA student guests

“With the many challenges facing our world, this annual event provides many people with recognition deserved for their work in developing a global community, said ILI President, (ret.) Judge LaJune Lange. The Twin Cities International Citizen Awards Gala offers attendees with opportunities to connect with individuals and organizations that are exploring diverse and authentic international relationships in the areas of business, non-profits and personal endeavors.”

This was the TCICA’s 20th year celebrating global citizenship. Keynote for the gala was the Honorable Ambassador Elkanah Odembo of the Republic of Kenya. He was joined by the Minneapolis-Eldoret Kenya delegation visiting for city and business meetings. The event took place Thursday, May 10, 2012 at the Minneapolis Club, with a 5pm reception and 6pm awards dinner.

The 2012 Twin Cities International Citizen Awards recipients were **Dan Buettner, Lawford Baxter and Caribou Coffee Companies**. International Citizen Award winner, **Dan Buettner**, an international explorer, educator, author, public speaker and co-producer of an Emmy Award-winning documentary who founded the Blue Zones®, a company that puts the world’s best practices in longevity and well-being to work in people’s lives. Buettner’s *National Geographic* cover story on longevity, “The Secrets of Living Longer” was one of their top-selling issues in history. In 2009, Albert Lea, Minnesota, a statistically average American city, completed a one year community health experiment that raised life expectancy by three years, trimmed a collective 12,000 pounds off waistlines and dropped healthcare costs of city workers by some 40%. He’s currently working with HEALTHWAYS to implement the program in the Beach Cities of Los Angeles. Their strategy focuses on optimizing the health environment instead of individual behavior change. His achievements include a New York Times best-selling book entitled *The Blue Zone*. www.bluezones.com His nomination was submitted by Coventry Cowens of Minneapolis.



Dan Buettner, Ambassador and Darren Miles of Caribou Companies

The 2012 Immigrant Achievement Award winner, **Lawford Baxton, PhD** was honored for his successful business development. After successfully working as a research engineer and manager for a decade, he decided to form his own company, Cut Fruit Express, specializing in the cutting, packaging, and distributing of fruit and eventually, vegetables in 1997. For the past fourteen years, through his hard work and business savvy, he has built up the company from a 10 employee, 8000-square-foot production to a multi-million dollar business with 60 employees in a 46,000-square-foot facility. He has held his company up to a high level of corporate citizenry and has worked hard to improve the lives of his employees, many of whom are immigrants themselves, and the community in which they live. He provides home buying assistance for his employees and post-secondary education assistance for their children. He makes the land on the company's property available to employees for cultivation of vegetables and fruits which can be used to feed their families and supplement their income. Additionally Cut Fruit Express is a sponsor of Project Sweetie Pie, an organization that teaches urban gardening to North Minneapolis youths. www.cutfruitexpress.com His nomination was submitted by Hyon Kim of MN Best, Inc.



**Shirlynn LaChapelle, Chinaza Nwaneri,
Lawford Baxton and Darren Miles**

Caribou Coffee Companies was the 2012 International Corporate Award recipient. In the 20 plus years Caribou Coffee has been in business, they have played a large part in supporting and sustaining the production of coffee. Caribou has helped coffee producing communities in supporting water-cleaning programs, financing schools, building clinics and investing in reforestation efforts. Furthermore, Caribou has also participated and partnered with many organizations locally and nationally such as: the Rain Forest Alliance, which helps create a more sustainable world, care for the planet, protects the forests and wildlife habitat, and also care for farm workers, their families and the community; Project 7, who helps Heal the Sick, Save the Earth, House the Homeless, Feed the Hungry, Quench the Thirsty, Teach them well and Hope for Peace. Darren Miles, Caribou's Sr. Director of Domestic License and Franchise Operations, and Retail Operations Support represented the company. www.cariboucoffee.com This nomination was submitted by Rashid Omar of Medina Realty.

Two **Rekindling the Flame Awards** were also presented this year. The *Rekindling the Flame* award recognizes international, national and local Minnesota individuals for their work and sacrifices in the promotion of social justice and tolerance. The 2012 recipients are Chinaza Nwaneri, a local high school student who has collected clothing and educational supplies for students in Kenya, and Shirlynn LaChapelle a local realtor and social activities. ILI board member John Stout, Attorney, emceed the ceremony along with Judge LaJune Lange, Honorary Consul for South Africa for Minnesota and ILI President.

The Twin Cities International Citizen Awards recognize the depth and breadth of the Twin Cities' international connections, concerns and commitments - in business and trade, research and human rights, agriculture and technology, the arts and medicine, education and journalism, and in hospitality and humanitarian relief.

The TCICA Awards serves as a catalyst for communicating among Twin Cities' international organizations and businesses, provides an opportunity to showcase the international involvement of the Twin Cities area, and inspires Twin Citians to enter into international opportunities available in our community. Many of the attendees come in international attire representing their home country or a country they have worked in. The event is supported by Twin Cities Business Magazine www.tcbmag.com , South African Consulate General www.sachicago.pwpsystems.com , Fredrikson and Byron P.A. www.fredlaw.com , MN Best, Inc. www.mnbestinc.com , Medina Realty, Inc. www.medinarealty.net .

International Leadership Institute, a 501 c (3) organization, provides civic education programs and technical assistance to build bridges toward sustainable outcomes for people, businesses and government. The ILI hosts several programs in Kenya, Tanzania, Sudan, Norway, Ethiopia, Morocco, Uganda, Rwanda, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Jamaica, Brazil, and Minnesota. For 18 years the ILI has given professionals opportunities to use their expertise in an international setting either in Minnesota or out of the country.

Twin Cities International Citizen Awards - Gallery

