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Financial Network's Stephen Werner among Community Leadership Award finalists

Stephen Werner, a financial advisor with [Exemplar Financial Network](#) / [Financial Network Investment Corporation](#), was recently selected as a finalist for the *InvestmentNews* / Invest in Others Community Leadership Awards. From hundreds of entries, Werner was considered for the Global Community Impact Award in recognition of his work with HEART, the Health Education Africa Resource Team.

As a finalist, Werner was invited to attend the Community Leadership Awards Dinner last Wednesday in New York City where the winners were announced. Although he was not selected as the Global Community Impact Award winner, Werner's place among the finalists earned a \$5,000 contribution in his name to HEART on behalf of the Invest in Others Foundation.

HEART focuses on disease prevention and empowerment for women and children in Africa. Werner has raised about \$50,000 for one of HEART's more unique programs, which distributes sanitary products – formerly unavailable – to 2,000 girls in 36 Kenyan schools every year. Without these necessities, girls miss many school days per year, putting them at risk to drop out. "If you educate a woman, you educate a family," said Werner, who has been equally active with another charitable cause in Kenya, the Hopewell Education Centre. Located in a large slum, the organization provides education to 700 children, mostly orphans and street kids. Until recently, the classrooms were in tin sheds and there was no clean drinking water. Werner is a member of the Walworth-Fontana Rotary Club and, with his club's involvement, he helped raised more than \$40,000 to build and furnish a water treatment facility, permanent classrooms, a library and a community center for the campus.

"It is truly an honor to be nominated for this prestigious award," said Werner. "My wife and I have been passionate about these two causes for the past five years and our trips to Kenya have been humbling experiences that have inspired our dedication and motivation to helping these people."

Based in Walworth, Ill., Werner was named Financial Network's Outstanding Representative of the Year in 1999. In 2009, the Geneva Lake Area Chamber of Commerce named him its Model Citizen of the Year.

For more information about the *InvestmentNews* / Invest in Others Community Leadership Awards, click [here](#).