Used Soccer Gear from Iowa Rush Soccer Club valued at over $500 were donated to schools and Rush partner clubs in Ghana.

As part of its Rush Equipment Assisting CHildren (REACH) program, Iowa Rush Soccer Club collected used soccer gear and shipped them to Ghana. Ghana, located on the west coast of Africa, is slightly smaller than Oregon with a population of about 24 million. Soccer is the major sport played in Ghana and used as a tool and medium for development in diverse areas; campaigns in the areas of health, violence, ethnic and religious conflicts, tolerance, fighting poverty, etc.

“Every Sunday, over 100 children (ages 6-17 years) wear Iowa Rush Soccer club gear in some village in Ghana for a soccer game,” said Frank Oppong, TD for Ghana Rush. Thank you to the leadership of Iowa Rush for supporting the REACH program and to the Ankeny/Iowa Rush Soccer families for donating their used items,” Mr. Oppong said. Some of the beneficiaries of the collected gear include Akim-Oda Secondary School, Osunase Orphanage, Akim-Oda Methodist Primary School, and various Ghana Rush Soccer clubs within Ghana.

The plan is to continue collecting and sending used gear to communities that can use them. The REACH program consists of collecting used equipment and shipping to communities in need in the United States and abroad. Over the past few years, Rush Soccer has delivered tens of thousands of pieces of equipment to countries like Iraq, Afghanistan, South Africa, Mexico, Thailand, Ghana, Togo, etc. Future sites include Mali, Kenya, and Haiti.

The REACH program has been featured on CBS, ABC and Good Morning America. General David Petraeus of the United States Army has personally shared with the Rush the Army’s desire for the REACH program to continue. General Petraeus values the humanitarian aspect as well as the fact that the negative stigma diminishes when the U.S. troops are viewed as gift givers in conflict territories. Other partners include America One (foundation of musician and humanitarian Bono) Eurosport, TRIAD and more.

While the REACH program has been very successful to date, it is still being under-utilized. With such a large membership and the full support of Iowa Rush Soccer and other Rush clubs across the nation, there is no end to the amount of good we can do for the less fortunate.

Submitted by Ahmed Agyeman, Iowa Rush REACH Volunteer Coordinator, 515-314-6795.

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