



## Ambassador Ranneberger visits Kisumu area

On September 30 and October 1, Ambassador Ranneberger returned to the Kisumu area to get updates on the situation on the ground and to conduct a variety of outreach activities. On arrival at the airport, he was greeted by Kisumu area Members of Parliament (MPs) Shakeel Shabir (former Mayor of Kisumu) and John Olago Aluoch.

His first major event was a town hall meeting at Kisumu Polytechnic, where he spoke with students from the Polytechnic, other post-secondary institutions in the Kisumu area, and representatives of the Nyanza Youth Forum about Kenya's reform agenda, the U.S perspective, and the positive role youth can play in urging their government to bring about necessary reforms. He then moved on to a working lunch with a variety of representatives from local civil society groups, religious institutions, and community leaders, including the Luo Council of Elders, where he engaged in more dialogue about the reform process with these influential members of the Kisumu community.

The Ambassador then stopped by two important medical research projects funded by the U.S. government: the malaria vaccine trial implemented by Walter Reed Medical Research Unit in Kombewa, and the malaria and tuberculosis vaccine trials implemented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in partnership with the medical team at Siaya District Hospital. If the vaccines prove to be effective in preventing malaria and tuberculosis infection in children under five, they could transform the face of childhood health in Africa and around the world and prevent millions of deaths annually. Results will take at least five years, but stay tuned for more on this important initiative.

Next, the Ambassador was welcomed at the Kogelo home of Sarah Obama, grandmother to President Barack Obama. Bringing a gift of a ram and other foodstuffs, the Ambassador and Mama Sarah caught up on current events. The Ambassador also talked with some students attending the local Senator Obama Secondary School.

That evening, he attended a reception at the Kisumu Yacht Club hosted by Kisumu Town West MP Olago Aluoch, and was joined by the Mayor of Kisumu Sam Okello; Mama Grace Onyango, the first female MP in Kenya; representatives of the Muslim, Christian, and Hindu communities; business leaders; and District Commissioner John Cheruyiot.

On October 1, the Ambassador visited the prestigious Maseno Secondary School for boys, founded in 1906 by the Christian Missionary Society. President Obama's late father, Dr. Barack Obama Sr, graduated from this school in 1954. The Ambassador addressed more than 1,000 students and had a lively discussion with them on Kenya's future, the role of youth, and their future contributions and responsibilities to their country as leaders and academic achievers. He also shared a private word of encouragement with 13 students whose school fees are fully funded by USAID's scholarship program for orphans and vulnerable students.