



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Micheline Mendelsohn
202.347.8630
communications@sister-cities.org

**SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL ANNOUNCES
2008 ANNUAL AWARDS WINNERS**

Communities Recognized for Excellence & Innovation in Building Partnerships Globally

WASHINGTON, DC - Sister Cities International will honor several communities for their outstanding sister city programs at its 52nd Annual Conference, July 16-19, 2008. Top honors recognize programs throughout the U.S. doing work around the globe.

“These are the best of the best for advancing cultural understanding. We are a citizen diplomacy network more than a half century old and our local programs continue to blaze trails for world peace,” said Patrick Madden, Executive Director of Sister Cities International. “The diversity and innovation of programs are the hallmarks of our network and these awardees,” said Madden.

Annual Awards Winners

BEST OVERALL

Suffolk Sister Cities, Population Under 100,000
Sister Cities of Newport News, VA, Population 100,000-300,000
City of Riverside and International Relations Council, Population 300,000-500,000
Fort Worth Sister Cities International, Best Overall, Population Over 500,000
Phoenix Sister Cities Commission, Best Overall, Population Over 500,000

INNOVATION: ARTS & CULTURE

Mount Prospect Sister Cities Commission, Population Under 100,000
Sister Cities of Durham, NC, Population 100,000-500,000
Jacksonville Sister Cities International, Population Over 500,000

INNOVATION: YOUTH & EDUCATION

Suffolk Sister Cities, Population Under 100,000
Omaha Sister Cities International, Population 100,000-500,000
Chicago Sister Cities International Program, Population Over 500,000

INNOVATION: HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Denver Sister Cities Program, Population Over 500,000

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

The Late Shinichi Hara - Fort Worth Sister Cities International

DISABILITY ADVOCACY

Phoenix Sister Cities Commission

Each program will receive a Sister Cities International commendation during the Lou Wozar Annual Awards Ceremony at the Sister Cities International Annual Conference in Kansas City, MO on July 16-19, 2008. The Annual Awards Program was established in 1962 to recognize outstanding sister city programs. Winners were selected by a distinguished panel of judges for achievements made in 2007.

Representing more than 2,300 communities in 135 countries, Sister Cities International (www.sister-cities.org) is a citizen diplomacy network creating and strengthening partnerships between the U.S. and communities abroad. Begun in 1956 after a White House summit where U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower called for people-to-people exchanges, sister city partnerships are tailored to local interests and increase global cooperation at the grassroots level. Sister Cities International promotes peace through mutual respect, understanding and cooperation by focusing on sustainable and economic development, youth and education, arts and culture, and humanitarian assistance programs.

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1301 Pennsylvania Ave, NW Suite 850 * Washington, DC 20004 * www.sister-cities.org