



2009 Annual Report



Our mission is to promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation—one individual, one community at a time.



Sister Cities International Board Chair Mike Hyatt meets with Northern Ireland's Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness and First Minister Peter Robinson at a reception at the Stormont Parliament building during the 2009 Annual Conference in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

A Letter from the President

Greetings,

In our 53rd year, Sister Cities International has seen tremendous growth. We continue to be a leader for cultural, educational and economic exchanges between U.S. cities and municipalities abroad, in 2009 Sister Cities International expanded its relationships, reach and impact through new programs and partnerships.

In the first quarter of 2009, we announced a \$7.5 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to conduct sustainable development projects focused on health, sanitation and water in urban areas of Africa. This grant represents the largest gift in our history and has allowed us to expand our capacity, expertise and impact in Africa.

Sister Cities International continues to break new ground with our Muslim World Partnership Initiative. Early in the year we celebrated the 100th U.S.-Muslim partnership. We formalize our partnership with the Arab Town Organization to foster new projects and programs in the Middle East and North Africa. We also participated in the 2nd Annual U.S.-Arab Cities Forum, in Amman, Jordan and the World Innovation Summit for Education in Doha, Qatar.

The year drew to a close with the addition of a new Sister Cities International signature event. The 5k Race & Festival for World Peace introduced the sister cities network to a new local, national and international audience. Over 500 participants joined us locally in Washington, DC for the festivities, while an additional 100 created their own event race in their city.

As we forge into 2010, Sister Cities International will continue to motivate and empower private citizens, municipal officials and business leaders. As the year progresses, we encourage your participation and welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick M. Madden".

Patrick Madden
President & CEO



Patrick Madden represents a powerful voice of local elected officials and citizen volunteers who work to promote world peace and cultural understanding through economic and sustainable development programs, youth and education projects, arts and culture, as well as humanitarian assistance.



A New Era Begins at Sister Cities International

This year, Sister Cities International received the largest grant in the organization's history. A \$7.5 million grant was given by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to help address African urban poverty issues such as water, sanitation and health. The Africa Urban Poverty Alleviation Program (AUPAP) will span three years and at its completion will incorporate 25 U.S. cities and their African sister cities.

AUPAP leverages U.S. technical and professional expertise to support shared learning and implementation of best practices to help local African governments and community organizations acquire the tools and capabilities for successful urban planning and management. This includes involvement and support from the private sector, NGOs and community-based organizations to provide sustained technical assistance and community development strategies.

The seven Phase I cities are listed below. Phase II will be announced in April 2010.

- Boulder, Colorado, and Kisumu, Kenya
- Corvallis, Oregon, and Gondar, Ethiopia
- Fort Worth, Texas, and Mbabane, Swaziland
- Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Ga East/West Districts, Ghana
- Lansing, Michigan, and Akuapem South Municipality, Ghana
- Louisville, Kentucky, and Tamale, Ghana
- The State of Maryland and Bong & Maryland Counties, Liberia

The program is being administered with the help of the Africa Global Sister Cities Foundation, a peer institution based in Accra, Ghana. The partnership will help advance both organizations as well as sister city relationships on the continent and around the globe. Sister Cities International has also opened its own office in Accra, adding three full-time staff to aid the AUPAP program.

Children gather near one of the AUPAP water well site projects in Gbarnga, Bong County, Liberia.

Sister Cities International's Reach

- There are 600 sister city programs in 49 states throughout the United States.
- California has the most sister city programs, with 92 communities representing 333 partnerships on six continents.
- Chicago, IL, has the most recognized sister city partnerships, with 28 sister cities. Its newest sister city is Bogota, Columbia.
- Japan has the most U.S. partnerships with 195.
- The smallest U.S. community ever recognized by Sister Cities International is Gilbert, AR, with a population of 28. Gilbert's sister city partner is Bride, on the Isle of Man.



Global Citizenship 2.0

With over 50 years of global citizenship, Sister Cities International now embarks on the beginning of a new era of cooperation and understanding. What began with President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956 continues with the help of broader-reaching technologies.

As the world becomes more interdependent, the use of technological tools such as the Internet will become increasingly important to the success of advancing the sister cities movement. With this in mind, Sister Cities International increased its use of technology in 2009 to expand its mission and demonstrate the immediate impact of what sister cities create at the local level.

Through the organizational blog “Type, Talk and Transform World Peace,” members can read about the citizen diplomacy movement through the eyes of President and CEO Patrick Madden as he travels the globe, meeting with like-minded individuals and organizations. Social media tools like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have allowed Sister Cities International staff members and the membership to share ideas and come together like never before.

Using technology has allowed Sister Cities International to engage people of all ages across six continents. During this year’s Annual Conference in Belfast, Northern Ireland, Sister Cities International was able to provide real-time information about the organization’s first event outside the continental U.S. Following the event, the Youth Leadership Conference participants have remained in touch via the Facebook page they created.

As the world watched President Obama’s November 2009 trip to Shanghai, China, he was asked by a student about the sister cities relationship between Chicago, IL and Shanghai, China. The President had this to say:

“I was just having lunch before I came here with the Mayor of Shanghai, and he told me that he has had an excellent relationship with the city of Chicago—my home town—that he’s visited there twice. And I think it’s wonderful to have these exchanges between cities.”



Top: Youth Leadership Conference attendees with Sister Cities International Board Member Carlo Capua at the 2009 Annual Conference in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Bottom: A group of young professionals from Washington, DC participate in the 5k Race & Festival for World Peace.

Opposite: Delegates from the Sister Cities of Louisville (KY) with their Tamale, Ghana partners.

Better Understanding and Cooperation with the Muslim World

Muslim World Partnership Initiative At-A-Glance

- Program launched in 1997
- 31 countries represented
- 100 partnerships
- Iraq and Turkey have 9 partnerships each
- Muslim populations are 7% of Sister Cities International's partnerships



Laguna Nigel, CA donated medical supplies to its sister city of Al-Qaim, Anbar Province, Iraq. In this picture, U.S. Marine Sgt. Baumgarten greets Mayor Farhan Ftaikhan Al-Farhan upon the arrival of the supplies.

In light of world events of the past decade, Sister Cities International has committed itself to what the U.S. State Department refers to as “smart power” via its members. Cities across the U.S. have engaged the Muslim world through diplomatic means for cultural and economic benefits to all involved.

March 2009 marked the 100th sister city relationship between a U.S. and a Muslim community. This milestone agreement between Houston, TX, and Karachi, Pakistan, reaffirmed Sister Cities International’s commitment to building a bridge of understanding and cooperation with the Muslim world. One shining example of this long-term engagement comes from the Somerville, MA, and Tiznit, Morocco partnership.

For over 12 years, The University of the Middle East (UME) Project has sought to empower secondary school teachers from the U.S., the Middle East and North Africa through exchange programs that provide teachers with the tools to engage students in multicultural education. The Somerville–Tiznit Sister Cities partnership is a direct outgrowth of UME’s many years of connecting American and Moroccan educators through its 33 programs. UME has sponsored over 40 Moroccan teachers at its annual Teacher Education Institute held at Boston College and Simmons College.

In December 2009, the Somerville, MA–Tiznit Sister Cities partnership hosted a five-day workshop in Morocco which focused on professional development and cultural exchange. The event culminated in the official signing of a Sister Cities relationship between Somerville Mayor Joseph Curtatone and Tiznit City Council President Abdellatif Ouammou.

“We do not want this [sister city] relationship to be just cosmetic: We want to make it mutually beneficial for the inhabitants of Karachi and Houston. We in Karachi will contribute to the resolution of contemporary problems that will illustrate to people across the globe the significance of Muslims and Pakistanis.”

Karachi Mayor Syed Mustafa Kamal

Opposite: The Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program engages youth from countries with significantly Muslim populations to learn about leadership and cultural understanding. A group of students pose in front of the White House on their IYLEP trip to Washington, DC.





Partner Today, Ensure Tomorrow

At the July 2009 Annual Conference in Belfast, Northern Ireland, Sister Cities International expanded its sustainable development partnerships by officially announcing a collaboration with the U.S. Department of Energy to provide awards for sister city programs participating in renewable energy projects at the municipal level. The inaugural Innovation: Sustainable Development—Energy awards were given to Duluth, MN, and Vaxjo, Sweden; Boulder, CO, and Dushanbe, Tajikistan; and Chicago, IL, and Shanghai, China. The creation of this awards category has helped make the entire sister cities network aware that sustainable development projects produce mutual economic benefits.

This past year, Sister Cities International concluded its Safe Drinking Water Initiative, a pilot program which distributed an estimated 300,000 packets of P&G's PUR through sister city networks in Ethiopia and Nigeria, purifying over 3 million liters of water. The selected African communities were considered most at risk for water-related health problems and diseases due to contaminated and turbid water. The final program evaluation will be used to scale the project for optimal success if replicated by other sister cities and adapt to a tool kit for sister city members who wish to initiate a safe drinking water program with their sister city.

"Clean technologies have proven their worth again and again. Investments in clean technologies can generate jobs and growth while safeguarding the environment, in effect addressing the financial crisis and climate change at the same time."

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon

Sister Cities Partnerships Mean Business

Sister city relationships are sometimes mislabeled as cultural exchanges with little or no impact to the community as a whole. As recent studies have shown, sister city partnerships mean business. Below are just a few of the economic benefits many Sister Cities International member cities have received through their partnerships:

- International Visitors
- Company Expansions
- Local Jobs
- Training Programs & Exchange Students
- Returns to the Local Tax Base

Opposite: Residences of Axum, Ethiopia watch as a man uses a P&G PUR packet to purify a bucket of water.

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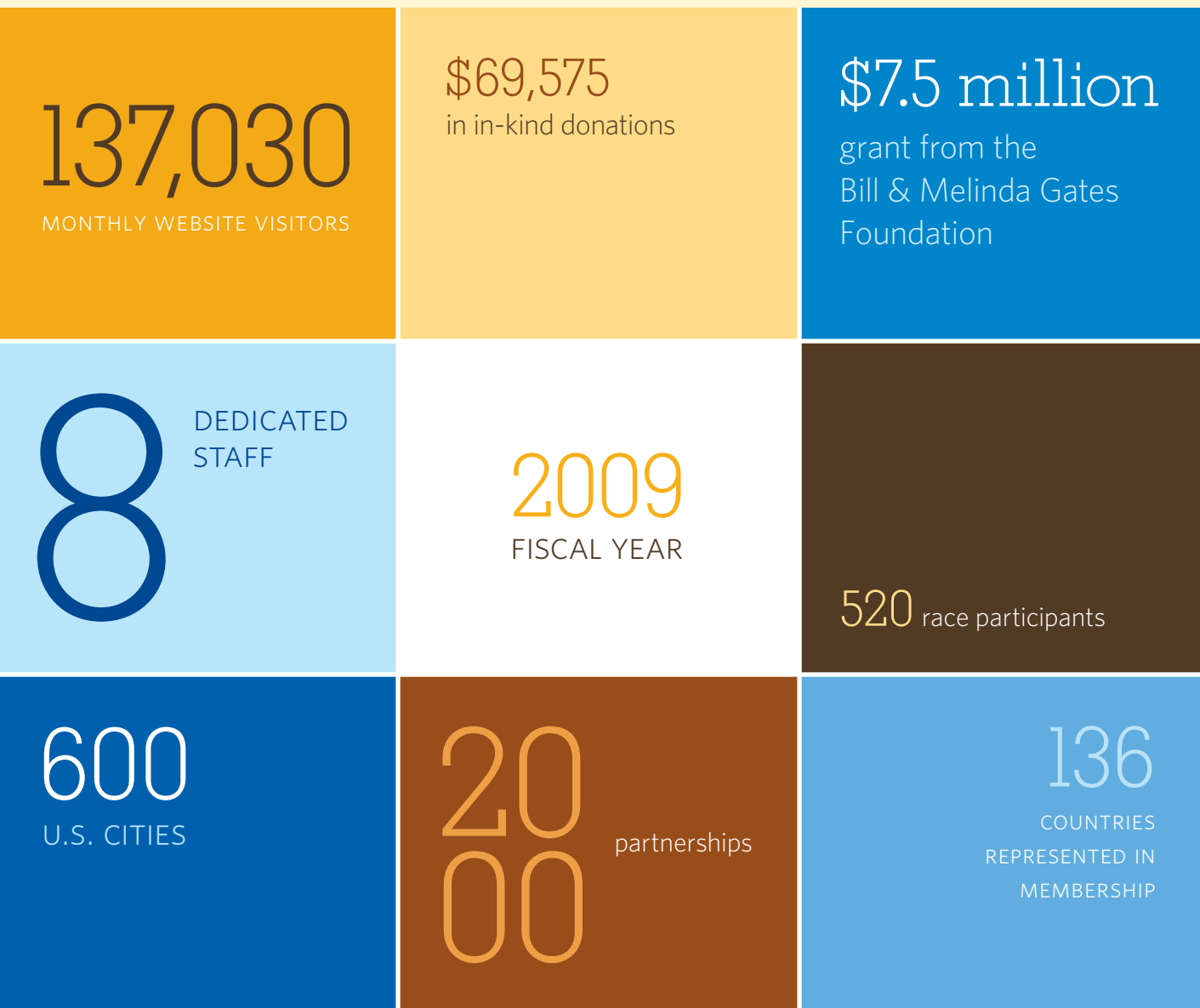
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Reading the daily headlines it is easy to grasp the depth of the economic challenges that U.S. cities and the world over faced during the past 12 months. Despite a tough economy and an ever-changing economic landscape, Sister Cities International weathered 2009 and has become stronger for it. Having received a \$7.5 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and welcoming 36 new and returned lapsed members, Sister Cities International has remained true to its mission of building global respect, understanding and cooperation.



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