



Sister Cities International 2021 Annual Conference – Building Stronger Ties for an Interconnected World announces Annual Award Winners

Washington, DC (September 22, 2021) – Sister Cities International (SCI) hosted their second ever virtual annual conference titled “Building Stronger Ties for an Interconnected World” on July 15-16, 2021. This was the second exclusively virtual annual conference in the history of Sister Cities International. The conference was designed to reach a global audience and to include any and all interested in Sister Cities International and its mission.

The annual conference connected sister cities members, United Nations representatives, business leaders, academics, civic leaders, entertainers, and others in an interactive and specially designed online platform. Leaders and attendees discussed issues revolving around the virtual world regarding sister city connections.

“Our ability to learn and improve upon our success of last year’s Virtual Annual Conference allowed us to provide an even more enriching, worldwide experience for our members and partners” said Leroy Allala, President and CEO of Sister Cities International. As seen during 2020’s Annual Conference, the virtual platform and open registration continued to attract a wider and more diverse and global audience. “During this transitional stage for countries, communities, and individuals, it is critical that we continue to display examples of citizen diplomacy to cities in the United States and around the world and to resume diplomacy online and face-to-face” stated Carol Robertson Lopez, Sister Cities International’s Board of Directors Chair.

Per tradition, the achievements of our membership network over the past year were recognized at SCI’s Conference. Sister city programs and volunteers were nominated for their accomplishments made in 2020 in the following categories: Innovation in Youth and Education, Innovation in Business, Trade, and Professional Exchange, Innovation in Humanitarian Assistance, Innovation in Arts and Culture, Volunteer of the Year, and Youth Leadership. The winners are:

Innovation in Youth and Education

Population < 25,000

- Sister Cities Essex Haiti

Population 100,000-300,000

- Virginia Friends of Mali and Richmond Sister City Commission

Population > 300,000

- City of San Antonio

Innovation in Business, Trade, and Professional Exchange

Population < 25,000

- Sausalito - Viña Del Mar Sister City Program

Population 100,00-300,000

- Sister Cities of Newport News

Population > 300,000

- City of San Antonio



Innovation in Humanitarian Assistance

Population > 300,000

- San Diego - Jalalabad Sister Cities Foundation

Innovation in Arts and Culture

Population < 25,000

- Sister Cities of Greenfield

Population 25,000-100,000

- Sister Cities Lawrence

Population 100,000-300,000

- Lexington Sister Cities Commission

Population > 300,000

- Fort Worth Sister Cities International

Best Overall Program

Population < 25,000

- Crestview Area Sister City Program

Population 25,000-100,000

- Culver City Sister City Committee, Inc.

Population 100,000-300,000

- Scottsdale Sister Cities Association

Population > 300,000

- City of San Antonio

Muhammed Saeed Sheikh of Houston, Texas was named Volunteer of the Year and **Samuel E. Farnham Jr. of Charlotte, North Carolina** received this year's Youth Leadership Award.

Winners were honored at Sister Cities International's 2021 virtual Annual Conference, attended by over 600 participants. For more information on the individual winners and interview requests, please email Jina Shim at jshim@sistercities.org. To learn more about the 2021 Annual Conference - "Building Stronger Ties for an Interconnected World," go to www.sci-ac.org

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About Sister Cities International

Founded as a Presidential Initiative by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956, Sister Cities International serves as the national membership organization for close to 400 individual sister cities, counties, and states across the United States with relationships in 1,800 communities in 137 countries on six continents. The sister city network unites tens of thousands of citizen diplomats and volunteers who work tirelessly to promote the organizations' mission of promoting world peace and understanding through economic development, youth and education, arts and culture, and humanitarian assistance.



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