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SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATES THE 2023 SUMMER LEADERSHIP MEETINGS IN DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA.

Washington, D.C. (August 3, 2023) – Sister Cities International (SCI) wrapped up the Summer Leadership Meetings in Durham, North Carolina, which were hosted by Sister Cities of Durham at the Self-Help Credit Union Temple Building in Downtown Durham. From July 26-28, Sister Cities leaders were able to attend the Annual Business Meeting, sit in on board and committee meetings, and participate in the second-ever SCI Academy.

The main theme of the summer leadership meetings this year was economic development, with the Sister City Academy session presented by the National Institute of Minority Economic Development. Ronda Pierce, SCI Board member and co-chair of the Durham Sister Cities planning committee, said, “this is a historic step in the history of SCI...Now that we are assured our SCI members are energized, we will be able to provide a SCI Economic Development Toolkit and Global Conversation with other cities. We look forward to increasing, promoting, and sustaining our Sister City relationships while working closer with our local chamber of commerce, convention, and visitor bureaus, and other economic development state and local partnerships.”

With eighty-five delegates representing more than forty Sister Cities across the country, SCI was pleased to host the largest number of participants for the Leadership Meetings since the pandemic. “Our SCI leaders from around the world were welcomed with open arms to Durham, North Carolina for three days of education, networking, and hospitality. We were also pleased to announce our Annual Awards and election results,” said Interim President and CEO, Ricki Garrett. Nine new members were welcomed on the Board of Directors, including one young professional representative.

Peter Svarzbein, Chair of the Board, said, “the hospitality of the city and people of Durham was incredible. The insightful programming and the opportunity for new connections simply made the event much better for our members and board.” In addition to the meetings, SCI members were able to enjoy an opening reception at the Durham Arts Council, a walking tour of Downtown Durham, and a tour and reception at the Sarah P. Duke Gardens. The event concluded with a celebratory win at the Durham Bulls game.

About Sister Cities International – Founded as a Presidential Initiative by Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956, Sister Cities International serves as the national membership organization for 465 U.S. communities with over 1,800 partnerships in more than 138 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 creating world peace and understanding through programs and projects focusing on arts and culture, youth and education, business and trade, and community development.

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