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**GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL WINS SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL'S  
INNOVATION AWARD (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)**

WASHINGTON, DC – Greater Fort Lauderdale Sister Cities International won Sister Cities International's 2015 Innovation Award (Economic Development) for a city with a population between 100,001 and 500,000. The 2015 Sister Cities International Innovation Award (Economic Development) recognizes the accomplishments of outstanding community and individual sister city programs that promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation.

An international business development organization with offices in Fort Lauderdale, Florida and Barcelona, Spain were seeking partners for Spanish companies interested in expanding into the Latin American and Caribbean Markets. The Fort Lauderdale/Broward County region used its access to the targeted markets along with experience and knowledge of the business development team to ensure a successful project.

Before taking the project to Barcelona, meetings with several chambers, economic development agencies and business development companies in Florida were organized. Professionals with experience in legal and accounting issues, visa requirements, logistics and transport, government initiatives, and real estate were selected for the project. In Barcelona, the delegation held meetings with seven Catalonian governments and private agencies to discuss work in the following cities: Mataro, Granollers, Las Franqueses del Valles, and Barcelona Vilanova.

Sister Cities International's Annual Awards are awarded in several categories including Best Overall, Innovation (Arts & Culture, Economic Development, Humanitarian Assistance, and Youth & Education), Volunteer of the Year, and Youth Leadership. Award winners will be honored at a special ceremony on Saturday, July 18 during Sister Cities International's 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Sister Cities International 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference will bring together elected and municipal officials, engaged citizens, diplomats, and business leaders in Minneapolis, Minnesota to discuss, "Building Generations for Peace." Conference sessions will provide attendees with opportunities to learn about strengthening their sister city programs through informative sessions led by experts and industry leaders. For more information on the 2015 Sister Cities International Annual Conference, please visit: [www.SisterCitiesConference.org](http://www.SisterCitiesConference.org).

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**About Sister Cities International**

Founded by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956, Sister Cities International serves as the national membership organization for over 545 individual sister cities, counties, and states across the United States with relationships in over 2,100 communities in 145 countries. This sister city network unites tens of thousands of citizen diplomats and volunteers who work tirelessly to promote peace and understanding through programs and projects focusing on arts and culture, youth and education, economic and sustainable development, and humanitarian assistance.

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