

**FRESNO SISTER CITIES WINS SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL'S  
INNOVATION AWARD (YOUTH AND EDUCATION)**

WASHINGTON, DC – Fresno Sister Cities has won Sister Cities International's 2014 Innovation Award (Youth and Education) for a city with a population greater than 500,001. The 2014 Sister Cities International Innovation Award (Youth and Education) recognizes the accomplishments of outstanding community and individual sister city programs that promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation.

Fresno Sister Cities (FSC) participates in several activities involving youth each year with their sister cities. In particular, FSC has been conducting a recurring exchange program each summer with their sister city in Münster, Germany for 27 years.

In 2013, 50 orchestra members from Münster played in a concert with Clovis High School and the Youth Orchestras of Fresno. Additionally, students from Fresno participated in an exchange in Germany for five weeks after 40 German students had stayed with them in Fresno. The directors of the FSC program completed a 2013 handbook for students and parents guiding them through the entire exchange program, which includes a contract between the student, parents, and program. Student ambassadors completed essays with topics regarding their experience in Germany.

To successfully implement these exchanges, FSC's working group members collaborated with Fresno Youth Orchestra, Japanese Rotary Group, Fresno City Hall, Fresno and Clovis School Districts, Nicholas Henebury Memorial Fund, and Fresno State University.

Sister Cities International's Annual Awards are awarded in several categories including Best Overall, Innovation (Arts & Culture, Economic Development, Energy/Sustainable Development, Humanitarian Assistance, and Youth & Education), Volunteer of the Year, and Youth Leadership. Award winners will be honored at a special ceremony on Saturday, August 2, during Sister Cities International's 58th Annual Conference in San Jose, California.

The Sister Cities International 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference will bring together elected and municipal officials, engaged citizens, diplomats, and business leaders in the exciting capital of Silicon Valley to discuss, "The Power of Digital Diplomacy". 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 2014 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 500 individual sister cities, counties, and states across the United States with relationships in 2,000 communities in 140 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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