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**Palm Desert Sister Cities Foundation wins *Sister Cities International's*  
Innovation: Youth & Education Award**

WASHINGTON, DC – The Palm Desert Sister Cities Foundation has won *Sister Cities International's* 2011 Innovation: Youth & Education Award for a city with population less than 100,000. The Innovation awards recognize the accomplishments of outstanding community and individual sister city programs that promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation.

In 2011, the Foundation designed a project with its sister city Gisborne, New Zealand with the objective of: expanding sustainable programming with emphasis on youth education, endeavor and mutual enrichment; and leveraging technology and community collaborations and partnerships to advance programs.

The Foundation based an educational project on the book “The Boy Who Conquered Everest”, an inspiring real-life story of 15 year old Jordan Romero who on Christmas Eve 2011, became the youngest person to summit all seven of the highest mountains in the world. The local Abraham Lincoln Elementary School and two schools from Gisborne were selected for the project and a course curriculum was developed based on the book. The schools then collaborated to bring more than 650 students together for joint study sessions through Skype. The course ended with a two hour interactive presentation by Jordan Romero himself.

The Foundation worked with schools, community volunteers, businesses and ultimately delivered a project that inspired and brought together youth from two different continents.

The *Sister Cities International* Annual Awards are awarded in several categories. Award winners will be honored at a special luncheon ceremony on July 14 during the *Sister Cities International* 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Jacksonville, Florida.

**About *Sister Cities International***

*Sister Cities International* facilitates nearly 2,000 partnerships in 136 countries on six continents between 600 communities in the United States with similar municipalities abroad. *Sister Cities International* represents citizen diplomats who work tirelessly to promote the organizations' mission of creating world peace and cultural understanding through economic and sustainable development programs, youth and education projects, arts and culture, and humanitarian assistance.

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