
SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL ANNOUNCES 2016 YOUNG ARTISTS AND AUTHORS SHOWCASE WINNERS

Over 100 students from around the globe ages 13-22 interpret peace through art, film, writing, and photography for the 28th Annual Young Artists and Authors Showcase

Washington, DC (June 16, 2016) – Today, Sister Cities International (SCI) announced the winners and finalists of the 2016 Young Artists and Authors Showcase. For nearly three decades, SCI has leveraged the power that art has to transform societies and transcend cultural boundaries through the Young Artists and Authors Showcase. The Showcase has given youth ages 14-18 from around the globe the opportunity to express their vision for a more unified, peaceful world through original artwork and literature. New for 2016, the Showcase added photography as part of the competition, allowing young people ages 13-22 to submit photographs via Instagram and, in partnership with Cinequest, short film submissions were accepted for a second year.

The 2016 Showcase encouraged youth to submit entries inspired by the theme “Peace through People.” Young artists, authors, photographers, and filmmakers shared their vision of peace and expressed how connecting globally allows them and their communities to prosper.

“Young artists and authors from around the globe have been submitting inspiring work to the Showcase for nearly three decades. Special for this year’s 60th Anniversary, we’ve incorporated short film and photography, where youth were able to showcase their talents in new inspiring ways. We’re thrilled to share the creativity of these young citizen diplomats online and at our [60th Anniversary Celebration](#) in Washington, DC July 13-16,” said Mary D. Kane, SCI President and CEO.

The 2016 Young Artists Showcase Grand Prize winner from the U.S. is Nathan Smoka from Columbia Heights, MN for his artwork titled “Unity.” Finalists include Jocelyn Abaray of Lakeland, FL; Alex Avila of Belvidere, IL; Julia Barquin of Delray Beach, FL; and Astha Chourasia of Chandler, AZ. The International Grand Prize winner is Samuel Aniwi of Kumasi, Ghana for his artwork titled “Together as One.” Finalists in this category include In-Hae Na of Incheon, South Korea; Tatsuya Sumitomo of Yao, Japan; Kamil Mikolaj Urban of Torun, Poland; and Elena Comarnitchi of Ungheni, Moldova.

The 2016 Young Authors Showcase (Essay) Grand Prize winner is Samantha Kamath of Chandler, AZ for her work titled “World Disagreement.” Finalists include Katherine Hann of Phoenix, AZ and Daln Ham of Incheon, South Korea. The 2016 Young Authors Showcase (Poetry) Grand Prize winner is Hannah Huebsch of Osage, IA for her work titled “My Vision of Peace.” Finalists include Mattlin Stanek of Stillwater, OK and Cristal Ramirez of Santa Clarita, CA.

The 2016 Sister Cities Short Film Challenge Grand Prize winner is Max Rykov of Montgomery County, MD for his film titled “Pianino for Peace.” Ethan Holleman of Highland Park, IL is a finalist.

The inaugural 2016 Sister Cities Photography Challenge Grand Prize winner is Isabella Cantu of San Bernardino, CA. Finalists include Noah Hughes of Charlotte, NC and Jessica Beall of San Antonio, TX.

The Grand Prize winners will each receive a \$1,000 cash prize. The winners' and finalists' work will also be on display at SCI's [60th Anniversary Celebration](#) in Washington, DC, July 13-16. Following the Conference, the artwork will go on a tour to several cities across the U.S.

To view the 2016 Showcase artwork, photography, and writing submissions, visit <http://bit.ly/1UQqlw7>. For more information about the Showcase and to request copies of the artwork, email communications@sistercities.org. The Young Artist and Authors Showcase is made possible by the generous support of the Carvey Family.

This year's momentous conference will mark 60 years sister cities creating peace through people. Conference speakers include Mary Beth Albright, Food Attorney, Food Writer and Food Network Star Finalist; Admiral Thad Allen, former United States Coast Guard admiral; David Beame, Event Director, Global Citizen; Governor Ziad Chebib, Beirut, Lebanon; H.E. Ambassador Francisco Obadiah Campbell Hooker, Embassy of Nicaragua; Mayor Farhad Niyaaesh, Herat, Afghanistan; Evan Ryan, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State; Donté Lamar Stallworth, Former Professional Football Player; Anthony A. Williams, Mayor of Washington, D.C. (1999 – 2007), and Chief Executive Officer, Federal City Council. For more information on these and other speakers and to register, visit <http://sistercitiesconference.org>.

#

About Sister Cities International

Founded by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956, Sister Cities International serves as the national membership organization for 570 member communities with relationships in 2,300 communities in 150 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.

Facebook: [Sister Cities International](#); Twitter: [@SisterCitiesInt](#); Instagram: [@SisterCitiesInt](#); Medium: [Sister Cities International](#); Website: www.sistercities.org