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**REHOBOTH BEACH SISTER CITIES ASSOCIATION WINS SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL'S  
INNOVATION AWARD (ARTS AND CULTURE)**

WASHINGTON, DC – Rehoboth Beach Sister Cities Association has won Sister Cities International's 2014 Innovation Award (Arts and Culture) for a city with a population less than 100,000. The 2014 Sister Cities International Innovation Award (Arts and Culture) recognizes the accomplishments of outstanding community and individual sister city programs that promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation.

The founding of the Rehoboth Beach Sister City Association (RBSCA) was based on research conducted by Russell McCabe, Delaware state historian, who verified from historical records that Giovanni da Verrazzano, a native of Greve-in-Chianti, Italy, a province of Florence, explored the Delaware coastline in 1524. This connection between Greve-in-Chianti and Rehoboth Beach lead to the formal establishment of a sister city relationship in 2010.

RBSCA's main project in 2013 was the Garden Exchange Project. Celebrating the spirit of international friendship between the two cities, it was agreed that gardens would be established in both cities, thus creating a place for citizens to enjoy and to have a better understanding of the culture of each city. The garden in Greve-in-Chianti would reflect the design of a typical garden in Rehoboth Beach while the garden in Rehoboth Beach would have the aesthetic of an Italian garden.

To successfully implement this project, RBSCA's working group members collaborated with the Delaware Commission on Italian Heritage and Culture, the City of Rehoboth Beach, RBSCA board members, supporters of the RBSCA and the Garden Project regional Italian-American organizations, local Italian-American business owners, and Sposato Landscape, Inc.

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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