

**TACOMA SISTER CITY COUNCIL WINS SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL'S  
INNOVATION AWARD (YOUTH AND EDUCATION)**

WASHINGTON, DC – The Tacoma Sister City Council (TSCC) won Sister Cities International's 2015 Innovation Award (Youth and Education) for a city with a population between 100,001 and 500,000. The 2015 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.

The TSCC Student Leadership Conference is an annual daylong conference where Tacoma high school students, civic leaders, business leaders, and elected officials gather to discuss Tacoma as an international city. The conference was designed as a partnership between TSCC and the Tacoma Public School Administration with the purpose to broaden the understanding of Tacoma's international relationships and activities with the world as well as to generate ideas to stimulate students' participation with those relationships. Over 100 high school students attended this conference in 2014.

After an opening session including a question and answer forum, the students attended breakout sessions with representatives from Tacoma's sister cities, Port of Tacoma, local government staff and officials, the World Trade Center, local businesses involved with trade, and other civic group leaders. At the end of the conference, the student groups are asked to craft recommendations for Tacoma as an international city. These recommendations are ultimately forwarded to the City Council, TSCC, the local Chamber of Commerce, World Trade Center, Port of Tacoma, and other interested groups.

It is TSCC's hope that students will gain knowledge of international cities in contact with Tacoma and deepen their understanding of local leaders and organizations involved with global work.

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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