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## **KALKIDAN ALEMU WINS SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL'S YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD**

WASHINGTON, DC – Kalkidan Alemu of Fort Worth Sister Cities International (FWSCI) has won the Sister Cities International (SCI) 2017 Youth Leadership Award. The Youth Leadership Award honors an exemplary youth for contributions to the sister city movement and recognizes the leadership and talent that benefit local sister city programs and the larger sister city network.

Kalkidan Alemu is the current Youth Board President at FWSCI and moved to the U.S. from Yemen at a young age. She was first introduced to the FWSCI through the Generation Hope Laptop program where she virtually conversed with students in Fort Worth's sister cities about their lives and cultures. After this experience, she became more involved with FWSCI, participating in the Junior International Leadership Academy for three years and completing ambassadorships to Bandung; Indonesia; Nagaoka, Japan; and Trier, Germany.

Among her many achievements, she launched a fundraising effort with the FWSCI Youth Board called Pennies for Pasta at her local high school where participating teams raised over \$300 to assist a refugee family from Iraq. The winning team got a free pasta dinner from a local restaurant, and the Youth Board was able to fully furnish an apartment and stock it with food for the family. They even provided a home-cooked meal on the family's very first night in the United States. These efforts would not have been possible without the resolve and passion of Kalkidan.

Kalkidan strives for excellence and has received many local and national awards including FWSCI's highest leadership honor: the Fort Worth Sister Cities Yamagata Emerging Leaders Scholar. When asked what FWSCI means to her, Kalkidan says: "My involvement in Fort Worth Sister Cities has helped me discover my passion for diplomacy and has strengthened my understanding of other cultures. I am so thankful for such wonderful opportunities; opportunities which I would never have dared to dream."

SCI's Annual Awards are awarded in several categories including Best Overall, Innovation (Arts and Culture, Economic Development, Humanitarian Assistance, and Youth and Education), and Volunteer of the Year. Award winners will be honored at the Lou Wozar Diplomatic Awards Dinner on Saturday, July 15 during SCI's 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference in Virginia Beach, VA.

SCI's 61<sup>st</sup> [Annual Conference](#) events, which include a [Youth Leadership Summit](#) and a [U.S.-Russia Mayors' Summit](#), will take place in Virginia Beach, VA from July 12-16, 2017. The events will bring together hundreds of the most influential global leaders in diplomacy, foreign affairs, policy, business, and innovation. Elected and municipal officials, business leaders, youth delegates, and citizen diplomats will discuss this year's theme "Global Communities for World Peace," building on President Eisenhower's initial vision of creating a more peaceful world by building global relationships through communities.

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### **About Sister Cities International**

Founded as a Presidential Initiative by Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956, Sister Cities International serves as the national membership organization for 500 member communities with over 2,000 partnerships in 145 countries on six continents.



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The sister city network unites tens of thousands of citizen diplomats and volunteers who work tirelessly to promote the organizations' mission of creating world peace and understanding through economic development, youth and education, arts and culture, and humanitarian assistance.

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