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**AURORA SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL WINS SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL'S BEST OVERALL PROGRAM AWARD**

WASHINGTON, DC – Aurora Sister Cities International (ASCI) has won the Sister Cities International (SCI) 2017 Best Overall Program Award for a city with a population between 300,001 and 500,000. The SCI Best Overall Program Award recognizes sister city programs that demonstrated outstanding accomplishments in 2016 in advancing the goals and mission of the sister cities movement.

In 2016, ASCI successfully accomplished major goals as an organization that strengthened their relationships with several of their sister cities and promoted growth locally. A coalition from ASCI worked with the Office of International and Immigrant affairs to establish a Friendship City relationship with Antiguo Cuscatlán, El Salvador, which led to the establishment of Colorado's first Salvadorian Consulate in Aurora in spring of 2017. They also hosted a 27-member delegation from Seongnam City, South Korea to share technological developments and establishing trade ties with young entrepreneurs from Seongnam City. Additionally, ASCI partnered with the Aurora History Museum to launch "A Mosaic of Cultures:" a series of exhibits that told the story of Aurora's Ethiopian immigrant community through interviews that shared personal experiences. ASCI also laid the foundation to launch its Global Youth Leaders Camp to develop global competencies in local youth through interactive and youth-led activities.

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 over 500 member communities with 2,000 partnerships in 145 countries on six continents. 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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