SCI's Mission

Sister Cities International is the national volunteer membership organization of U.S. communities linked globally to promote lasting friendship through a variety of programs.

The goals of Sister Cities International (SCI) are:

- To develop partnerships between U.S. towns, cities, counties and states and similar jurisdictions of other nations;
- To create opportunities for all people to experience and explore other cultures through long-term partnerships;
- To create an atmosphere in which economic development and trade can be explored, implemented and strengthened;
- To open a dialogue and address issues ranging from the cultural to the technical, from the municipal to the medical, from the environmental to the educational and beyond;
- To stimulate environments through which partnerships can creatively learn, work, and solve problems together; and
- To collaborate with other organizations, both in the United States and in other countries, that have similar visions and goals.

Letter from The Board President

The dramatic changes occurring in the world of the 90's only reinforce the critical significance that Sister Cities play in promoting peace and goodwill. We are encouraging better international understanding through citizen diplomacy in all countries around the world.

Despite worldwide turmoil and conflict that sometimes seems insurmountable, time and time again, we witness how people to people programs, then city to city relationships, build lasting and unshakable bonds — one friendship at a time.

Just recently, I was inspired by a delegation I led to Eastern Europe that illustrated what the Sister Cities program is all about. As it turns out, the newly elected Prime Minister of the emerging democracy of Macedonia was a young sister city intern only five short years ago, participating in a summer exchange program in Tempe, Arizona.

Branko Crvenkovski is only 31 years old. He recounted to me in Skopje that when he returned to his country after seeing the greatness of America, he decided that he couldn't just be an engineer or do computer work. He said:

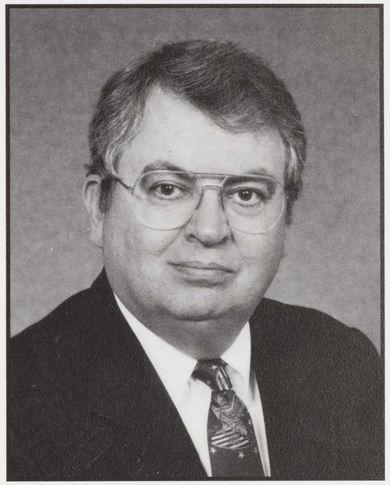
> *"I wanted to do something for my country. I wanted to help my people. That summer in your city influenced me to try to bring about needed changes in Macedonia."*

All over Eastern Europe, young people are holding leadership positions. The torch of freedom and democracy is being carried by many of these young leaders who have been influenced through programs like the sister city exchanges.

The message to me is that all 1,040 sister city programs in the United States need to continue working with and exchanging people. You'll never know when the guest in your home or your city might later turn out to be the Prime Minister of his or her country or the person who will be in a position to really make a difference in our world.

Make a great friend for Sister Cities; make a great friend for America; make a great friend for the world — that's what our organization is all about.

Richard G. Neuheisel



Richard G. Neuheisel, SCI President