Program Highlights

Over half of all Americans currently living in U.S. cities have a sister city in another country. The United States Congress, the Department of State and United States Information Agency (USIA) support Sister Cities International and USIA is responsible for providing financial assistance to the national association. The following are some of the programs SCI implements around the world:

The Eisenhower International Scholarship Fund

The Eisenhower International Scholarship Fund, established in 1977, provides international college students with scholarship awards to study in their U.S. sister city. Funds are raised through a one-day pro-am golf tournament that is co-sponsored every year with the University of Texas at Tyler.

U.S. - N.I.S Youth Exchange Program

Funded by a USIA grant awarded to SCI, seven reciprocal youth exchange programs are taking place in 1994 between cities of the New Independent States (N.I.S.) and their U.S. sister cities.

Each exchange lasts for a minimum of three weeks, involves at least ten youth participants from each city, and centers around a specific theme such as government, history, culture or the performing arts.

SCI Community Service Learning Program

Funded by a grant from The Reader's Digest Association, Inc., the Sister Cities International Community Service Learning Program provides the opportunity for young people to serve their sister city through involvement in a reciprocal international youth exchange.

Teams of young people from each participating community (ten sister city pairs each year) travel to their sister city to work on different types of service learning exchanges, including:

- Work in orphanages or facilities for abused children
- Assistance with the developmentally or physically disabled
- Projects relating to the environment such as tree planting, park beautification, and recycling
- Service to the elderly or "shut-ins" and
- "Teens helping teens" projects, particularly working with youth at risk.

All of these programs are designed to touch young lives, benefit people in need, and empower young people to make a difference on a global scale.

SCI Trilateral Exchange Program

Funded by a grant from The Center for Global Partnership, this program encourages trilateral sister city linkages between people in Japan, the U.S., and a variety of other regions in the world — initially, cities located in Brazil, Hungary, Mexico, Russia, Zimbabwe, and Costa Rica.

Recognizing the need for greater global understanding between the U.S., Japan and the rest of the world, the trilateral program includes exchanges, internships and conferences designed to encourage citizens and city officials to work together on common problems and concerns.

The Young Artists Program

Each year, young artists between the ages of 13 and 18 are invited to depict different themes supporting SCI's mission of fostering international peace and global understanding.

A panel of judges selects ten winners and each one receives a cash prize. The finalists artwork is on display during the Eisenhower Pro-Am Golf Tournament and again at the SCI annual conference.