



## News this Issue...

- ❖ Ambassador Sasae Hosts Kickoff Reception
- ❖ 2016 Hercules Fourth of July Origami Event
- ❖ Rio Vista Sister Cities Students Visit Tobishima
- ❖ Kawakami-Watsonville July 2016 Update
- ❖ Bakersfield Sister City Youth Ambassadors Visit Wakayama
- ❖ Sausalito Wins Award from Sister Cities International
- ❖ Cupertino's Talented Teenagers' Trip to Toyokawa
- ❖ Cross Cultural Closeness
- ❖ 4th Annual Fairfield Japan Fest
- ❖ Bakersfield-Wakayama Coming Attractions

### Sister City Information from the Consulate

- ❖ [Sister City List](#)
- ❖ [Sister City Photo Gallery](#)
- ❖ [Consulate Website](#)
- ❖ [Consulate Facebook](#)

## News from the Consulate

### Ambassador Sasae Hosts Kickoff Reception for 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Sister Cities International

In honor of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sister Cities International, Japanese Ambassador to the US Kenichiro Sasae hosted a kickoff reception at his official residence in Washington, DC on July 13. In his remarks he noted that Japan has more sister city relationships with the United States than any other country by far (over 420). We should not forget that the very idea of sister cities was born out of a desire to rid the world of war. It is therefore fitting that Ambassador Sasae also mentioned the sister city relationship between Hiroshima and Honolulu—locations that perhaps best represent the beginning and end of hostilities between our two countries. In this way, President Obama's recent historic visit to Hiroshima symbolizes and embodies the progress achieved through Japan-US sister city relationships. Sister city volunteers should be very proud of the activities detailed in this newsletter, as they have real meaning that have and will continue to contribute to lasting peace between the US and Japan.



Ambassador Sasae delivering remarks at the kickoff reception

## News from the Sister Cities

### Past Events

#### 2016 Hercules Fourth of July Origami Event

By Lynn Fissell, President/Treasurer, Hercules Sister City Association  
(Edited for length)

At the Fourth of July event in Hercules, the five Youth Ambassadors who will travel to Tsushima in July 2017 helped operate a booth, the main attraction of which was origami. Featured were some elaborately-crafted items among those that were made using traditional designs. Their efforts were rewarded with praise and the sales proceeds will be added to the funds that are expected to help offset their travel expenses.



Four of the five Youth Ambassadors working in the origami booth

## Past Events

### Rio Vista Sister Cities Students Visit Tobishima

By Ron Jones, Chair, Rio Vista Sister Cities Association (Edited for length)

On June 5, 12 seventh grade students from Riverview Middle School departed for a nine-day excursion to Tobishima. The 10 boys and two girls, along with two chaperones, landed in Osaka and traveled by bus to Kyoto for two days and three nights of sightseeing—castles, shrines, and temples...one even covered in gold! Having been thoroughly immersed in the culture of the ancient capital of Japan, the group boarded the train to Nagoya where they were greeted by their hosts for the 90-minute bus ride to Tobishima Village, population 4,500. The students were warmly accepted into Japanese family life while living as honored members of their host families. The following days were a fun-filled educational experience, with a day in school, visits to the fire station, and a bus tour of Nagoya, including stops at the aquarium and science museum.



*Rio Vista students enjoying posing with swords*

Back in Tobishima on the last (regrettably) day, there was a farewell at City Hall and a bus ride back to Nagoya to board the train (Shinkansen) to Osaka. Just a short flight of 5,413 miles and 10 hours later they were back at SFO riding BART, and finally their last leg of transit to Rio Vista! So far the feedback has been, "Wow, when can we go again?" On August 19, it will be our turn to host 33 eighth grade students from Tobishima.



*Rio Vista student trying his hand at calligraphy at a Tobishima school*

## Kawakami-Watsonville July 2016 Update

By Robb Mayeda, President, Kawakami Watsonville Sister City Association  
(Edited for length)

On May 10, 16 Watsonville middle schoolers left Mineta International Airport in San Jose and landed at Narita 16 hours later. The group was chaperoned by Lakeview Principal Dr. Rosa Hernandez and Watsonville-Aptos Adult School Assistant Principal Todd Livingstone. Rosa's daughter was one of the student representatives this year, and Todd chaperoned seven years ago, so he knew what to expect.

The students attended classes at Kawakami Junior High School and visited the two village elementary schools. Each of the three schools hosted a welcome assembly for our students. On Saturday, they visited Matsumoto Castle, which is two hours away in the same prefecture, Nagano. On Sunday, the Watsonville students and their host families had a barbecue in a mountain retreat. The area around Kawakami-mura features many mountain parks, resorts, and hiking areas. It is a destination for many of those live in urban areas but want to get away from the city for the weekend. One of the popular trends in Japan now is a "forest shower," which is basically a walk in the forest. Recent studies have shown that after a walk in a forested area, people's blood pressure and other vital signs are much improved. At the end of the visit, the group stayed in Tokyo for three days and two nights before returning to the US on September 18.

The Kawakami-mura students are scheduled to arrive in Watsonville on Tuesday, September 6 (the day after Labor Day) and will stay until early Monday morning, September 12.

There are many captioned photos on our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/kawakami2016](http://www.facebook.com/kawakami2016).



*Kawakami-mura and Watsonville kids at a mountain retreat in Nagano Prefecture*

## Past Events

### Bakersfield Sister City Youth Ambassadors Visit Wakayama

By Susan Stone, Wakayama Co-Chair,  
Bakersfield Sister City Project Corporation (Edited for length)

From June 8-17, eight students and two young adults from Bakersfield traveled to Wakayama as part of our Youth Ambassador Program. The group was led this year by Mrs. Susan Stone, BSCPC Past-President and Wakayama Committee Co-Chair, who initiated the program. All of the students and adults stayed with local Wakayama families during their visit.

The first full day of the visit began with Mayor Masahiro Obana, who welcomed the group and presented each of the delegation with gifts. From City Hall, it was an easy stroll to the Wakayama Historical Center, where this year's visit to Wakayama Castle included a new adventure—the chance to dress in Ninja costumes! After everyone had changed into these traditional outfits, the group headed up the steep path to the castle itself, taking time along the way to marvel at the beauty of the Momijidani Gardens and trying to make themselves invisible under the direction of a Ninja master. After touring the castle and taking in the panoramic views from the battlements of the central tower, the group returned to City Hall, where they enjoyed a delicious buffet lunch. The afternoon was spent at Joto Junior High School, where the students participated in English, music, and P.E. classes.



*The Bakersfield students practicing their ninja poses at Wakayama Castle*

The following day, the Wakayama International Relations Division planned a fun-filled day for the group. It began with a short bus ride to Kada, where the group visited Awashima Shrine—a very unique shrine for women, where hundreds of Hina dolls and other figurines are displayed. The group then boarded a ferry to Tomogashima Island, part of Sentonaikai National Park. The students especially enjoyed the chance to explore this island, which is said to have inspired the setting of Hayao Miyazaki's *Castle in the Sky*, an anime

film that many of them had seen. The students enjoyed wandering through the many WWII-era bunkers and tunnels, as well as clambering over the rocks to the tide pools and enjoying beautiful vistas from the hill where a lighthouse still stands. That evening, the Wakayama Sister City Affiliation Committee hosted a Welcome Party for the group, where the students performed rehearsed songs and dances for more than 80 people.

On Sunday, the final day of the visit, the delegation and their host families went on an excursion to Shirahama, where they visited Senjojiki (Thousand Tatami Mat cliffs), Sandanbeki (famous for its caves, once used by pirates), and ate lunch at a wonderful buffet restaurant overlooking the white-sand beaches of Shirahama. The highlight of the day was a glass-bottom boat ride. On Monday morning, after many tearful farewells and promises to keep in touch via e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, etc., the Bakersfield group departed for more adventures in Nara, Kyoto, and Hiroshima. But for everyone, the best part of the trip was the few days in Wakayama with their new friends and “families”.

### Sausalito Wins Award from Sister Cities International

Submitted by EV Gilbreath & Dina Hatchuel,  
Sausalito Sister Cities, Inc. (Edited for length)

In July, Sausalito Sister Cities, Inc. (SSCI) was awarded the 2016 SCI Best Overall Program Award for a city with a population under 25,000. This award recognizes sister city programs that demonstrated outstanding accomplishments in 2015 in advancing the goals and mission of the sister cities movement. In 2015, SSCI facilitated all sister cities partnerships for the City of Sausalito, prepared individuals for life in a multi-cultural world, and facilitated relationships that promote international trade for the Sausalito-area.



*Left to right: Sausalito Mayor Jill Hoffman, SCI Chairman Emeritus Bill Boerum, SSCI President Susan Roe*

Award winners were honored at the Lou Wozar Diplomatic Awards Dinner on July 16 during SCI's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in Washington, DC, and SCI Chairman Emeritus Bill Boerum delivered the award in person at SSCI's student welcome dinner on July 29.

## Past Events

### Cupertino's Talented Teenagers' Trip to Toyokawa

By Sarang Deshpande, Student Delegate,  
Cupertino Toyokawa Sister Cities Inc. (Edited for length)

This past June, a selected group of 14 students and two chaperones had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity of representing their city of Cupertino overseas in Japan as delegates. Beginning with their send-off from San Francisco International Airport, all the students sported joyful expressions filled with excitement. Part of their visit included a homestay with a Japanese family in Cupertino's beautiful sister city of Toyokawa, which included a Japanese delegate who will come to Cupertino in September. They spent the other half of their trip learning various aspects of Japanese culture by visiting Japanese temples, shrines, and castles in Nagoya, Kyoto, and Nara, as well as attending workshops to immerse themselves in Japanese art.

The city of Toyokawa kicked off the Cupertino students' time in their city with a bang by hosting a dinner reception. The students felt at home after hearing sincere speeches made by the Toyokawa speakers. With the mayor, city officials, host families, and Toyokawa student delegation in attendance, Cupertino's representatives had a blast chatting, eating, and, of course, performing. At the event, they presented their choreographed dance of American songs, one for each decade since the 1960s, for the audience. They executed the performance flawlessly and became the first group to successfully incorporate audience participation in their show! The night ended with lots of pictures, since this was the only event where all members of both delegations were present.



*Toyokawa mayor and city officials with Cupertino and Toyokawa student delegations*

During the delegation's visit to Kyoto, they visited the Kiyomizudera Temple. The pagoda temple, located at the top of a cliff, required a long, uphill walk to get to, but it was well worth it. Students were able to take in one of Kyoto's top attractions and historical sites. In addition, the view of the city from the top was gorgeous. They walked around for a little while to enjoy the nature and ambience of the beautiful temple area.

On the way down, the students were given freedom to shop at the small souvenir stores lining the pathway. They wound their way down going shop-to-shop, and many stopped for ice cream or a cold refreshing drink in the hot and humid Japanese summer.



*Cupertino delegation posing in front of Kiyomizudera Temple*

The students returned from their 10-day endeavor on July 8 and were welcomed with open arms by loving parents who missed their kids but couldn't wait to listen to all the stories. After all, the delegates had made plenty of memories from their voyage to share!

### Cross Cultural Closeness

By Claire Chen, 2016 S2I Participant, Sunnyvale Sister City Association  
(Edited for length)

From the very start of my trip to Iizuka in late June, my host family was amazing. They wanted me to have fun and live the Japanese life. The Hidakas welcomed me and made me feel like part of their family. During my stay I spent a lot of time with the kids—Sumina, Mitsunari, and Suzuna. We became great friends and they made sure I got the most out of life in Iizuka.



*Claire Chen (center) meets the Hidaka family for the first time*

The highlight of my trip came when the Hidaka family took me to a local temple for a traditional Japanese tea ceremony. The serene environment of the temple, the kindness of the hostess, the bitter green tea that Sumina, Suzuna and I shared, and a surprise earthquake left a deep impression on me!

## Future Events

### 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Fairfield Japan Fest

By Kelley Cortright, Event Chair, Fairfield-Nirasaki Sister City Program  
(Edited for length)



The Fairfield-Nirasaki Sister City Program will hold its 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Japan Fest fundraising event on Saturday, August 20. It will run from 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM at the Fairfield Community Center at 1000 Kentucky Street. People of all ages are welcome, and tickets will be available online or at the door.

There will be exciting performances and activities for all ages, as well as great food. Performers include Sakuraren, a traditional folkdance group, and a musical ensemble led by renowned koto artist Shirley Muramoto-Wong. Children and families can do origami and calligraphy, and learn about many other aspects of traditional Japanese culture, such as Ikebana, at our numerous activity and game tables. There will also be Japanese goods for sale.

The proceeds from last year's event also made it possible for the Program to host six Japanese students and a chaperone this past winter, continuing a 29 year-old tradition of winter and summer student exchanges between Fairfield and Nirasaki.

Please contact Event Chair Kelley Cortright at [fairfieldsistercity@gmail.com](mailto:fairfieldsistercity@gmail.com) for more information.

### Bakersfield-Wakayama Coming Attractions

By Susan Stone, Wakayama Co-Chair,  
Bakersfield Sister City Project Corporation (Edited for length)

#### 26<sup>th</sup> Wakayama Student Summer Cultural Study Visit

From August 4-9, 2016, BSCPC will be welcoming a group of 40 Wakayama junior high and high school students and their three chaperones for the 26<sup>th</sup> Wakayama Student Summer Cultural Study Visit. This student exchange program began in 1988, and became an annual program in 1993. All the students and adults will be staying with local Bakersfield families, including the families of students who visited Wakayama in June of this year. Activities planned for this year's visit include a visit to Cal State University, Bakersfield (hosted by staff from the Intensive English Language Program), a swim party at the McMurtrey Aquatic Center, a visit to Murray Family Farms, and the Third Sister City Olympics and Family Picnic on Sunday, August 7.

#### 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Visit by Wakayama Delegation

In celebration of the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Wakayama-Bakersfield sister city relationship, Mayor Masahiro Obana of Wakayama will lead a delegation of city officials to Bakersfield from October 25-27 of this year. Plans for this visit are still in the formative stages, but activities will include a gala dinner and a cherry tree planting ceremony at the Wakayama Pavilion of the Sister City Gardens at Mill Creek in Bakersfield.

### Call for Submissions



Have a story or event you'd like to share? Submit it for the next issue of the newsletter! The input from your organizations is what makes the newsletter informative and interesting. The deadline for the next issue is **September 5**. Please direct all submissions to: [kevin.odonnell@sr.mofa.go.jp](mailto:kevin.odonnell@sr.mofa.go.jp) in Word document format as an attachment. Pictures can be either pasted in the Word document or attached separately.

## Event Calendar

### July

- 7/2 Morgan Hill-Mizuho 10-Year Sister City Anniversary Celebration
- 7/13-16 Sister Cities International Annual Conference in Washington, DC
- 7/28 Mayor of Chichibu and student delegation visits Consulate  
Student delegation from Sakaide visits Consulate  
Welcome reception for Takko-machi Vice Mayor and delegation in Gilroy
- 7/29 Mayor of Warabi and student delegation visits El Dorado County  
Welcome reception for Sakaide student delegation in Sausalito
- 7/29-8/8 Fukuoka student delegation visits Oakland

### August

- 8/1-4 Mayor of Osaka visits San Francisco
- 8/3 Student delegation from Shimonoseki visits Consulate
- 8/10 Student delegation from Nanao visits Consulate
- 8/16 Student delegation from Kurume visits Consulate
- 8/19 Welcome reception for Iizuka student delegation in Sunnyvale
- 8/20 Fairfield Japan Fest

### September

- 9/24 Vallejo Sister City Association Annual International Dinner & Auction

### October

- Otsukimi Moon Viewing Party in Oakland