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News from the Consulate

SCI Gains Japanese Board Member

Actor and philanthropist Shin Koyamada was recently elected the new Young Professional Member of the Sister Cities International (SCI) Board of Directors and the official SCI Country Representative for Japan & Eastern Asia. Koyamada is the first native-born Japanese member of the Board. Last April, Shin attended the 60th Sister City Anniversary Celebration between the City of San Jose and his hometown of Okayama to support their sister city programs and learn more about getting involved. Koyamada became an international celebrity after co-starring in the Tom Cruise film "The Last Samurai." On the philanthropic front, Koyamada and his wife established a nonprofit foundation in 2008 dedicated to inspiring youth to pursue their dreams.



Shin Koyamada (center) at the SCI 61st Annual Conference in Virginia Beach, Virginia, with SCI Honorary Board Member Norm Mineta (left) and SCI Chair Tim Quigley (right)

News from the Sister Cities

Fairfield-Nirasaki

Japan Fest 2017 Fundraiser

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

The Fairfield-Nirasaki Sister City Program will hold its 5th Annual Japan Fest fundraising event on Saturday, August 19 from 11AM-3PM 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 Ensohza, a traditional folkdance group; Wesley Ukulele Band from San Jose; and the Sacramento Kendo Club. 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 and lunch for sale. The proceeds from last year's event enabled the Program to host six Japanese students and a chaperone this past winter, continuing a 30 year-old tradition of student exchanges between Fairfield and Nirasaki. Please contact Event Chair Kelley Cortright at fairfieldsistercity@gmail.com for more information.



Official poster art for Japan Fest

Modesto-Kurume 25th Anniversary Celebration

By Nancy Holmes, Kurume Committee VP, Modesto Sister Cities
(Edited for length)

A delegation of 32 people arrived in Modesto on Tuesday, May 16 and stayed until Friday, May 19. There were 21 in the Mayor’s group and 11 in the cultural group. The cultural group performed at local schools and at public events by providing fabulous demonstrations of Japanese stringed instruments, calligraphy, painting, and kimono dressing. They were very well received at a local grade school and at Modesto High School where over 500 students were able to experience the presentations.



Kurume Mayor Narahara with Modesto Mayor Brandvold

Kurume Mayor Narahara and the official group met with Modesto Mayor Brandvold, shared information with Jennifer from the Visitor’s Bureau, and met with many city officials. A highlight of the visit was a private tour of Modesto’s Gallo Family Winery. They were also guests at Sciabica Olive Oil. Commemorating the anniversary, a Ginkgo biloba tree was planted at Modesto Junior College West Campus. All guests were honored at a dinner reception at the home of Garrad and Dallas Marsh and a dinner reception at Reed Car Museum where over 40 classic cars were on display. A public reception was held at the McHenry Museum where proclamations and gifts were exchanged between Modesto and Kurume. A much honored guest at the reception was Consul General Yamada.



Kurume Mayor's delegation with Modesto Mayor Brandvold and MSI President Adrian Harrell

The delegation was kept very busy during the short stay. Many friendships were made and we look forward to celebrating our 30th anniversary five years from now with a delegation from Modesto to Kurume!

Hercules-Tsushima

Hercules Friendship Delegation to Visit Tsushima

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

Since their selection in January 2016 by the Hercules Sister City Association as Youth Ambassadors, four Hercules High School students have been conducting fundraising events, the last of which was an origami and flag booth at the 4th of July event in Hercules. They have been learning a speech about themselves in Japanese as well as absorbing many Japanese customs that will prepare them for their trip to Japan during the last two weeks of July 2017. Accompanied by one adult chaperone (Lynn Fissell, HSCA President/Treasurer), their homestay experience in Tsushima will include many events such as the Owari Tsushima Tenno Festival and tours of selected cultural sites. At a farewell potluck, the Hercules Friendship Delegation will meet the student members of the Tsushima Friendship Delegation that will visit Hercules in early August 2018. After leaving Tsushima, travel to and tours of Hiroshima, Kyoto, and Tokyo will round out the Delegation’s immersion in Japanese history and culture.



Youth Ambassadors pose in front of their origami and flag booth at the Hercules 4th of July event

What makes a good delegate?

By Dina Hatchuel, Sausalito-Sakaide Program Director,
Sausalito Sister Cities, Inc. (Edited for length)

As we embarked on the 2017 recruitment and selection of our delegates going to Japan this year, we asked ourselves two questions. What makes a good delegate and what makes a good delegation? Once the delegates were selected we decided to ask them and their parents these same questions. Here is a partial list of the feedback collected:

A good delegate:

- Displays respect
- Stays active and involved
- Is cooperative
- Is open minded
- Is willing to try new foods and activities
- Can communicate using physical gestures
- Is open and flexible
- Is hardworking
- Is patient especially with language barriers
- Has a sense of humor
- Is friendly and kind to host family
- Follows the rules
- Is friendly and kind to other delegates
- Is observant
- Is confident
- Is responsible for self and belongings
- Has manners and is polite
- Acknowledges cultural differences
- Is punctual
- Is a team player
- Asks question to learn and understand
- Is a good / hardworking student
- Active and creative participant in our society--volunteers, has a job, builds skills
- Has fun

Identifying these characteristics can assist with:

- recruiting and developing an outline of program expectations for potential candidates
- ensuring relevant questions in application forms, interviews, and selection
- preparing the delegation for their trip

Our 2017 student exchange delegation left on July 28th with our Vice Mayor, two chaperones, and the Program Committee Chair. After they return on August 9th they will prepare a presentation about their experiences for the community.

A Long Awaited Trip

By Lauren Becker, S2I 2017 participant, Sunnyvale Sister City Association
(Edited for length)

My family started hosting lizuka students three years ago, and I've looked forward to visiting Japan ever since. Japan was everything I hoped it would be! Two days in Tokyo made a great start to the trip. The people in lizuka were very welcoming and friendly. My host family took great care of me and now I miss them like a second family! I loved all of the food, but my favorite part of the trip was attending school. It's very different than school in Sunnyvale, especially since we helped serve lunch and cleaned the classroom. I can't wait to visit again!



Flashing peace signs with a newly met host family in lizuka

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 6**. Please direct all submissions to: 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

- 7/19-30 Hercules Friendship Delegation travels to Tsushima
- 7/23 Farewell reception for Sausalito student delegation to Sakaide
- 7/28-30 Takko-machi delegation participaties in Gilroy Garlic Festival

August

- 8/2 Shimonoseki students visit the Consulate
- 8/16 Kurume students visit the Consulate
- 8/19 Japan Fest in Fairfield
- 8/18-20 Tobishima-mura Mayor and delegation visit Rio Vista

September

- 7/19-30 Hercules Friendship Delegation travels to Tsushima

October

- 8/18-20 Tobishima-mura Mayor and delegation visit Rio Vista