

La Crosse Sister Cities

La Crosse is fortunate to have Sister City relationships with seven cities around the world.

These cities include Bantry, Ireland; Dubna, Russia; Epinal, France; Førde, Norway; Friedberg, Germany; Luoyang, China; and The Republic of Cameroon, Kumbo, West Africa.

Each of these relationships is unique and features cooperative efforts in such diverse activities as health care, education, sports, the arts, government agencies and public policy, business, and many others

La Crosse's business activity along with the varied cultural backgrounds of the citizens has resulted in an environment that makes foreign visitors welcome and is supportive of a variety of cultural activities and events. Many of these events are supported and coordinated by the City's International Committee.

The International Committee has representation from each of our Sister Cities and from citizens interested in promoting international awareness and citizen diplomacy.

International Committee

The City of La Crosse International Committee exists as an umbrella committee to advise the Mayor and City Council and to act as a resource on international matters, to advise and to recommend future Sister City relationships, and to coordinate activities among the La Crosse Sister City Committees. The Committee is responsible for keeping alive our locally rich and diverse cultural heritage, for raising awareness of international connections available in the La Crosse area, and for fostering positive relations with citizens in other countries. The Sister/Partner/Twinned Cities include Republic of Cameroon, Kumbo, West Africa; Epinal, France; Dubna, Russia; Luoyang, China; Friedberg, Germany; Forde, Norway; and Bantry, Ireland.

Riverside International Friendship Gardens

The Riverside International Friendship Gardens are located on a 1.2 acre site just east of the La Crosse Convention & Visitor's Bureau at Riverside Park. The Friendship Gardens have been made possible through a unique public/private partnership. Partners include the City of La Crosse Parks Department, the Bluff Country Master Gardeners, and the Riverside International Friendship Gardens Board of Directors. The City of La Crosse has provided land and additional resources and expertise to ensure the ongoing success of the gardens. The Bluff Country Master Gardeners have provided expertise in design and horticulture, as well as leadership in planting and maintaining the gardens. The RIFG Board of Directors provides overall direction and fundraising for the gardens.

Chicago Sister Cities

Chicago has 28 Sister Cities which include: Accra, Ghana; Amman, Jordan; Athens, Greece; Belgrade, Serbia; Birmingham, United Kingdom; Bogota, Colombia; Busan, Republic of Korea; Casablanca, Morocco; Delhi, India; Durba, South Africa; Galway, Ireland; Gothenbury, Sweden; Hamburg, Germany; Kyiv, Ukraine; Lahore, Pakistan; Lucerne, Switzerland; Mexico City, Mexico; Milan, Italy; Moscow, Russia; Osaka, Japan; Paris, France; Petachtikva, Israel; Prague, Czech Republic; Shanghai, China; Shenyang, China; Toronto, Canada; Vilnius, Lithuania; Warsaw, Poland.

Mission

Chicago Sister Cities International is committed to promoting Chicago as a global city, developing international partnerships and networks, and sharing best practices through citizen-to-citizen connections.

History of CSCI

Honorary Chairman – Mayor Rahm Emanuel

In 1960, Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley signed the first Sister Cities agreement with Warsaw, Poland. In the 1970s and 1980s, Chicago signed with seven additional Sister Cities. In 1990, former Mayor Richard M. Daley enacted an executive order to establish a volunteer Board of Directors, launching over 20 years of increased community engagement and a rapid growth in Sister City relationships. Since then Chicago has established official relationships with a total of 28 cities in almost every region of the world. Today, Chicago Sister Cities International is the most active Sister Cities organization in the world. Operating under the guidelines established by Sister Cities International, the program has greatly impacted Chicago's international activity and its status as a leading global city.

On April 1, 2013, Chicago Sister Cities International merged with World Business Chicago. The newly merged organization binds Chicago's international programming with its global economic development arm by aligning the inherent commonalities that exist between CSCI and WBC. Chicago Sister Cities International continues to operate under its own name and branding, but now as a division of World Business Chicago.

Advisory Board

The Advisory Board is composed of eight individuals from the following companies/organizations; JPMorgan Chase & Co., World Business Chicago, Lahore Committee of Council representatives, Motorola Solutions, United Airlines and Boeing.

Council of Chairs

The Council of Chairs is comprised of the chairs and vice-chairs of Chicago Sister Cities International committees. Each sister city relationship has a corresponding committee of volunteers who actively work on promoting exchanges between the two cities. In addition, three committees are focused on topic-driven issues.

Staff

The Chicago Sister Cities International organization has six staff. They are the Executive Director, Deputy Director, Director of International Programs, two Senior Managers of International Programs and a Manager of International Programs.

Initiatives

Humanitarian Committee

The Humanitarian Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International is committed to developing international partnerships that provide funding and support to organizations and people in need in Chicago and our international network of sister cities.

The Humanitarian Committee facilitated the donation of over \$500,000 worth of hearing aids to children in Casablanca, Morocco and Amman, Jordan. In addition, the Committee has supported programs benefiting UNICEF, After School Matters and the King Hussein Cancer Center in Jordan.

Healthcare Committee

The Healthcare Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International provides a forum for health care professionals to share best practices as it pertains to global medicine. The Healthcare Committee has established a strong partnership with the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University. The partnership has successfully brought physicians from throughout our network of 28 sister cities to Chicago as part of the Chicago Sister Cities Medical Initiative Program to attend the Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Symposium in 2009, 2011 and 2012.

Social Services Committee

The Social Services Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International works to bring together social services professionals from around the world to share best practices and discuss policies that address global social problems. The Social Services Committee has set up a Social Service Exchange Program that serves as a conduit for cultural discourse, mutual sharing of professional social service knowledge skills and cultural experiences to enhance social services

in our global community. The Social Service Committee has initiated exchanges with Birmingham, England; Hamburg, Germany; Osaka, Japan; and Paris, France. Kathleen Borland, Chair of the Social Services Committee, received the 2011 Volunteer of the Year Award from Sister Cities International for her work with the committee.

Délice Network

As Chicago is known as a city of gastronomical excellence, the city is a member of the Délice Network of Good Food Cities. Délice is an international network of likeminded cities engaged in promoting the benefits of culinary excellence and good food. Created in 2007 by the City of Lyon in France, Délice is comprised of 18 cities from 4 continents and offers a platform to exchange and meet with chefs and gastronomy professionals from around the world. Chicago's membership in Délice is administered for the City of Chicago by Chicago Sister Cities International and the Illinois Restaurant Association.

Resouces

Sponsorship

Chicago Sister Cities International offers organizations numerous sponsorship opportunities throughout the year. From our organization-wide events like our International Festival and the Chicago Consular Corps Ball to specific committee events, we reach hundreds of thousands of people throughout the Chicago community and world each year.

Sponsorship of our programming provides a strong and visible message reflecting your organization's commitment to promoting international alliances in the world of business, culture, education, immigration, tourism and humanitarian causes.

The trusting relationships we have built on a global scale are a vital asset in securing foreign direct investment in the region we call home, and civic leaders recognize the value of the 50+ year legacy we have built.

Volunteers

For over 50 years, Chicago Sister Cities International has relied on passionate, dedicated volunteers to build a rich legacy of cultural, educational and economic bridges that have developed Chicago's global identity. Volunteers generously sharing their time and creativity have always been the essential element of our success.

As a volunteer-based organization, we greatly value the work of the more than 800 volunteers who commit their time to our organization. Chicago Sister Cities International is made up of 30 volunteer committees representing our 28 sister cities and initiatives in the areas of healthcare, humanitarian efforts and social services. These committees develop programming and initiatives to further the goals and mission of the organization.