
SISTER CITIES OF WILMINGTON, INC. WINS SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL'S INNOVATION AWARD FOR YOUTH AND EDUCATION

WASHINGTON, DC – Sister Cities of Wilmington, Inc. (SCW) has won Sister Cities International's (SCI) 2016 Innovation Award for Youth and Education for a city with a population less than 100,000. The 2016 Sister Cities International Innovation Award for Youth and Education recognizes the accomplishments of outstanding community and individual sister city programs that promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation.

The Wilmington Children's Chorus is a multi-cultural children's choir founded by the City of Wilmington, under James M. Baker, Mayor, as a project of *Cityfest, Inc.*, in the Office of Cultural Affairs. The WCC currently involves more than 150 youth, ages 8-18, in 5 ensembles.

The WCC's 2015 exchange visit to Fulda began with pre-tour language and cultural training for the participating students, a total of 47 high-school age members of the organization's Chamber Choir. Staff and volunteers provided musical and general cultural background of Germany, as well as some contemporary history, and some basic German words and phrases. The youth stayed with host families and revisited old friendships with KdjF members whom they and their own families had hosted during the Orchestra's 2013 return visit to Wilmington.

Fulda Lord Mayor Gerhard Moeller hosted a luncheon reception for both the Choir and Orchestra groups and various local guests in the Stadtschloss, a noble Baroque palace now re-purposed as the town hall. The Choir entertained the audience with their signature song of greeting, the South African "We enter and the spirit is moved," as well as one or two brief selections from the music they had prepared for the trip. This and other days also included collaborative rehearsals with the KdjF at several venues around town.

All of the rehearsals culminated in a collaborative concert by the Chorus and Orchestra in the nearby 18th century Klosterkirch am Frauenberg. Sponsored by the KdjF, the concert was free and open to the public, and drew a full house of 200 guests, friends, and family, plus the combined Chorus and Orchestra. The program comprised music spanning the 17th through the 20th centuries from both the American and European continents, including Mozart, Engelbert Humperdinck, and Aaron Copland, as well as three show and traditional American songs.

SCI's Annual Awards are awarded in several categories including Best Overall, Innovation (Arts and Culture, Economic Development, Humanitarian Assistance, and Youth and Education), and Volunteer of the Year. Award winners will be honored at the Lou Wozar Diplomatic Awards Dinner on Saturday, July 16 during SCI's 60th Anniversary Celebration in Washington, DC.

SCI's 60th anniversary celebration will include an [Annual Conference](#) and [Youth Leadership Summit](#) in Washington, DC July 13-16, 2016. The celebration will bring together hundreds of the most influential global leaders in diplomacy, foreign affairs, policy, business, and innovation. Elected and municipal officials, business leaders, youth delegates, and citizen diplomats will discuss this year's theme "Peace through People," building on President Eisenhower's initial vision of creating a more peaceful world by building global relationships.

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About Sister Cities International

Founded as a Presidential Initiative by Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956, Sister Cities International serves as the national membership organization for 570 member communities with 2,300 partnerships in 150 countries on six continents. The sister city network unites tens of thousands of citizen diplomats and volunteers who work tirelessly to promote the organizations' mission of creating world peace and understanding through economic development, youth and education, arts and culture, and humanitarian assistance.

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