

## **GREATER COLUMBUS SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL WINS SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL'S AWARD FOR INNOVATION IN ARTS AND CULTURE**

WASHINGTON, DC – Greater Columbus Sister Cities International (GCSCI) has won the Sister Cities International 2018 Innovation Award for Arts and Culture for a city with a population greater than 100,000. The awards competition, which is open to over 500 sister city programs nationwide, recognizes the accomplishments of outstanding individuals and community sister city programs that are promoting peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation.

GCSCI was selected for the *Thousand People* project which took place in Columbus from March 25-April 9. Thanks to the generous support from Columbus City Council, GCSCI was able to host Emanuele Timothy Costa, a photographer from the Columbus Sister City of Genoa, Italy. For two weeks, Costa's portraits from the *Thousand People of Genoa* project were displayed at the Cultural Arts Center, John Glenn International Airport, the Columbus Museum of Art, the Greater Columbus Convention Center and Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. While in Columbus, Costa began a new chapter in this project where he photographed over 1,400 Columbus residents for an exhibit which will be displayed in Genoa in 2019.

"We all stand to learn from these superstar Sister City programs as they impact their communities across a broad range of sectors that include business entrepreneurship, youth leadership, and arts and culture," said Roger-Mark De Souza, Sister Cities International's President & CEO. "These individuals and local organizations inspire us to be better citizens as their work exemplifies President Eisenhower's vision of engaged international citizen diplomats. They create beneficial connections and lasting relationships which will help their communities today and for years to come."

Sister Cities International Annual Awards recognize excellence in overall programming and highlight key innovations in arts and culture; business and trade; humanitarian assistance; youth and education; and professional and technical exchange categories. This year they will honor all our award winners during SCI's 2018 Annual Conference from August 2-4<sup>th</sup> in Aurora, Colorado.

The conference will bring together hundreds of the most influential citizen diplomats and global leaders in diplomacy, foreign affairs, policy, business, and innovation to discuss, share examples, and network. This year's theme, *Cities Leading the Way*, will focus on smart and resilient cities, leadership development, and entrepreneurship as key building blocks of President Eisenhower's vision of creating a more peaceful world through citizen engagement and international cooperation between cities.

Founded as a Presidential Initiative by Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956, Sister Cities International serves as the national membership organization for 500 member communities with over 2,000 partnerships in more than 140 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 programs and projects focusing on arts and culture, youth and education, business and trade, and community development.

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### **About Greater Columbus Sister Cities International**

GCSCI is a nonprofit organization that enhances the quality of life of the Greater Columbus region and its global network of sister cities through the development and advocacy of engagement and exchange.