



# ANNUAL REPORT



CONNECTING GLOBALLY.  
THRIVING LOCALLY

# IMPACTING THE WORLD FOR OVER 36 YEARS

BANDUNG, INDONESIA

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

GUIYANG, CHINA

MBABANE, ESWATINI

NAGAOKA, JAPAN

NÎMES, FRANCE

REGGIO EMILIA, ITALY

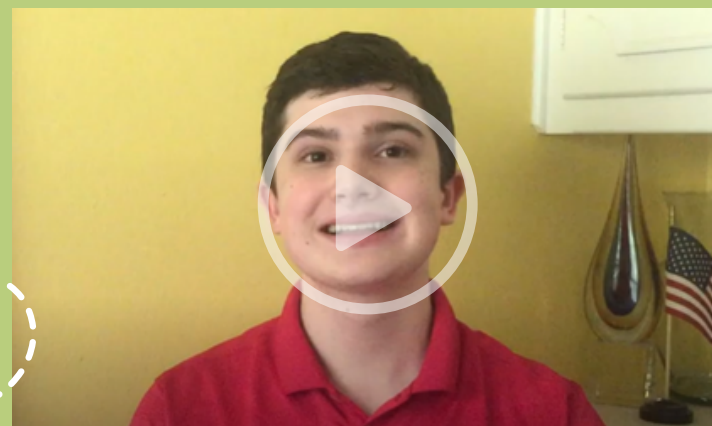
TOLUCA, MEXICO

TRIER, GERMANY



# 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

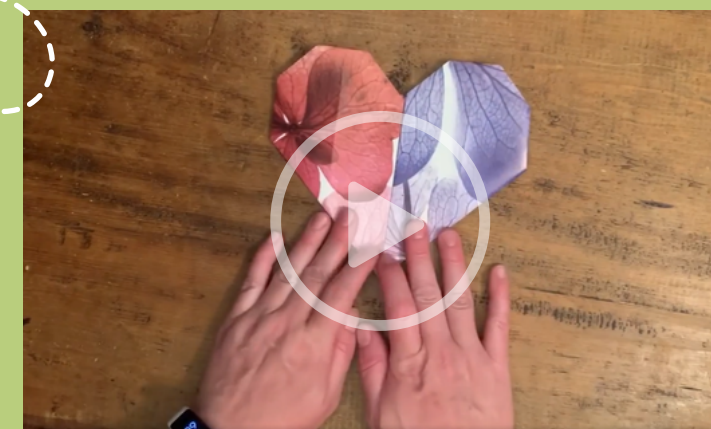
Recognized as Best Overall Program in the nation for the 10th time. Youth board member Will Lourcey given the Outstanding Youth Leadership Award.



Celebrated 35th anniversary with Reggio Emilia, Italy through historical video production.



Hosted virtual Annual Meeting with public television host and best-selling guidebook author Rick Steves attended by 400+



Launched 35 Things in 35 Days unique social media campaign featuring cultures of all nine of Fort Worth's sister cities

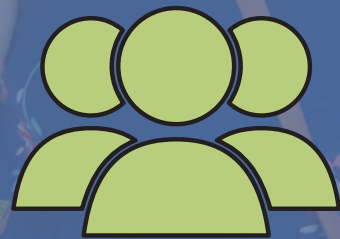
Enjoy a brief look at 2020!

# 2020 IMPACT



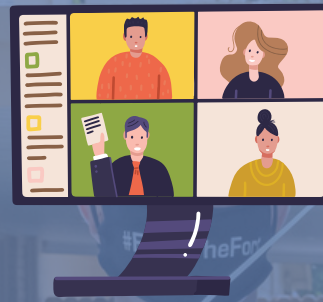
8

IN-PERSON  
PROGRAMS &  
EXCHANGES



645

ADULTS  
INVOLVED



33

VIRTUAL  
PROGRAMS &  
EXCHANGES



150

YOUTH  
INVOLVED



\$17,031

SCHOLARSHIPS  
RAISED



\$14 MM

ECONOMIC  
IMPACT



# OUR VALUE

Fort Worth Sister Cities is the preferred resource for international relations because of:

- Deep, long-standing relationships with international leaders and partners
- Expertise in protocol and intercultural competency
- Access to local internationally focused resources
- Access to international network of sister city programs, embassies, NGOs and US Dept. of State
- Powerful and effective outcome-based programming supported by evaluation and research
- Committed volunteers with expertise in international relations
- Personal relationships with citizens from other countries



# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the fiscal year ended September 30, 2020

Statement of Financial Position

Total Assets	\$	599,906
Total Liabilities		153,579
Total Net Assets		446,327
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$	599,906

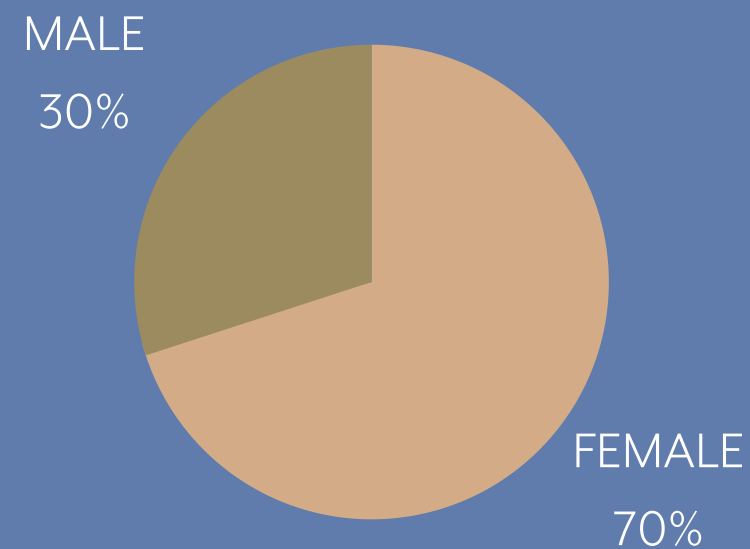
Statement of Financial Activities

Total Revenue and other support	\$	603,942
Expenses		
• Programs and Exchanges	\$	507,402
• Fundraising		39,819
• General and Administrative		71,629
Total Expenses		618,850
Changes in Net Assets		(14,908)
Net Assets at Beginning of Year		453,959
Net Unrealized Gains (Losses) on Investments		(37,674)
Donated Services and Use of Facilities		44,950
Net Assets at End of Year	\$	446,327

The financial information presented here represents a portion of the financial statements of the Association. Unaudited financial statements are available upon request.



# WHO ARE OUR STUDENTS?



10%	Asian
10%	Black
50%	Latino/Hispanic
30%	Multiracial

## OUTCOMES FROM EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

87%	Increased cultural awareness
86%	Increased awareness of global issues
88%	Expanded knowledge of other cultures
71%	Improved problem-solving skills
63%	Felt more self-sufficient

# WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?



Reshma Niraula  
Youth Ambassador

"I believe that Fort Worth Sister Cities International has helped me become a global citizen. I'm more aware and knowledgeable of different traditions of people around the world. Sister Cities has helped me develop connections globally, and I am thankful to be a better version of myself because of it."



Will Lourcey  
Youth President

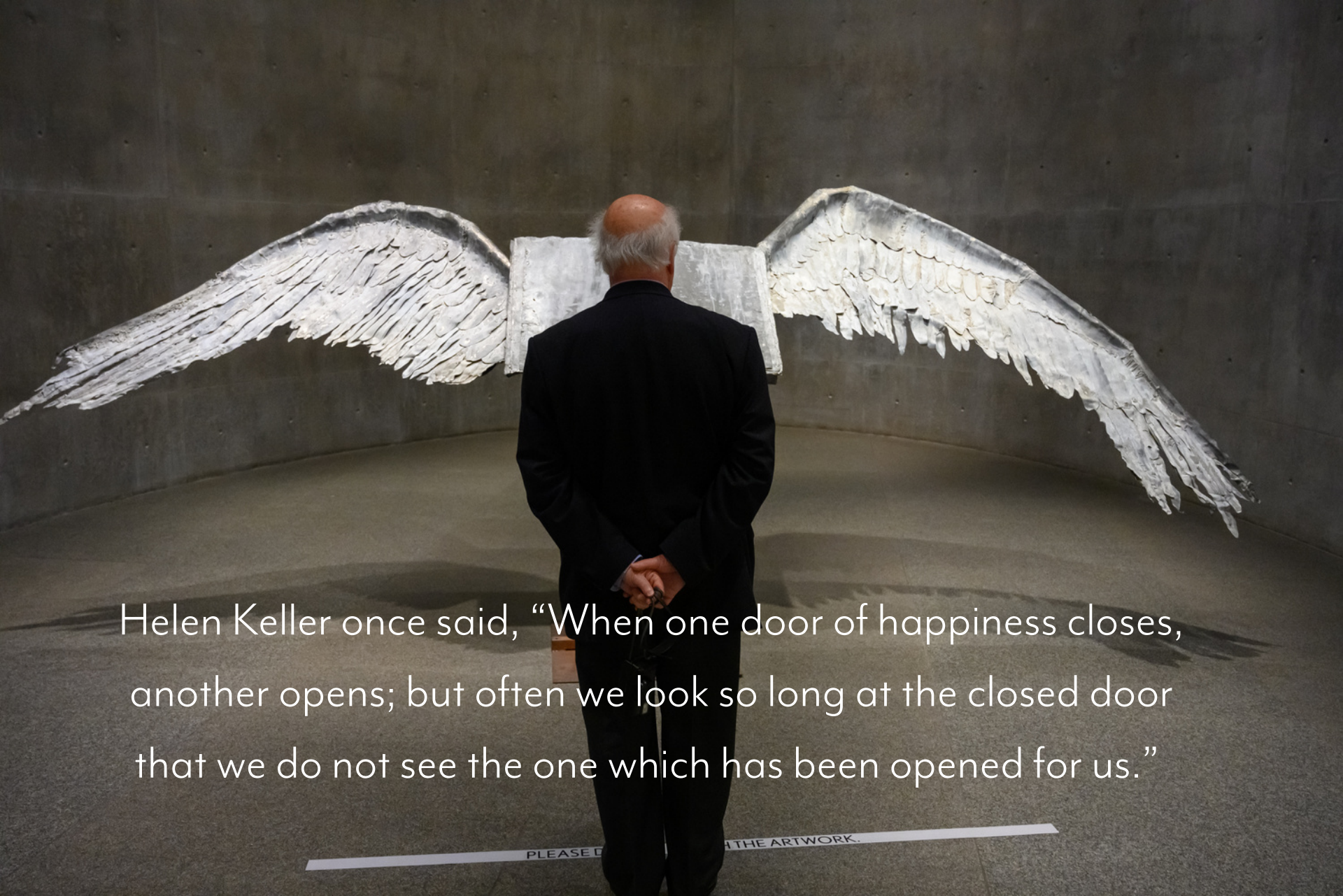
"Sister Cities has been a revelatory experience for me and has given me great insight into the cultures of the world, as well as embracing the culture of my own community. My travels to France and Japan have helped me to realize my passion for foreign relations."



Nyasha Muwalo  
Youth Ambassador

"Sister Cities has changed the world for the better by teaching people to be open-minded. This erases negative misconceptions about other cultures and enables people to truly get to know one another. Traveling to Hungary and Indonesia -- countries I virtually knew nothing about -- helped me realize that every culture is amazing. "

# RISING TOGETHER



Helen Keller once said, “When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.”

In March of 2020, it seemed as though the doors to the world were slamming shut for all of us. Travel stopped, schools went virtual, offices closed, birthday parties and weddings were canceled, dining in restaurants suddenly became life-threatening events, as did visiting with loved ones and relatives.

Reeling from the shock of having our day-to-day lives upended, we stared at that closed door, hoping, and wondering when it would open again. Many people suddenly felt very disconnected, but Fort Worth Sister Cities International, an organization that focuses on making connections that make change, had some very important work to do, and we found another door.

We discovered a different way to make a difference. International travel may have stopped, but our ability to connect and build relationships grew. We used virtual resources to maintain connections with our sister cities which is often difficult. We created new curriculum for youth programs and engaged adults in unique opportunities they may not have been able to enjoy any other way. One of our proudest accomplishments in 2020 was the donation of an ambulance from MedStar Mobile Healthcare and gloves and masks donated from Texas Health Resources for our friends in Toluca, Mexico.

We are incredibly proud of our ability to flex to the needs of our community and in spite of the uncertainty created by the global pandemic, our focus now is on the future. We are focused on emerging from this pandemic with a clear sense of purpose. To solidify our purpose, we have been asking hard questions. Why are we valuable to the City of Fort Worth? What benefits do we provide to our members, our students, and our community? And, we’ve answered those questions.



We are valuable to the city of Fort Worth and our community because we serve as the leading authority on international relations from protocols to relationship building and cultural competency. We leverage our connected network, our members, our youth, and our local community to make connections and build relationships that change lives, uncover opportunities, serve humanity, and foster peace and prosperity both locally and abroad.

For over 35 years, we have connected people around the world. That is a statement that seems both simple and complex at the same time. You can read about our exchanges and get a small taste of what we do, but that doesn't give you a true sense of the impact. That doesn't show you the high school student who nervously traveled to Nagaoka, Japan for the first time and felt a world of opportunity open up for her, so much so that she majored in international business and now works in foreign affairs. It doesn't show you the young man in Toluca, Mexico whose mother escaped a violent situation in an ambulance that was recently donated to their community. It doesn't show the economic impact of a small Fort Worth business that dreamed of expanding globally and made a powerful business connection because they received protocol training and participated in a business exchange.

To fully understand the value of Fort Worth Sister Cities International, you must dive into each story and there are over 35 years' worth of stories. At Sister Cities, the door to our future is wide open. We hope that you will walk through it with us and help us continue the story.



From left to right: Councilman Carlos Flores; Fort Worth Sister Cities International President/CEO Mae Ferguson; Daniel Guerrero Gomez, Toluca, Mexico representative; Toluca Chair Florence Bruner; Councilman Brian Byrd; Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber President/CEO Anette Soto Landeros

*Rachel DeLira-Pie*

One of our proudest accomplishments in 2020 was the donation of an ambulance from MedStar Mobile Healthcare and gloves and masks donated from Texas Health Resources for our friends in Toluca, Mexico.

# WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING?



Nyja & Richard Roby  
Reggio Emilia Chairs

“Because of our involvement with Sister Cities, we’ve learned the importance of international exchange and how it can grow into commerce. Our view of other cultures has indeed improved because of the expanded international relationships we’ve been able to cultivate. Sister Cities is dedicated to providing students with global experiences that will be with them for a lifetime.”



Bob Jameson  
President/CEO, Visit Fort Worth

"Fort Worth Sister Cities International is a vital partner in bringing global perspectives to our city. First impressions make a big difference. So we rely on Sister Cities training for our hospitality team to ensure we deliver a Texas welcome in a culturally sensitive way."



Rachel Malone  
Nîmes Chair

“When speaking with a French woman visiting Fort Worth, she told me she admired American patriotism. Flags everywhere. Singing the anthem at sporting events. People wearing flag pins. The discussion made me realize how proud I am to be an American. We learn about other cultures, and in doing so, we learn more about ourselves.”

## LOCAL AWARDS

- Bob Bolen Award for Outstanding Board Leadership – Libby Watson
- Eisenhower Award for Organizational Involvement – Junior League of Fort Worth
- Volunteer of the Year – Terri West



## NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

- Best Overall Program (2019, 2017, 2011, 2009, 2007, 2003, 2001, 1998, 1992, 1990)
- Youth Leadership Award: Will Lourcey (2019)
- Innovation in Business & Trade (2018)
- Ruth Hashimoto Award: Mary Palko (2018)
- Chairman's Award: Mary Palko and Carlo Capua (2018)
- President's Award: Mary Palko (2017, 2006)
- Chairman's Award: Mae Ferguson (2017, 2008)
- Innovation in Humanitarian Assistance (2016, 2012, 2009, 2008, 2004)
- Youth Leadership Award: Kalkidan Alemu (2016)
- Ruth Hashimoto Award: Michael S. Hyatt (2016)
- Youth Leadership Award: Bogdana Oliynyk (2014)
- U.S. China Sister Cities Youth Award (2014)
- Innovation in Arts & Culture (2010)
- Innovation in Youth & Education (2010, 2003, 2002)
- United Nations Peace Award for Most Positive City - Top 5 Finalist (2010)
- Volunteer of the Year: Shinichi Hara (2007)
- Volunteer of the Year: Elaine Yamagata (2005)
- Sister Cities 50th Anniversary Award (2005)
- Innovation in Public Safety (2003)
- Volunteer of the Year: Mary Palko (1999)
- Special Achievement Awards in Education (1996)
- Reader's Digest Award for Best Overall Youth Program (1991)
- Sales and Marketing Executive Award (1990)
- Neighborhood USA Award (1989)
- Reader's Digest Award for Best New Program and Most Community Involvement (1988, 1986)



# 2020-21 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## City Council Liasons:

Bandung, Indonesia - Jungus Jordan  
Budapest, Hungary - Ann Zadeh  
Guiyang, China - Carlos Flores  
Mbabane, Eswatini - Kelly Allen Gray  
Nimes, France - Brian Byrd  
Nagaoka, Japan - Cary Moon  
Reggio Emilia, Italy - Gyna Bivens  
Toluca, Mexico - Betsy Price  
Trier, Germany - Dennis Shingleton

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Beth Weibel, Senior Program Manager  
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Robert Sturns  
Valerie Washington



## OUR MISSION

To promote Fort Worth globally and enrich our community through international education, exchange and commerce, creating a more peaceful and prosperous world.

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## OUR VISION

To be recognized as a Center for International Relations (CIR). The CIR is envisioned as follows:

- Serves as a hub, center, connector, leader for activities and education related to international relations in Fort Worth
  - Over time, will add services that increase access by citizens and will generate fees for service
- 

## OUR FOCUS

Cultural Competency - The ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures for youth, adults and organizations



# 2020 was a challenging year and we are so grateful for the generous support of the Members Circle of Giving.

\*Three-year sustaining member

## PLATINUM - \$25,000

Visit Fort Worth\*

## PREMIER - \$15,000+

Rae & Michael S. Hyatt\*  
Texas Health Resources

## GLOBAL - \$10,000+

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# LOOKING FORWARD

While our first adult trip will not occur until February 2022 to Toluca, Mexico to see the monarch butterflies, we are setting all the wheels in motion to, like the butterflies, emerge from our cocoons and take off! Youth exchanges will resume in March 2022 with applications and interviews set for fall 2021. Other trips are also being planned so join us:

April 14 -25, 2022 - Trip to Reggio Emilia and wine tour of Italy

Sept. 15-26, 2022 - Visit to Nimes and art lovers tour of southern France

Stay tuned and join us as we renew friendships and create new ones around the world.

[www.fwsistercities.org](http://www.fwsistercities.org)



CONNECTING GLOBALLY.  
THRIVING LOCALLY