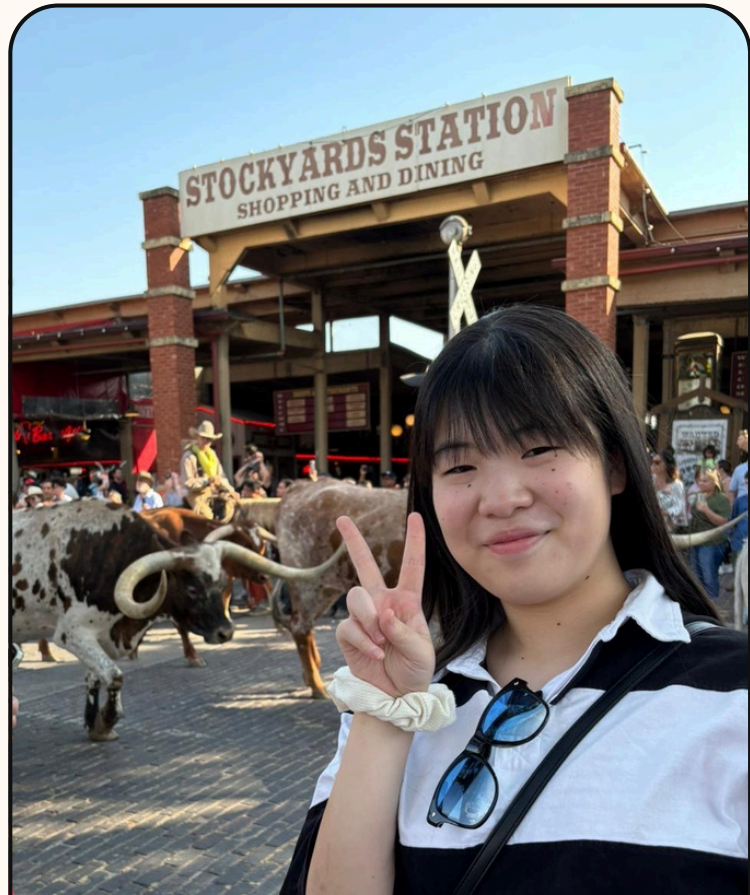


2024

ANNUAL REPORT







# BECAUSE THE ULTIMATE DESTINATION IS UNDERSTANDING

CONNECTING GLOBALLY. THRIVING LOCALLY.



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# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



2024 was a transformative year for Fort Worth Sister Cities International as we deepened our impact locally and globally. We were honored with the prestigious Youth & Education Award from Sister Cities International, recognizing our commitment to fostering cross-cultural understanding and global citizenship.

We honored the retirement of Mae Ferguson, President and CEO of Fort Worth Sister Cities for 25 very successful years. We looked forward as we enthusiastically welcomed Kippen de Alba Chu as our new President and CEO.

We piloted the Global Leaders in Action program, connecting youth across three countries and reaching over 871 underserved students in Fort Worth. These initiatives not only enrich individual lives but also strengthen the cultural fabric of our city, fostering empathy, leadership, and collaboration among future global leaders. Our youth exchanges sent 71 students abroad to six countries, while locally, we hosted students from France and engaged with refugee families through service projects. One of our young artists won the international grand prize in the Young Artists and Authors Showcase, a testament to Fort Worth's talent on the global stage.

Adult exchanges included delegations from Eswatini, Mexico, China, and Estonia, and our partnership with Calgary, Canada explored future international ties. These programs empower participants to forge meaningful connections, share best practices, and address global challenges collaboratively. Locally, our community came together through cultural celebrations like Kodomo No Hi, Bastille Day, and the Lunar New Year, while partnerships with organizations like the Kimbell and Fort Worth Opera highlighted the city's vibrant global connections.

Our education initiatives flourished, engaging 40 educators in curriculum development and hosting a Dual Language Camp for 107 students. By providing resources and professional development opportunities for educators, we ensure that global perspectives are seamlessly integrated into Fort Worth classrooms, equipping students to thrive in an interconnected world.

As we reflect on this remarkable year, it's clear that these programs are vital not only for those who participate but also for the communities they touch. By connecting Fort Worth to the world, we continue to build bridges of friendship, trust, and collaboration—essential for a peaceful and prosperous future.

We look forward to building on this momentum in 2025, continuing to connect Fort Worth to the world.



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# MEET THE PRESIDENT



Born and raised in Hawaii, I have spent countless hours on and in the water regardless of whether it was at a beach or in a pool. This has given me the perspective that our world is actually an ocean continent separated by land masses and not the other way around. In order to navigate such vast distances, one has to account for a myriad of factors (context) and rely on many kinds of relationships (networking) in order to reach a destination. So, when I reflect upon my career of 16 years in nonprofits, preceded by 14 years in the political arena, what emerges as a common thread throughout is strategic thinking and network building. And my fair share of ear infections.

My professional journey started as a staff member for the Hawaii State House of Representatives where I learned the value of patience and compromise. Transitioning to the nonprofit sector, I was hired to lead Iolani Palace, a National Historic Landmark in Downtown Honolulu that served as the official royal residence for the Hawaiian monarchy. In early 2019, I landed at the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History as Chief of Staff. A year later, the pandemic shut us down, causing significant internal upheaval. I departed the museum as its Interim President after three years and joined the Board of Directors for Transform 1012 N. Main Street. In October 2024, I was named to succeed Mae Ferguson, who had led Fort Worth Sister Cities International for 25 years. I won't even try to fill her shoes, but I am excited to continue the legacy of the organization and build on its strengths in international cooperation.



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ACCOUNTING MANAGER

MEET  
THE  
TEAM



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# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

## PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE



SENT 135 YOUTH AND  
ADULTS TO SEVEN  
COUNTRIES

## GLOBAL LEADERS



LAUNCHED PILOT  
SUMMER YOUTH  
PROGRAM

## AWARD-WINNING



HONORED WITH  
INNOVATION IN YOUTH  
& EDUCATION AWARD



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# BY THE NUMBERS

22

CULTURAL EXCHANGES

16

CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAININGS

4.5K+

LOCAL PARTICIPANTS

35

EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EVENTS



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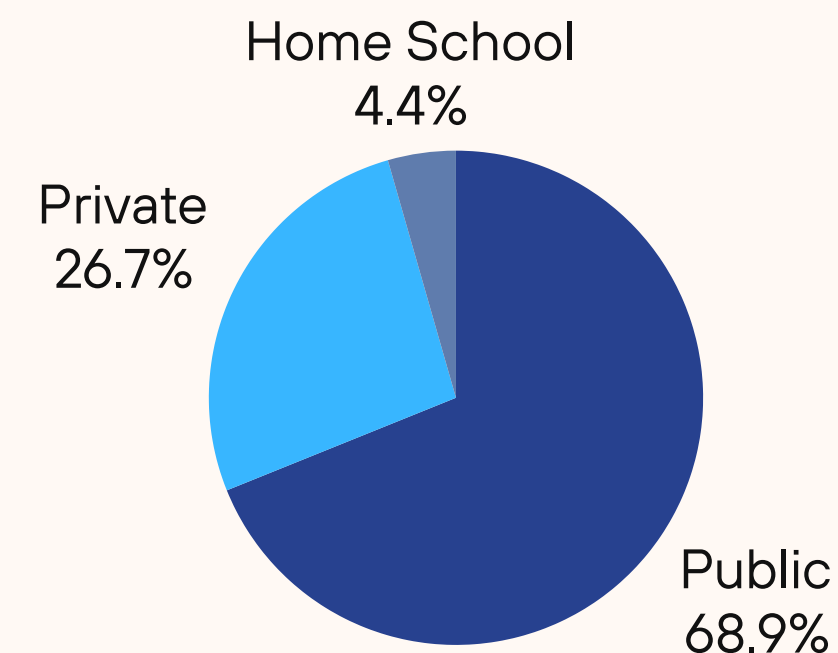
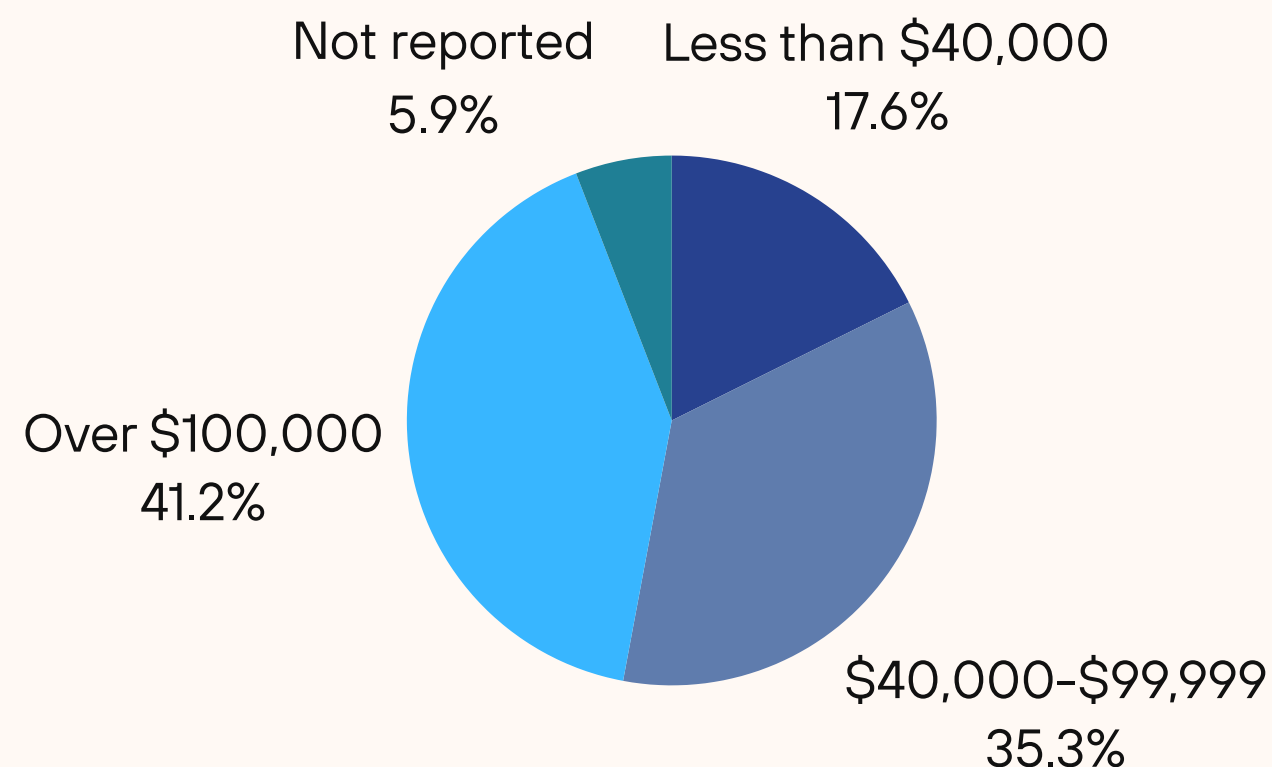
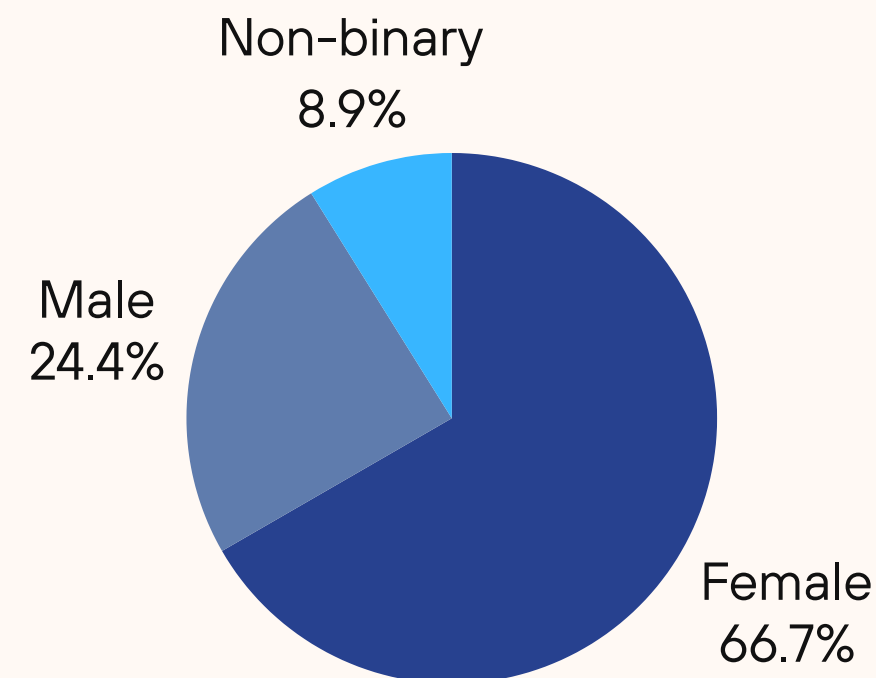
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# WHO ARE OUR STUDENTS

7% Asian/Pacific Islander  
13% Black  
27% Latino/Hispanic  
9% Multi-racial  
1% Native American  
43% White





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# OUR IMPACT



## CULTURAL COMPETENCY

100% INCREASED AWARENESSES OF GLOBAL ISSUES

98% EXPANDED KNOWLEDGE OF DIFFERENT CULTURES

97% MADE INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIPS



## SKILLS

93% FELT MORE SELF-SUFFICIENT

92% IMPROVED LEADERSHIP

90% IMPROVED PROBLEM-SOLVING



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# TESTIMONIALS



## VALERIA VENEGAS

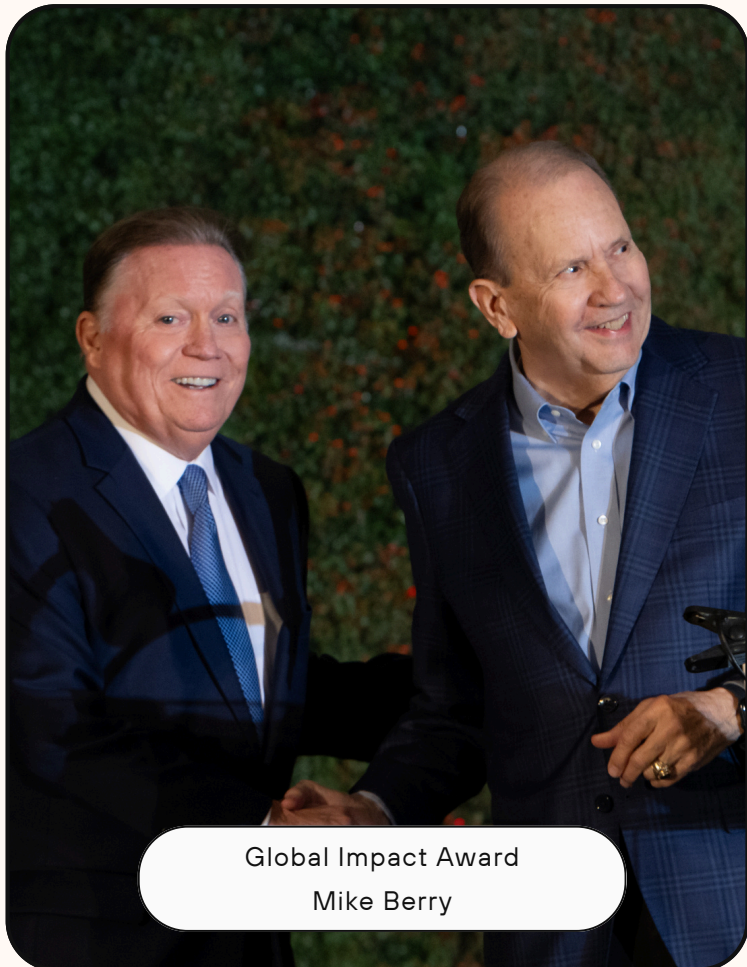
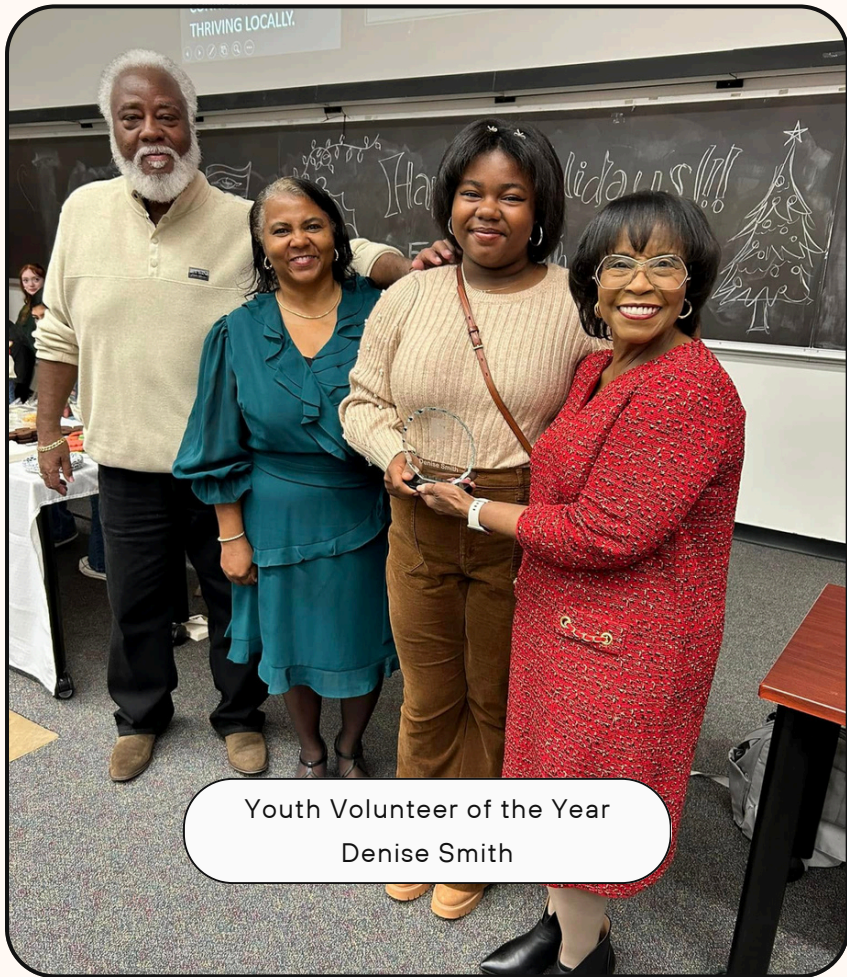
I have been exposed to the rich life of other cultures and have adventured to places I wouldn't even know about if it weren't for FWSCI. My time on the board and helping organize events helps me realize the power the youth have to connect with others and gives me confidence to what the future holds for international affairs. I personally traveled to Nagaoka Japan in the summer of '24 as a Harashin Scholar and will always remember the bonds and connections I had to my host family.



## HAO TRAN

My Japanese host family Satoshi and Eiko could not have been more authentic in their love for wanting to understand me, learn from me and wanting to share their lifestyle and I wanted nothing more. They welcomed me into their home like a daughter and I will forever cherish my time with them. When we sat at the dinner table, it brought me back to my own childhood when my own family sat together not to eat, but to talk and share ourselves, building on love, laughter and trust.





# LOCAL AWARDS



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Long Range Planning, Jan Titsworth  
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Trier, Germany – Katie & Hayne Shumate

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Jeff King  
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Ann Rice  
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Mayor Mattie Parker

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Budapest, Hungary – Jeanette Martinez  
Guiyang, China – Michael Crain  
Mbabane, Eswatini – Chris Nettles  
Nagaoka, Japan – Alan Blaylock  
Nîmes, France – Macy Hill  
Reggio Emilia, Italy – Gyna Bivens  
Toluca, Mexico – Carlos Flores  
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Frank Tilley & Connie Beck

in memory of Janeyl & James Beck and

Mable & Gordon Tilley

Rae & Michael S. Hyatt

The Yamagata Foundation

in memory of Elaine & Tadashi Yamagata

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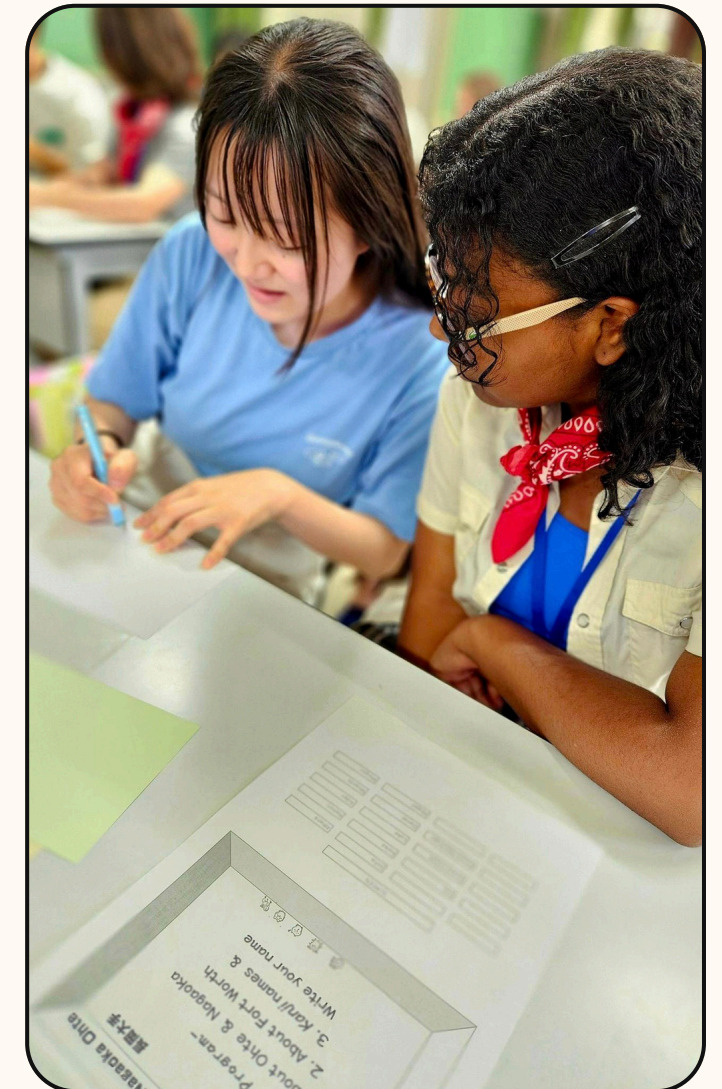
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CONNECTING GLOBALLY. THRIVING LOCALLY.