



# TUSCALOOSA SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL

NARASHINO  
JAPAN

SCHORNDORF  
GERMANY

SUNYANI-TECHIMAN  
GHANA



## Tuscaloosa Sister Cities International

2nd Quarter 2023 Edition

April 2023



It's a new, busy, season for Tuscaloosa Sister Cities International. The days are bursting with activity and events, and plans for an exciting summer travel season ahead. Thank you to all who joined us to enjoy the recent Sakura and West Alabama Multicultural Alliance Heritage Festivals, as well as those who

entered the Sakura Art Contest – several entries will be sent to Washington, D.C. soon for international competition! Read on in this issue of the TSCI Newsletter to see what we are planning in the months ahead, and how YOU can be a part of our terrific, ongoing, global outreach efforts!

*Lisa Keyes*

Lisa Keyes - TSCI Executive Director *Alabama State Representative and Board of Directors Liaison, Sister Cities International*

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## **Narashino Spring Greening An Earth Day Event!**





On Friday, April 21, in tribute to Earth Day, members and friends of the Tuscaloosa Sister Cities International organization took part in a "Spring Greening" spruce-up at Tuscaloosa's Narashino Grove. Tuscaloosa's BF Goodrich plant and TSCI volunteers trimmed cherry trees, added mulch, and picked up litter along the I-359 roadway. Earth Day is the perfect time to remember the importance of keeping our community clean, green, and environmentally healthy and contribute to our city, and environment, honoring those who make an impact on the world.



## Sakura Festival – A Time to “Renew”



Music, dancing, Japanese games, origami, and delicately crafted papermaking were all part of Tuscaloosa's festive 37th Annual Sakura (Cherry Blossom) Festival. This year's event at the Tuscaloosa River Market attracted hundreds of visitors, all eager to learn more about Japan and Japanese culture. A highlight of the festival was the University of Alabama's Nozomi Daiko

drum corps, led by Laurie Arizumi and talented university performers. This year's festival theme is "Renew," a perfect way to celebrate the fresh, new season!

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## WAMA Festival Wow!



TSCI was honored to be a co-sponsor of this year's West Alabama Multicultural Alliance Heritage Festival, on April 2, 2023. An estimated 500 visitors celebrated our region's cultural heritage, including live performances, hands-on activities, displays, giveaways, and tasty treats at "centers" spotlighting local, historic and international culture, including our Sister Cities Narashino, Japan, Schorndorf, Germany, and Sunyani-Techiman, Ghana. Additional displays included exhibits from Tuscaloosa's Civil Rights Trail and Reverend Thomas Linton's historic civil rights and barbershop collection. The Festival is growing by leaps and bounds each year and is a terrific way to showcase Tuscaloosa's heritage and ties to local and international culture.

Thank you, WAMA Fest, for inviting TSCI to be a part of this great celebration!

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# TSCI Delegation Prepares for Ghana



A 13-member Community-Student Delegation, led by Tuscaloosa City Councilman Matthew Wilson, will travel to Ghana, West Africa to mark the 12th anniversary of the strong Sister Cities Partnership with Sunyani-Techiman. The delegation will meet with city, regional, and traditional leaders there, as well as visit schools, businesses, and key areas of interest throughout Ghana.

Discussions will also include plans to develop partnerships for libraries, agriculture, water system, and cultural/craft opportunities between cities. Our sincere thanks to Sunyani-Techiman for planning an amazing visit to West Africa!

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## Schorndorf, Here We Come!



Passports: check; German language tips: check; Euros ordered: check! The 18-member TSCI/Tuscaloosa City Schools student delegation is getting ever closer to our July departure for Schorndorf, Germany! Student delegates have attended monthly meetings since January to prepare for their two-week exchange in Europe. They've also already started communicating with their host partners at Max Planck Gymnasium in Schorndorf, and comparing notes on how to make their experiences memorable.

TSCI is happy to recognize Northridge student delegates Anushka Nichani and Rylan North, recipients of the first-annual TSCI "Spirit of Community" Scholarship, in memory of the late, long-time TSCI Board Member David Ford. David's widow, Linda, announced the scholarship recipients after selecting their winning essays detailing the importance of community involvement. Anushka and Rylan will receive \$750 as recipients of the "Spirit of Community" scholarship. Congratulations, Anushka and Rylan!

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## AGP Celebrates 25 Years





Happy 25th Anniversary to the Alabama Germany Partnership! AGP recently held a festive celebration to pay tribute to the many companies in Alabama with business and professional ties to Germany and the success of Alabama-Germany partnerships over the past quarter century! Sincere and heartfelt appreciation to AGP for recognizing TSCI's Lisa Keyes with the 2023 Dr. Barbara Fischer Education Award, and Ted von Cannon, former Executive Director of the Jefferson County Economic and Industrial Development Authority, with the top Rainer Bauer Award. Fostering global connections is an honor and privilege - and our commitment- each and every day. TSCI salutes AGP for reaching this exciting 25-year milestone anniversary with our very best wishes for continued, impressive growth and success!

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## SCI Young Artist Showcase



Tuscaloosa Sister Cities International is happy to have exhibited more than 100 art entries from Tuscaloosa City Schools and Narashino, Japan schools in the recent Sakura Art Contest. Several entries will be sent to Washington, DC to compete in the Sister Cities International Young Artist and Author's Showcase (YAAS) The 2023 YAAS theme is "Peace by Piece: Food Security in My Community".

Michiru Sawai's (Toho Junior High School, Narashino), "Fresh Food Available Forever", Isabella Maxey's (The Alberta School of Performing Arts) "Food for All, Nighitha Kushra's (Central High School), "A Dream of Hope", and Yareli Asiain-Rodriguez's, (Paul W. Bryant High School) "The Last Piece", will compete for cash prizes in the international competition. Good luck to all!

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## Japanese "Doll Festival" Collection on Public Display





A beautiful “Hinamatsuri”, doll collection, donated first to Paul W. Bryant High School, has now found a permanent home for many visitors to enjoy.

After donating the collection to the Japan Club at Paul W. Bryant High School, it was determined that the collection needed a permanent display home where many visitors could enjoy them. The colorful, encased doll collection, featuring more than a dozen dolls, including the regally attired “Emperor” and “Empress”, is now in the Historic Collections room at the Tuscaloosa Public Library.



Ms. Sylvia Cottingham originally received the doll collection from a Japanese friend when the Cottingham family lived in Japan in the 1960s. The dolls were a gift to Ms. Cottingham’s three daughters.

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**TSCI 2022 Board of Directors**

Tuscaloosa Sister Cities International is proud of the support and commitment, locally and globally, of its Board of Directors. The board meets at 5pm on the second Wednesday of January, April, July, and October. Each member supports TSCI programs and events throughout the year. Thank you to each outstanding member of the TSCI Board of Directors!



- Kip Tyner, Chairman, Tuscaloosa City Council President
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- Dr. Janet Sherrod, Tuscaloosa City Schools
- Lisa Keyes, Executive Director, TSCI



## **Tuscaloosa Sister Cities Wants You**

To become more involved with us! Whether you are interested in international culture, hosting an international student or adult delegate, or love to travel and would like to be a member of our next visit to Narashino, Schorndorf, or Sunyani-Techiman, Ghana we'd love to know you. TSCI is a non-profit, publicly funded agency and our goal is

to promote peace, mutual respect and global understanding and respect. We welcome your interest and your input, and we look forward to getting to know you better as we "Connect Globally and Thrive Locally".





Tuscaloosa Sister Cities International is a member  
of Sister Cities International  
"A Global Citizen Diplomacy Network"

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