



T U S C A L O O S A  
**SISTER CITIES**  
I N T E R N A T I O N A L

NARASHINO  
JAPAN

SCHORNDORF  
GERMANY

SUNYANI-TECHIMAN  
GHANA



**Tuscaloosa Sister Cities International**

**Winter Edition**

**January 2024**

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**Happy New Year!**



It's an exciting month at Tuscaloosa Sister Cities, as we prepare for a busy year ahead! The TSCI-Tuscaloosa City Schools exchange program has returned to full operation again, and we are so thrilled to be traveling to Narashino, Japan, again for the first time since 2018. Twenty student delegates from Tuscaloosa's Paul W. Bryant, Central, and Northridge High Schools have been selected to represent Tuscaloosa in Japan this coming summer. Festival season is also back in full swing in 2024, and plans are being made for a Sunyani-Techiman, Ghana official delegation to visit Tuscaloosa in May, and a TSCI Community Delegation visit to Schorndorf, Germany in September. Read on in this issue of the TSCI Digital Newsletter for details on how YOU can get involved with our global programming that inspires and impacts!

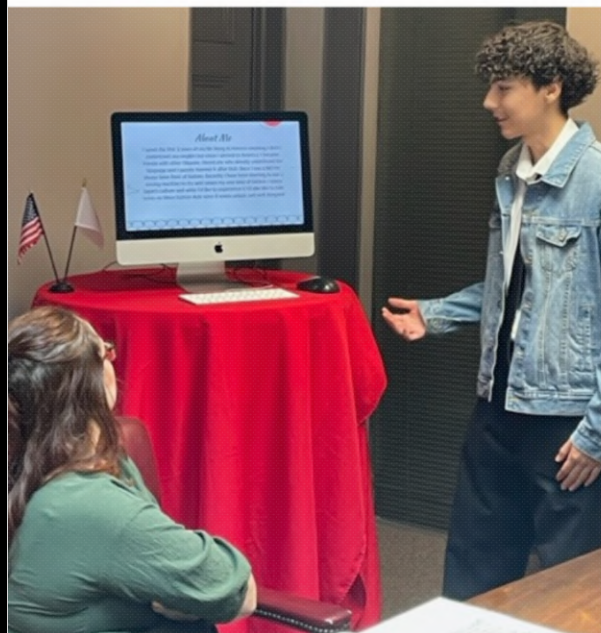
*Lisa Keyes*

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

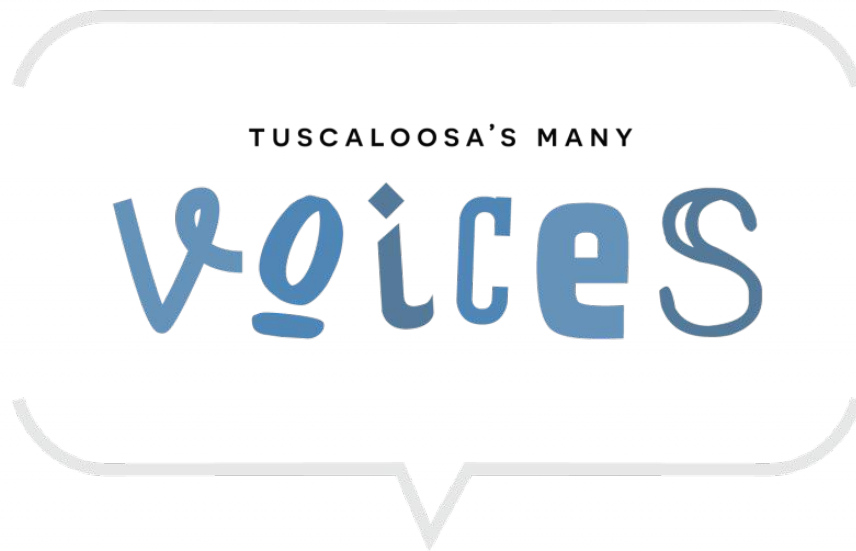
## **Narashino Bound!**

Tuscaloosa Sister Cities International and Tuscaloosa City Schools are proud to announce the selection of 20 student delegates for the summer 2024 Student Exchange to Narashino, Japan! Interviews were held in December, and the selected delegates will soon begin monthly preparations for their May 27-June 10, 2024 exchange. The students, representing Paul W. Bryant, Central, and Northridge High Schools, will learn about Japanese culture, traditions, education, and language, as they prepare for the many amazing experiences that await!





## Tuscaloosa's Many Voices Summit Global/Local Network Planned



The Tuscaloosa's Many Voices Summit is scheduled Tuesday, Jan. 23, from 8:30am–2 pm in the Bryant Conference Center Rast Room on The University of Alabama campus.

Sponsored by the Office of Global and Community Engagement in UA's Division of Community Affairs, this meeting will bring together UA programs, nonprofit organizations, city government offices and businesses from throughout the Tuscaloosa area who interact closely with international residents.

Attendees include representatives from many civic and educational bodies in West Alabama, including Tuscaloosa City and County Schools ESL programs, Stillman College, Shelton State Community College, The United Way of West Alabama, Tuscaloosa Sister Cities International, many UA-based outreach programs, and others. The lunch hour will feature international residents who will share their perspectives on living in Tuscaloosa.

The outcome of the meeting will be the establishment of an ongoing Tuscaloosa's Many Voices Network. Interested individuals may contact [global@ua.edu](mailto:global@ua.edu) for information about joining this network.

For more information or to register for the Tuscaloosa's Many Voices Summit, visit <https://ccbp.ua.edu/TMV/>.

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## Africana Film Festival



*Tuscaloosa*  
**AFRICANA  
 FILM FESTIVAL**

**SAVE  
 THE  
 DATE**

**SATURDAY  
 FEB 10, 2024  
 2:00PM - 8:00PM**

**UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA  
 STUDENT CENTER THEATER  
 751 CAMPUS W DR  
 TUSCALOOSA, AL 35487**

**FEATURE FILM**

**WALTER RODNEY:  
 WHAT THEY DON'T WANT YOU TO KNOW**

**BLACK LIVES MATTER**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:  
[bill.foster@aframsouth.net](mailto:bill.foster@aframsouth.net)  
[tulzen@ua.edu](mailto:tulzen@ua.edu)**

Mark your calendars, and please make plans to attend! Tuscaloosa's Africana Film Festival returns to an in-person event this year, after a three-year virtual hiatus. TSCI is proud to be a co-sponsor of the Tuscaloosa Africana Film Festival. Proceeds from the film festival benefit AframSouth, an educational organization dedicated to providing educational, health, and community development opportunities for adults and youth in African American communities throughout the region. Contact [bill.foster@aframsouth.net](mailto:bill.foster@aframsouth.net), or [tulzen@ua.edu](mailto:tulzen@ua.edu) for more information.

## Sakura Festival



Mark your calendars for a delightful celebration of all things Japanese! On Saturday, March 23, Tuscaloosa's 38th Annual Cherry Blossom Festival will be held at Tuscaloosa's Mildred Warner Westervelt Transportation Museum from 9 a.m. – noon. The theme for this year's event is "Uketsugu/Preserve" and we are looking forward to preserving Japanese customs and traditions for the entire community. Special programs will include music, Japanese games, cosplay, giveaways, and activities for every age group! It's fun and free! For more information, contact [tuscaloosasistercities@gmail.com](mailto:tuscaloosasistercities@gmail.com).

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## West Alabama Heritage Festival



Mark your calendars for the 2024 West Alabama Multicultural Alliance (WAMA) Heritage Festival, scheduled for Sunday, April 7, at the Tuscaloosa River Market. The program's mission is to elevate the heritage of people of color and other underrepresented minority groups by presenting programs that inspire positive values, develop strong role models, and support community service with a primary focus on the youth community. WAMA President, Samyra Snoddy, says, "WAMA Fest offers a culturally aware and diverse event to give Tuscaloosa a unique blend of ethnic art, culture, and history. The festival serves as a conduit for promoting and perpetuating the art, culture, and history of Tuscaloosa. TSCI is proud to celebrate cultural diversity in West Alabama as a co-sponsor of this annual event!"

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## Connect Globally

Sister Cities International Offers a World of Programs Supporting Global Diplomacy - Here Are Three in 2024!





**SisterCities**  
INTERNATIONAL



## 2024 YOUNG ARTISTS AND AUTHORS SHOWCASE CLIMATESCAPE: Resilient Cities for Tomorrow's Climate

**DEADLINE:**  
**MAY 1, 2024**

<https://yaas2024.org/>

**EMAIL:**  
**YOUTH@SISTERCITIES.ORG**

### **What is YAAS?**

The Young Artists and Authors Showcase (YAAS) is an annual contest that encourages youth worldwide to express the mission of Sister Cities International through original artwork, literature, photography, and music.

### **How is it judged?**

Submissions are centered around an annual theme and judged based on creativity, composition, and theme interpretation.

### **Are there prizes?**

Selected Grand Prize Winners in each category will win a \$1,000 prize, while second place winners will win \$250, and third place winners will be awarded \$100. Winners' artwork will be displayed on the Sister Cities Website after the winners are announced during the Youth Leadership Summit.

### **Eligibility and Guidelines**

Students are to check in with their member cities to ensure eligibility for this YAAS competition. Sister City organizations must ensure that they are dues paying members. After this coordination, the application can be filled out for submission.

There is NO fee to submit an entry to YAAS at the national office. Students must be 13-18 years old to participate in the YAAS competition.



## Classic Art

- Students may submit one (1) piece of art.
- Media accepted includes but is not limited to oil, acrylic, watercolor, charcoal, and colored pencils. Digital art will be taken in a separate category.
- Students must upload the photograph of their artwork in the application in a .jpeg/.jpg or .png format.



## Digital Art

- Students may submit one (1) piece of art.
- Digital mediums will be accepted in this category. See the website for more details.
- Moving art pieces will not be accepted.
- Submissions must have a minimum of 1350x1080 px.
- Students must upload the file of their artwork in the application in a .jpeg/.jpg or .png format.



## Photographers

- Students may submit one (1) photograph.
- Limited digital manipulation is allowed for the photographers' showcase. Edits include but are not limited to filters and lighting. See the website for more details.
- Only two-dimensional (2-D), unframed artwork will be accepted.
- Students must upload the file of their artwork in the application in a .jpeg/.jpg or .png



## Musicians

- Students may submit one (1) piece of music.
- Students should submit their music piece in their application through MP3 format only.
- Only audio submissions will be accepted, no videos.
- Submissions cannot exceed 4 minutes.
- The piece must be original. Reinterpreted music will not be accepted.



## Authors

- Students may submit one (1) piece of writing.
- Articles can be creative writing, essays, anecdotes, and other written works following the content guidelines.
- Students must upload their document in either a .pdf or .doc format and not exceed 500 words.
- Submissions must be written in English.



## Poets

- Students may submit one (1) piece of writing.
- Students must upload their document in either a .pdf or .doc format.
- Submissions must be written in English.
- Poetry must not exceed 200 words.



# DIPLOMACY BEYOND BORDERS: INSPIRE, CONNECT, TRANSFORM

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**  
**AUGUST 5-9, 2024**

## MISSION

The 2024 Youth Leadership Summit (YLS) includes sessions and activities for youth ages 14-18, from across the globe.

The summit is designed to engage future leaders and expose them to important global challenges, inspiring a new generation of citizen diplomats and volunteers who become instrumental in promoting peace, mutual respect, and prosperity.

The main goals of this summit is to prepare students with leadership and professional development skills to enable their successes and growth in the global community.

**CONTACT US**  
[www.sistercities.org](http://www.sistercities.org)



## AGENDA

The summit will be split into three parts: training seminars, cultural events, and a public forum.



During the training days, students will attend workshops where they learn about professional development skills and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal. They then will identify local issues, and develop community solutions with their peers using an SDG of their choice.



Cultural events will include tours of Washington, D.C. landmarks and immersing attendees in cultural experiences from across the globe.



The Public Forum will feature student presentations, cultural panels and events, and networking spaces for attendees.





Sister Cities International is pleased to host the All Americas Sister Cities Summit taking place in the city of San Antonio, Texas, from May 28th to 31st, 2024.

This summit will bring together elected officials, citizen diplomats, and other key stakeholders from 35 countries across the Western Hemisphere. Rooted in the spirit of friendship, mutual respect, and opportunity, the summit aims to strengthen existing partnerships and cultivate new ones, particularly with the United States' closest neighbors.


Through this collaborative effort, the All Americas Summit seeks to showcase the power of partnerships in shaping trade, diplomacy, and peace across the Americas. The summit places a spotlight on the diverse ways in which city-to-city partnerships can flourish and emphasize common interests such as tourism, trade, gastronomy, education, culture, and more.



## JOIN US

**Henry B. González Convention Center**  
900 E Market St  
San Antonio, TX 78205

**Grand Hyatt**  
**San Antonio River Walk Hotel**  
+1 (210) 224-1234  
Group Code: **G-QNZN**

 [allamericassummit.sistercities.org](http://allamericassummit.sistercities.org)

 [specialevents@sistercities.org](mailto:specialevents@sistercities.org)

## TSCI 2024 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
- Matthew Feller
- Yukiko Gilbert
- Bernd Griemel
- Chad K. Jackson
- Chad L. Jackson
- Megan Legerski
- LaMonica Little
- Greg Madrid
- Andrew Maxey
- Donna McKee
- Leigh Pate
- Edel Revord
- Christy Hayes Wilson



## **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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