



To promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation, one individual, one community at a time.

SISTER CITIES SELECTS ROTARY CLUB OF MORGAN HILL AS ITS 2019 OUTSTANDING PHILANTHROPIST

Rotary Club to be Honored at This Year's November 15 Annual Philanthropy Celebration

Morgan Hill, Calif., (October 21, 2019) – Sister Cities of Morgan Hill (www.morganhillsistercities.com/) is celebrating and honoring Rotary Club of Morgan Hill for its invaluable support throughout 2019 while Sister Cities established a new international relationship with Ameca, Mexico. “Rotary Club welcomed Sister Cities into its existing relationship; its connections and guidance were invaluable for us during the entire year-long process. Simply put, we could not have done it without them,” says Amy Whelan, president, Sister Cities of Morgan Hill. “All of our members are very excited to have the opportunity to publicly thank and raise a glass to Rotary’s generosity, community spirit and thoughtful energy.

Rotary Club of Morgan Hill’s existing connection rests mainly with the Rotary Club of Ameca and includes a range of community service projects that are planned and executed in partnership. For example, the two Rotary Clubs have worked together since 2009 to provide computers, technology and infrastructure improvements to all of the primary schools in Ameca’s inner city.

The annual Morgan Hill Community Foundation (MHCF) event brings together an impressive list of community leaders who deserve praise for their time, effort, and commitment to Morgan Hill’s excellence. MHCF’s Annual Philanthropy Celebration honorees come from any nonprofit in Morgan Hill that wishes to honor a person, company or group that has made a significant contribution to the nonprofit in the current calendar year. This year’s event is scheduled for November 15, 2019, at the Morgan Hill Community & Cultural Center. Tickets are available for purchase at mhcf.ticketspice.com/philanthropy.

Sister Cities & Ameca, Mexico

Sister Cities added its relationship with Ameca, Mexico, to its roster of city-to-city connections in late 2018. The process of formalizing the relationship culminated in a Sister City delegation traveling to Ameca this past September. Representatives from both Rotary Club and Sister Cities made up the delegation, as well as representatives from Kiwanis Club of Morgan Hill, the City of Morgan Hill, and the Morgan Hill Unified School District. All travel and travel-related expenses were not subsidized through Sister Cities. The next phase of the relationship includes a reciprocal program between elementary schools. Sister Cities’ vice president, John Kelley,

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traveled in September to deliver 50 letters from 5th grade students at San Martin Gwinn Elementary, and returned with 125 letters from students within five different grammar schools in Ameca.

The Sister Cities and Ameca relationship is also serving as the basis of a City of Morgan Hill Proclamation at the City Council regular meeting on Wednesday, October 23. The proclamation recognizes those who were instrumental in establishing the relationship with Ameca: Rotary Club of Morgan Hill, David Allen, Lesley Allen, Peter Anderson, and John Kelley.

Sister Cities & the Mizuho Morgan Hill Student Exchange Program

In addition to its growing relationship with Ameca, a cornerstone of Sister Cities is the Mizuho Morgan Hill Student Exchange Program (MMHSEP), which is a reciprocal middle school student travel program that has operated since 2008. The program alternates between Morgan Hill students staying with host families in Mizuho, Japan, and then hosting those same Japanese students in Morgan Hill the following summer. The group is preparing to send Morgan Hill students in the summer of 2020. The summer trip is significant in 2020 because the summer Olympics is scheduled in Tokyo between July 24 and August 9, very near Mizuho. The Olympic torch is scheduled to pass through Mizuho during the same timeframe that Morgan Hill students usually travel for this program, although 2020 student travel dates are not yet confirmed. It presents an added fantastic opportunity for Morgan Hill students to witness a world-wide event, in addition to the excellent cultural and educational opportunities already built into the exchange between Mizuho and Morgan Hill.

Mizuho Morgan Hill Student Exchange Program is also participating in the MHCF Annual Philanthropy Celebration as it honors Darren Itow, a dedicated volunteer who has made a critical difference in this past summer's hosting of Japanese students here in Morgan Hill. The program administrators are very grateful for his contributions that made such a significant difference not only for the students traveling, but also for the host families and activities.

For more information on how to support the MMHSEP or participate in the program, contact mizuhoexchangemh@gmail.com.

For more information about Sister Cities' exchange program for high school students to travel to San Casciano, Italy, visit the [San Casciano Exchange Program](#) information center.

About Sister Cities of Morgan Hill

Sister Cities is an all-volunteer, membership nonprofit formed in 2002. It hosts relationships with five international cities: San Casciano, Italy; Seferihisar, Turkey; Mizuho, Japan; Headford, Ireland; and Ameca, Mexico. Morgan Hill's Sister City program is modeled on [Sister Cities International](#), a world-wide organization fostering connections between cities, counties, or states. Connections between cities are usually based on shared similarities that can expand into a more

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thorough cultural exchange. Most Sister Cities organizations are comprised of volunteers, with the support of their local, elected officials. Sister Cities of Morgan Hill is under the fiscal sponsorship of the [Morgan Hill Community Foundation](#).

If interested in learning more about Sister Cities in general, the group hosts member meetings every fourth Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m., at the Morgan Hill Centennial Recreation Center. Interested guests may attend a meeting or two before deciding to join.

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