



Sister Cities of Durham Annual Meeting Event 2025

Program

Nosh and Mingle

- Enjoy appetizers and a cocktail from the Durham Distillery and our SCD Soundtrack!
- Enter the drawing - earn tickets by chatting with SCD Board Members and City Committee Chairs

Election of Board Members

The nominations committee presented the following slate to the SCD Board in September:

- John Felheim
- Alma Reynaga
- Celeste Holtzman

Kindly cast your ballot if you are a member (have paid dues).

Sister Cities International Leadership Summit Participant - Cora Williamson

Dot Borden Volunteer Award Recipients:

- Tom Harris served as the immediate, past President from 2021 through 2024. Tom has been active on the Toyama committee. Tom currently serves as the Chair of the Governance committee
- Sue Mathias, also active on Toyama committee, served as the SCD President from 2020 to 2021. Sue currently serves on the Finance committee.

Mayor's Award to Peace Builders

- Afrikios Bistro, owner Ammakyeiwaa Asantewaa, nominated by Ronda Pierce
- Brian Snyder, former Chair, Kostroma and active in Ukrainian refugee work, nominated by Nancy Cox

Drawing, and presentation of gift to guests

City Committee Reports

Zhuzhou, China Annual Report

- Durham–Kunshan Sister City Signing Ceremony - Committee members worked diligently to organize and facilitate the signing ceremony establishing the new sister-city relationship between Durham and Kunshan. The event was a great success and reflected well on SCD's expanding international partnerships.
- Dragon Dance in Durham Christmas Parade - For the third time, we incorporated a dragon dance group into the Durham Christmas Parade. The performance was a big hit and drew enthusiastic responses from the community, showcasing our vibrant cultural traditions.
- Feng Shui Lecture at Durham Library - The committee collaborated with the Durham Public Library's Adult Program to host an engaging talk on Feng Shui, which was well attended and sparked great interest in Chinese cultural perspectives.



- High School Student Trip to Zhuzhou - In partnership with the Thousand Mile Initiative and the Zhuzhou Foreign Affairs Office, the committee helped organize a high school student exchange to Zhuzhou in June. Eleven students from RTP visited Zhuzhou No. 2 High School, where they taught and represented our city with pride. Zhuzhou Delegation Visit to Durham planning for July 2025 four-member delegation of high ranking city officials from Zhuzhou.

Tilaran, Costa Rica Annual Report

- Chair, Melissa Perez, visits friends and city representatives for a celebratory event in Fall 2024.
- Long serving Chair, Melissa Perez stepped down in Spring 2025. Currently the committee is not active.
- SCD Board will decide whether to move Tilaran to Friendships status or possibly end the relationship.

Please contact president@sistercities-durham.com if you would like to join the committee or have ideas to share.



Toyama Enthusiasts Annual Report

- Annual New Year's Celebration at the home of Consul General Maeda and wife (in Atlanta): committee representative attended on our behalf
- Toyama College of Foreign Languages (TCFL) Student Visit: 16 students, accompanied by two chaperones, stayed with host families while they studied and practiced English at DTCC. Activities included: tours of the DBAP and 21C Museum, SCD and the Toyama Enthusiasts hosting a Meet and Greet at the Glass Jug, attendance at a Duke Women's basketball game, a tour of the Durham County Library, shopping at Southpoint Mall, a tour of the Nasher Museum, a day of Cosmetology treatments and international student dance event at DTCC, a grocery store tour, and a potluck farewell
- Partnering with the Nippon Club of the Triangle at their Tanabata Festival in Raleigh: Several Toyama Enthusiasts staffed a kids' origami table as well as displaying information about our city committee and SCD
- Visits to Toyama: Members David and Jenene Atoji visited with Mayor Fujii while visiting family; member Brian Snyder did some sightseeing for a day while in Japan this summer; host families Graham, Kelly and Kendall Donaldson, and Mary McKee and Enrique Williams all visited students in Toyama who they have hosted over the years
- Planning for representation at the Japan-US Sister Cities Conference for Fall 2025
- Planning for Fall visit by Taiko Drumming Performance, Peaceful Forest
- Successfully growing the committee to 13 members



Sibiu, Romania Annual Report

- City Committee Chair, Mitch Scurtu, visited Sibiu in Fall 2024 with an effort to renew interest in the previously held, International Musica Festival honoring Dorothy Kitchen who founded the Duke Strings Schools.
- The bulk of program year, 24/25 was focused on identifying funding and planning for the Fall 2025 Festival and competition.
- The Sibiu committee is focused on adding new members in order to continue offering the annual Festival with the goal of one day bringing the Festival to Durham.
- In addition the Mayor of Sibiu would like to have an exchange of youth.



Please reach out to president@sistercities-durham.com to join the committee or have ideas to share.



Kavala, Greece Annual Report

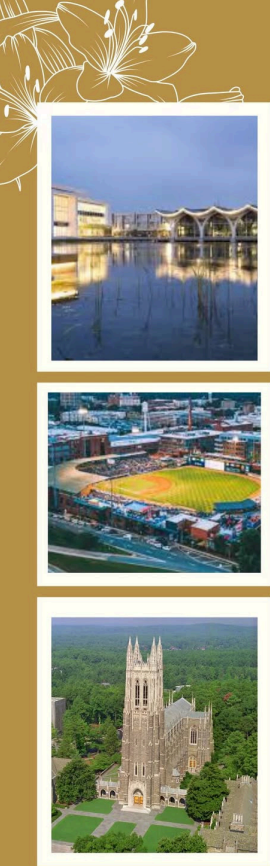
City of Kavala, Greece has / is experienced financial problems this past year. Kavala is not communicating with their five sister cities. Our Durham Kavala Committee has not been given any official word, they will not answer our emails. We hope this will change soon.

- Our Durham Kavala Committee hosted members of sister cities of Durham at St. Barbara's Greek Orthodox Church in January of 2025. Greek food, provide by Captain John's Dockside Grill, was served and everyone toured the beautiful artwork - traditional iconography - in the sanctuary.
- We promoted the annual Greek Festival held at Saint Barbara's every May.
- Our Committee members participated in various SCD events.

Kunshan, China Annual Report

After several years of being in Friendship status, Kunshan became our 9th Sister City in October of 2024 with a wonderful signing ceremony at the Durham Arts Council. We were honored to host the Mayor of Kunshan and her delegation for several days of meetings with Duke University and the City of Durham.

- The committee welcomed new leadership this Spring, James Long, who has served as an active member of the Zhuzhou committee and Violet Evans, who is new to SCD took the reigns from Jeanette Song who led through the signing ceremony.
- The committee is scoping out a stratgic plan to more actively engage Duke students, especially those affiliated with Duke's Kunshan campus.
- The commitee partnered with the Zhuzhou committee to celebrate Chinese New Year and will continue to look for ways to recognize Chinese culture more broadly wihtin the Triangle.



You are Invited to
The Agreement Signing Ceremony

**Between
Durham, North Carolina
& Kunshan, China**

Thursday, November 14th, 2024

Durham Performing
Arts Center

3:30pm Reception with
Refreshments

Ceremony follows

Sister Cities Durham UK Committee Annual Report

The Committee's activities in the last year have centered around two major initiatives:

1. Pub Nights

The committee launched a new series of Pub Nights to foster community engagement and promote cultural exchange. This activity replaced our annual Two Durhams Beer Festival in 2025:

- March 20, 2025 – Lakewood Social: Trivia game and informal networking.
- June 18, 2025 – Bull City Solera and Taproom: Trivia contest and raffle for a trip to Washington, DC. \$25 gift certificate donated by Bull City Solera.
- Pub Nights planned for October, pre visit to Durham, UK and in November, post visit.

2. Trip to Durham, UK

Planning for delegation of four committee members—Eve Marion, Leslie Fischer, Michael Shiflett, and Adam Shiflett to County Durham, UK October 13–16, 2025. In partnership with the County Government and Visit County Durham, the goal was to renew confidence in the strong ties between our cities and rebuild our connections with County Durham partners, and explore new avenues for collaboration in education, arts, and municipal exchange.



Annual Report Celaya, Mexico

- In partnership with Build Your Smile and UNC Dental School, held dental clinics in Celaya in Summer 2024.
- Welcomed visiting Dental Students from Celaya to our Annual Meeting and featured typical sweets from Celaya in Fall 2024.
- Participated in the Durham Holiday Parade.
- Held a Cinco De Mayo event in partnership with UNC Dental Students at Que Chula in Chapel Hill. Each of the SCD committees provided a fun basket for a raffle.
- Transitioned leadership of the Celaya committee from Elsa Jimenez, who served as Chair for a number of years, to Carolina Vera, a long serving member.
- Planned for Summer 2025 visit to Celaya to offer dental clinics and meet with the Mayor of Celaya to celebrate our friendship

Arusha, Tanzania Annual Report



- August 2024 Celebrated **YAAS 2024 (Young Artists and Authors Showcase)** with Arusha student **Natasha Lewis Laizer** of Oloirien Secondary School achieving **2nd place in the essay category**. This recognition highlights the ongoing success of youth engagement and cross-cultural creative exchange between Arusha and Durham students.
- Partnered with Afrikikos Bistro to launch the Kiswahili Conversation Series, held every 2nd and 4th Thursday. These sessions created an informal yet immersive space for community members in Durham to practice Kiswahili, share Tanzanian culture, and promote linguistic
- Collaborated with North Carolina Central University (NCCU) Environmental and Geospatial Science Program to co-host the Hybrid Saturday Drone Academy. The academy provided hands-on STEM learning in drone technology, mapping, and environmental applications, fostering global collaboration and innovation. The initiative included:
 - 3 NCCU master's students serving as pilot mentors.
 - 4 Durham/Raleigh students participating locally.
 - Virtual exchange sessions with students in Arusha and Dar es Salaam.
- The Sister Cities of Durham-Arusha is proud to have had our Co-Chair Ronda Pierce facilitate the National Institute of Economic Development Economic Development Summit in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania and have Durham businesses in attendance.
- Planning for summer visit from the H.E. Ambassador Dr. Elsie S. Kanza, Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of the United Republic of Tanzania to Durham and the Triangle.

Annual Report of the Board

- Celebrated our 35th Anniversary in October 2025
- Participated in the Durham Holiday Parade
- Held our Annual Retreat in January
- Held a Women's History Month Event in March featuring a panel of women leaders including Secretary of State, Elaine Marshal
- Moved out of City of Durham Office and now have open space at Recity Network.
- Held a successful fundraising raffle for a trip to Washington, DC In June.
- Increased our Board size and the diversity of our Board with the addition of several young professionals.



SCD Financials ending June 30, 2025 for FY 2024/25

Income Sources:

Numbers are rounded

- City of Durham - \$14,450
- Dot Borden Annual Gift - \$4175
- Dues and Donations - \$6600
- Raffle Trip to DC. -\$2500
- Other - \$665

Total Income: \$28,340

Expenses:

- SCI Membership Dues - \$1030
- Board Insurance - \$1770
- Accounting Expenses - \$2365
- Office Admin - \$4800
- Technology - \$665
- Office and Storage Unit - \$2260
- Travel - \$2300
- Program Support - \$8700
- Conferences - \$1240
- Other - \$1148

Total Expenses: \$26,278

Assets:

- City Committees - \$27,580
- General Fund - \$17,100
- Youth Scholarship - \$3665
- Reserve - \$5300

In FY 24/25 we realized savings with the retirement in November of our long serving Office Administrator, Brady Surles. Brady also served the organization as a past President and volunteer, Executive Director. As a volunteer, Leslie Fischer, performed this work through April and the responsibilities were then delegated to Board members. In addition, our long serving Bookkeeper, Dawn Hull, retired and David Rowson became our new Bookkeeper; we were able to increase the responsibilities of the Bookkeeper and still realize savings from the cost of eliminating the paid Office Administrator position.

The City of Durham allotted \$18,500 to SCD and the remaining balance will come to SCD in Fall 2025.

A new fundraiser, the Washington, DC Raffle, helped SCD exceed its' fundraising goal.

Dot Borden, an SCD founder, created a fund through the Triangle Community Foundation - each year, SCD receives an interest payment. We invite you to consider creating a gift of this nature and are happy to provide support.

Budget 25/26

SCD opened the 25/26 FY in a healthy financial position.

Projected total income of \$28,775 equals projected total expenses.

Li Ming's 黎明超市

GLOBAL MART

SCD Business Sponsors



THROUGH THIS LENS



Captain John's Dockside
restaurant and Tiki Bar



Neomonde
Mediterranean
A New World of flavor.



QUE CHULA
♦ CRAFT TACOS & TEQUILA BAR ♦



Foster's
market



Mariakakis
Fine Food & Wine

Lowes
FOODS

Our 24/25 Board Members

Nancy Cox - President

Chris Boyer - Vice President and Chair of Toyama

John Felheim - Secretary

Min Shu - Treasurer

Gwenn Bookman - co-Chair Arusha

Dot Borden - Lifetime Director

Violet Evans - co-Chair Kunshan

Mark Goodwillie - co-Chair Zhuzhou

Randy Griffin - Chair Kavala

Leslie Fischer - co-Chair Durham, UK

Zenani Fogg - Board member

Lusia Li - co-Chair Zhuzhou

James Long - co-Chair Kunshan

Eve Marion - co-Chair, Durham, UK

Susannah Ochalo - Board member

Ronda Pierce - co-Chair Arusha

Salma Rashid - Board member

Alma Reynaga - Board member

Mich Scurtu - Chair Sibiu

Patricia Sheppard - Board Member

Katie Vanhoy - Board member

Carolina Vera - Chair Celaya

Jeannette Song served as the Kunshan Chair through April

Elsa Jimenez served as the Chair of Celaya through May

Our City and Board Committees

Please join a committee

Arusha

Sibiu

Celaya

Tilaran

Durham

Toyama

Kavala

Zhuzhou

Kunshan

- Governance
- Finance
- New Sister City committee
- Youth Programs and Scholarships
- Technology
- Outreach and Engagement - *marketing, fundraising and membership*
- Peace Grove Team (*care for oak trees in Central Park and create programs*)
- Nominations
- Women's History Month Event
- Annual Meeting and Awards
- Holiday Parade

Become a member of Sister Cities, grab your annual passport membership today and help to spread peace in Durham and around the world through cultural understanding.

Memberships:
Individual \$20
Family \$35
Student \$10
Lifetime \$300



SISTER CITIES OF DURHAM MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

NANCY PROIA,
CHAIR DURHAM ENGLAND COMMITTEE

"My involvement with Sister Cities goes back ten years. I have served (am serving) as SCD-UK Chair/Co-Chair; have planned events; attended events; been a SCD presenter as part of Durham County Library programming; gone abroad to Durham, England, multiple times; made new friends; and watered SCD trees! It is a source of enormous satisfaction to me. What could be better than trying to make a difference in the world? I promote SCD at every logical opportunity.



Nancy Proia front left

Send checks made payable to
Sister Cities of Durham
112 Broadway Street Suite B
Durham, NC 27701
www.sistercities-durham.com

