

Annual Newsletter

AMES INTERNATIONAL
PARTNER CITIES
ASSOCIATION



AIPCA Welcomes New Board President, Karla McCollum

2024 was a remarkable year for AIPCA and an exciting start to my journey as President, a role I stepped into in July after serving as Treasurer. I've had the privilege of learning from our past president, Cindy Hicks, and collaborating with our incredible volunteer members, whose dedication makes all the difference. It's been a busy, rewarding time, and I've loved every minute of it!

AIPCA's achievements in cultural, business, and educational exchanges would not be possible without the support of our volunteers, Mayor Haila, the City of Ames, and the Ames Regional Economic Alliance. Working alongside people

passionate about building meaningful partnerships between Ames and our global partners has been a true highlight.

Our relationship with Koshu, Japan, and the State of Iowa's partnership with Yamanashi Prefecture continues to grow stronger.

I'm deeply grateful to everyone who welcomed the Koshu Youth Delegation this year, from Ames citizens and local businesses to Iowa State University and the Japanese American Association. A special thanks goes to the Honorary Consul to Japan in Des Moines, Ms. Peggy Kerr, for her ongoing support.

One of my favorite moments this year was witnessing the transformative experience of Ames middle school students traveling to Koshu. Watching them navigate new cultures, foods, and challenges while gaining a deeper appreciation for global connections reminded me why AIPCA's mission is so vital.

In a divided world, organizations like AIPCA foster understanding by building bridges, one relationship at a time. We invite you to join us in this meaningful work of connecting Ames with the world!

Karla McCollum



Koshu City Day Proclamation and Downtown Adventures Await Japanese Students Exploring Ames

Ames Celebrates Koshu City Day: Honoring Over Three Decades of Friendship Mayor John Haila officially proclaimed Wednesday, October 16, 2024, as Koshu City Day in Ames, recognizing the enduring partnership and cultural exchange between Ames and Koshu City, Yamanashi, Japan.

This special day celebrated the visit of middle school student delegates and their chaperones from Koshu, who traveled to Ames as part of a longstanding sister-city relationship that has spanned over 30 years.

The proclamation ceremony was held at Ames City Hall, where Mayor Haila emphasized the deep bond between the two cities. Reading from the official proclamation, he stated, "We are committed to continuing and strengthening the bond we have by adding online exchanges between our youth, commerce exchanges between our businesses, as well as other mutually beneficial undertakings and opportunities." His words captured the essence of the relationship—a commitment to friendship, education, and collaboration.

The Ames-Koshu sister city relationship was formalized in 1993, and since then, hundreds of citizens from both communities have engaged in cultural and educational exchanges. These interactions have not only fostered friendships but also provided unique learning opportunities for participants, enhancing their understanding of each other's traditions, values, and way of life.

This year's visit included a group of Koshu middle school students and chaperones who explored Ames, experiencing highlights such as the Ames

middle school and high school, Iowa State University, a visit to Red Granite farm, the city's fire station, the innovative Ames Public Library, and local downtown businesses. Their days of discovery is a reflection of the shared commitment between the cities to nurture cross-cultural relationships.

Mayor Haila's proclamation underscored the importance of these connections: "Our Partner City Relationship with Koshu City has enriched our community, offering opportunities for growth and collaboration across cultures. It is a relationship built on mutual respect and the desire to learn from one another."

The recognition of Koshu City Day also served as a reminder of the exciting future ahead for the partnership. Plans to expand the relationship include more online exchanges between youth, fostering deeper connections, and exploring opportunities for business collaboration between Ames and Koshu.

As the proclamation urged, Ames residents celebrated this milestone, reflecting on the power of cultural exchange and the lasting impact of three decades of friendship. Koshu City Day stood as a testament to what can be achieved when two communities, despite being oceans apart, come together in the spirit of mutual respect and shared curiosity.

Cindy Hicks



A Message from the Treasurer

To all AIPCA Members,

This brief report highlights how your membership dues and generous donations are being utilized to support our mission.

A significant portion of our 2024 budget was dedicated to successfully hosting the student delegates from Koshu City. While AIPCA covered day transportation and meals, we aimed to provide authentic and enriching experiences that showcased the best of our community. We worked closely with local businesses, organizations, and community members to secure low-cost or free activities for the delegates. Such as Reiman Gardens, Iowa State Athletics, touring downtown Ames businesses to name a few. However, the true success of this program hinged on the incredible support of our host families.

They generously opened their homes and hearts, providing the delegates with an authentic taste of Ames life. Without their warm hospitality, this cultural exchange would not have been possible.

Looking to 2025, I aim to implement a more effective online portal for members to join, renew, and maintain communication. These first steps will help build a stronger foundation for AIPCA and cultivate growth in the future.

Your contributions are vital to the success of AIPCA. They empower us to make a real difference in our community and achieve our goals.

Thank you for your continued support!

Laura Hansen



Make a difference!

Are you passionate about fostering global connections and promoting cultural exchange? Do you want to make a difference in Ames by engaging with people from around the world? We invite you to become involved with the Ames International Partner Cities Association (AIPCA) and help us promote cultural and educational exchanges between Ames and our partner cities.

Support Cultural Youth Exchanges

Whether you're interested in hosting, participating in cultural exchanges, supporting the group with membership or donations, or supporting education and youth programs, AIPCA has a variety of ways for you to get involved.

For more information, contact the City Manager's Office at 515-239-5101 or email at aipca@cityofames.org.

APPLICATION

Mail Checks to:
AIPCA Inc
Box 811 c/o City Manager
Ames, Iowa 50010

From Ames to Koshu: In Their Own Words



Tongdan Jia

“The Ames delegation spent three days (July 9 – 12) in Koshu, which was one of the highlights of my trip. We got to witness the daily life of Japanese junior high students, as well as learn about Koshu's colorful culture and rich history of grape farming, wineries, and railroads.”



Madelyn Basnet

“This trip is something I will remember for a lifetime--the first time I travelled without my family. I'm grateful to have met so many cool people and I hope the future generations who go on this trip will get to have as amazing an experience as I had. Arigatou Gozaimashita!”



Flora Wellington

“I think that we were not the only ones who benefitted from this exchange. I think this exchange widened my host family's kids' perspective on the world. They learned that I can drive at 14 and that most of my school lunches are pizza. The school children got to interview us, discover our likes and dislikes, and gain real-world experience with English. This program is definitely more than just for one side's enjoyment. Anyone who participates, no matter how small, can learn from us, and we can learn from you.”



Cece Fulton

“Staying with host families made the difference on this trip. I learned a TON about how people live in Japan! I also learned a lot from my host sister about how school worked and how to use chopsticks. I hope that future delegates have are just as stunned by the beauty and awesomeness of Japan and the welcoming leaders of Koshu City!!”
