

ATLANTA SISTER CITIES COMMISSION



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2025**



CITY OF ATLANTA

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Andre Dickens
MAYOR

Greetings:

As the 61st Mayor of Atlanta, I'm proud to extend my sincere congratulations to the Atlanta Sister Cities Commission (ASCC) on another remarkable year of achievements. The Commission continues to embody the spirit of international friendship through programs that bring people together, including cultural exchanges, educational partnerships, and philanthropic initiatives that strengthen Atlanta's global connections.

The City of Atlanta and the Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs (MOIIA) were proud to collaborate with ASCC throughout 2025 on several meaningful events and projects. In February, we partnered with the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs, Goethe Zentrum Atlanta, the Consulate General of Germany, and the Consulate General of Nigeria to present the Things Fall Apart Exhibition at Gallery 72 in Downtown Atlanta. This celebration of the film's 50th anniversary reconnected us with Atlanta's legacy in the Black film industry, the Civil Rights Movement, and our city's emergence as a global creative hub.

This year also marked the 20th anniversary of the Atlanta–Fukuoka Sister City partnership. To commemorate this milestone, Fukuoka Mayor Sōichirō Takashima, members of the Fukuoka City Council, and a youth delegation visited Atlanta for a week of cultural and educational exchange. The delegation joined Atlanta leaders to sign sister school agreements with Atlanta Public Schools, presenting a special Oribe lantern and Satsuki Azaleas at the Atlanta Botanical Garden, and met with Atlanta City Council Members, including President Doug Shipman and other local officials.

Our relationship with Nuremberg, Germany, also deepened in 2025, as students from Mays High School travelled to our sister city for a reciprocal visit. Their time in Nuremberg highlighted the enduring human rights connection between our two cities. To close the year, the Nuremberg–Atlanta Sister City Committee hosted a special Atlanta booth at the Nuremberg Christkindlesmarkt, one of Europe's oldest and most celebrated Christmas markets, sharing Atlanta's art, culture, and sports spirit with our German friends.

These exchanges remind us that global connections thrive on collaboration, creativity, and shared purpose. On behalf of the City of Atlanta, I commend the ASCC Committee Chairs, members, partners, and friends who made 2025 a truly historic year. As I begin my second term as Mayor, I look forward to continuing this work together to strengthen Atlanta's role as a leader in global engagement and cultural diplomacy.

Sincerely,

Mayor Andre Dickens

Atlanta Sister Cities



Ancient Olympia – Greece 1994

Brussels – Belgium 1983

Bucharest – Romania 1994

Cotonou – Benin 1995

Fukuoka – Japan 2005

Lagos – Nigeria 1974

Montego Bay – Jamaica 1972

Newcastle-Upon-Tyne – Great Britain 1977

Nuremberg – Germany 1998

Port-of-Spain – Trinidad 1987

Rio de Janeiro – Brazil 1972

Ra'anana – Israel 2000

Salcedo – Dominican Republic 1996

Daegu – Korea 1981

Taipei – Taiwan 1979

Tbilisi – Republic of Georgia 1988

Toulouse – France 1974



About ASCC

The Atlanta Sister Cities Commission (ASCC) fosters global connections by forming friendship links between the Atlanta community and similar jurisdictions worldwide. These partnerships promote goodwill, cultural understanding, and collaboration through a wide range of mutually beneficial programs.

ASCC actively encourages the participation of diverse citizens in developing and maintaining international relationships. It oversees the establishment of sister city affiliations, managing the process and supporting dedicated committees for each recognized partnership.

The commission's vibrant exchange programs span education, culture, philanthropy, economic development, and social initiatives. These efforts have earned recognition and awards from Sister Cities International for their outstanding contributions to community outreach and economic and educational advancement.

Currently, ASCC oversees Atlanta's 17 sister city relationships, striving to enhance global awareness and foster goodwill through people-to-people diplomacy. Its platform empowers Atlantans to explore diverse cultures, expand academic horizons, stimulate trade and investment, support philanthropic efforts, and elevate Atlanta's standing in the global community.



Salcedo artist, Eddavie Montero's impression of a meeting of the Atlanta Sister Cities Commission.



Through strategic relationships, ASCC has contributed significantly to Atlanta's global footprint. Notable achievements include:

- **Economic Impact:** Companies like Sage North America and NurnbergMesse have chosen Atlanta for their North American operations.
- **Global Connectivity:** Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport has extended its reach to Belgium, Nigeria, Jamaica, and the Dominican Republic.
- **Educational Growth:** Georgia Tech established a global campus in France.
- **Philanthropy:** Over \$80 million in medical supplies and services have been donated, benefiting more than 50,000 patients in Jamaica.
- **Cultural Engagement:** Over 300,000 visitors annually enjoy the Atlanta Christkindl Market, celebrating German culture.

Collectively, these initiatives contribute nearly \$100 million to the local economy, driven by business and trade, tourism, education, and cultural programs. ASCC continues to position Atlanta as a leading city for international collaboration and cultural exchange.

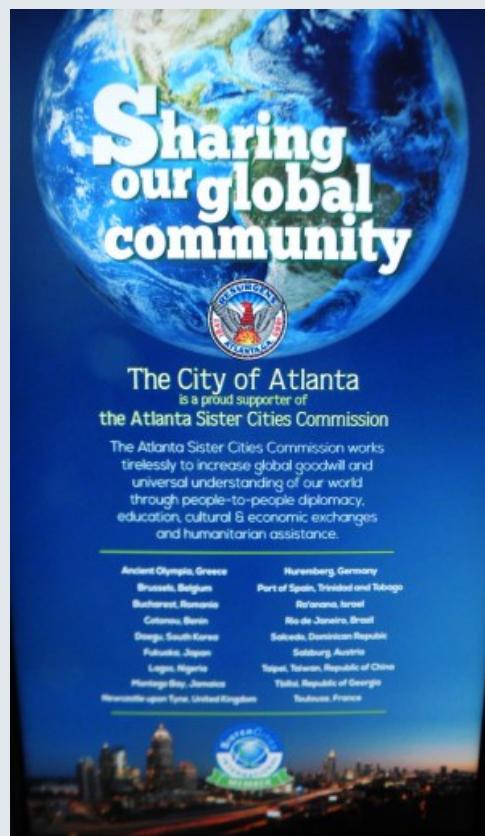
Chairman's Letter



Matt Ohm
Chair
Atlanta Sister Cities Commission

I am pleased to submit to you the 2025 Annual Report of the Atlanta Sister Cities Commission (ASCC). In addition to the activities of the various committees, ASCC carries out its role and function in relation to Atlanta's Sister Cities program.

We were pleased to serve the City of Atlanta and its international community during 2025 and look forward to the continued growth and expansion of the Sister Cities program under your administration.



The Atlanta Sister Cities Commission (ASCC) was chartered by the City of Atlanta and codified in Atlanta City Ordinance No. 1979-71. The organization is managed by a Chair appointed by the Mayor of Atlanta and ratified by a majority of the Atlanta City Council.

The full 'board' of the Commission comprises the Chair, three additional Mayoral appointees and two members appointed by the City Council. In addition, the chairpersons of each Sister City Committee, or their designee, serve on the Commission.

Elections are held annually to select a Vice Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer. Each elected officer serves a one-year term. Elected officials of the Commission are restricted to two consecutive terms in office.

The Commission is supported by members of the Mayor's Office staff who participate in monthly and special meetings, help shape the Commission's policy and act as liaison with the Mayor.

ASCC maintains a web site with annual reports and information on each of the sister cities. Please visit www.atlsistercities.com. Also, please visit the **Commission's page on LinkedIn** <https://www.linkedin.com/company/atlanta-sister-cities-commission/>

The Atlanta Sister Cities Commission Foundation, Inc is a Nonprofit 501(c) (3) Corporation, organized to engage in charitable, educational and scientific programs that support the Atlanta Sister Cities Commission and the international endeavors of the City of Atlanta.

20th Year Celebration

The Atlanta-Fukuoka sister city partnership celebrates its 20th year in 2025

Since 2005, the sister cities across the Pacific have been collaborating on people-to-people exchanges, engaging in cultural activities, and benefiting from a robust economic relationship that has positioned Japan as one of the top investor countries in the state of Georgia.

In August 2025, to mark the 20th anniversary of the sister city partnership, Fukuoka Mayor Sōichirō Takashima led a delegation of Fukuoka City Council members, students, and other government representatives to Atlanta for a week of commemoration.

Mayor Andre Dickens and Mayor Takashima met for an engaging conversation on student exchange and the importance of empowering young people in both of our cities. Atlanta and Fukuoka share the belief that our future depends on ensuring every young person has the opportunity to succeed.

Each city enshrined its commitment to youth with a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the City of Fukuoka and Atlanta Public Schools. This MoU institutionalized the Fukuoka-Atlanta Youth Exchange Program, which has operated since 1996 to develop global talent and serve as a cultural bridge between Atlanta and Fukuoka.



The Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs (MOIIA) welcomed this year's cohort of the Fukuoka-Atlanta Youth Exchange Program to the City of Atlanta, where they got a glimpse of City Hall history and learned how MOIIA seeks to create a welcoming environment for visitors across the globe. **Coretta Scott King Young Women's Leadership Academy and Fukusho High School** established a Sister School Declaration, intended to expand on their existing partnership in school exchanges and support the Japanese language program at Coretta Scott King.

In addition to the Mayoral meeting, Atlanta City Council President Doug Shipman and City Council Member Jason Dozier welcomed seven Fukuoka City Council representatives to Atlanta City Hall. The discussion centered on challenges that both cities face and the innovative policies and solutions each city is implementing to address issues of housing, transportation, and sustainability.

To wrap up the activities, the Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs, as well as the City of Atlanta's Chief Operating Officer LaChandra Burks, and City Council President Doug Shipman, joined the Japan-America Society of Georgia for their Annual Gala and a special unveiling of the newest Oribe lantern and Satsuki azaleas, gifted to the Atlanta Botanical Garden by the City of Fukuoka. The lantern and azaleas are available for the public to enjoy at the Atlanta Botanical Garden's Japanese Garden.



This important anniversary brought Fukuoka to Atlanta and continues to honor two decades of collaboration and friendship, reaffirming our shared commitment to building a brighter future through global connection.



Events In 2025

1. Carter Memorial / January

Atlanta—Newcastle: Commemoration service in Newcastle for President Jimmy Carter at the site of a memorial stone installation from his first visit in 1977.



2. Fete des Rois / January

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC celebrates the New Year at the Fete des Rois soirée.



3. Vasilopita / January

Atlanta—Olympia: Committee sponsors the Greek New Year celebration, officiated by Consul General, Konstantinos Adamopoulos.

4. Tradition / February

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members celebrate the French tradition of La Chandeleur, an evening of crepes.



5. Film Showcase / February

Atlanta—Lagos: Exhibition and panel discussion showcasing the long lost documents of the making of the film, Things Fall Apart, to rediscover the film's deep ties to Atlanta, the black film industry, civil rights, and Atlanta's rise as a global city.

7. Book Donation / February

Atlanta—Cotonou: Chair visits Cotonou to meet Benin committee and donate books for a local school library.

6. Emperor Birthday / February

Atlanta—Fukuoka: Birthday reception in Atlanta for His Majesty the Emperor of Japan. Fukuoka table display.



Events In 2025

1. Exhibition / February

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members toured Spelman College Museum of Fine Art exhibition "Amanda Williams: We Say What Black Is."



2. Independence Day / March

Atlanta—Salcedo: The Dominican community celebrates the 181st Independence Day of the Dominican Republic at the Golden Drops Café in Decatur.



3. SCAD Fash / March

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members toured SCAD Fash exhibition Sandy Powell's Dress the Part: Costume Design for Film.



4. Screening / April

Atlanta—Nuremberg: Atlanta delegation to Nuremberg participates in the German premiere of Rock & Chisel, a documentary about the life and legacy of Steffen Thomas.

5. Fundraiser / April

Atlanta—Montego Bay: Annual Spring fundraiser in support of the Atlanta-Montego Bay Medical Mission.

6. Anniversary / April

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC 50th Anniversary Celebration at Le Chateau, Atlanta.

7. Delegation / April

Atlanta—Daegu: Representatives from Daegu Metropolitan City and the Daegu Metropolitan City Chamber of Commerce visit the City of Atlanta.



Events In 2025

1. Consular Visit / April

Atlanta—Salcedo: Consul General Rosa Yanina Torres Tamares, Consul General of the Dominican Republic in Louisiana, **meets with the Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs.**



2. Exchange / May

Atlanta—Fukuoka: Students from North Atlanta High School visit Fukuoka as the first part of a reciprocal exchange.



3. Art Collection / May

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members toured the Sue and John Weiland Art Collection at The Warehouse.



4. Asian Heritage / May

Atlanta—Daegu: Committee participates in the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month celebration at Atlanta City Hall.



5. Robotics Award / May

Atlanta—Nuremberg: Prof. Dr. Wolfram Burgard of Nuremberg received the prestigious 'Pioneer in Robotics and Automation Award' at the ICRA Conference in Atlanta.



6. Meetings / June

Atlanta—Ra'anana: Atlanta chair, Guy Tessler, visits Ra'anana for meetings with Ra'anana city government officials.



Events In 2025

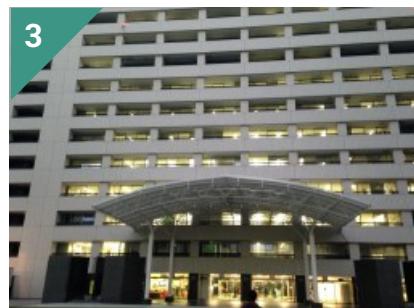
1. Fundraiser / June

Atlanta—Lagos: Committee supported a major fundraiser by the Nigerian Women's Organization of Georgia.



2. Nuit en Blanc / June

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members celebrated the French tradition of Nuit en Blanc by wearing all white attire to welcome summer.



3. Chair Visit / June

Atlanta—Fukuoka: Atlanta chair, Keiko Scott, meets International Affairs Section's staff at Fukuoka City Hall to plan anniversary celebrations.



4. Day Camp / June

Atlanta—Olympia: Committee sponsored a participant in the Annunciation Summer Day Camp.

5. Donation / June

Atlanta—Cotonou: Committee donated a motorbike to the committee members in Cotonou.

Events In 2025

1. Proclamation / July

Atlanta—Newcastle: Stevie Wonder is presented with the Freedom of the City of Newcastle, recognizing his work in civil rights.



2. Centenary / July

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members celebrated Delta Air Lines' 100th birthday by visiting the Flight Museum.



3. Artist / July

Atlanta—Rio de Janeiro: Luciane Dom, multilingual singer, songwriter and producer, from Rio de Janeiro, visits Atlanta.

Meetings / July

Atlanta—Fukuoka: Fukuoka City Hall staff visit Atlanta for meetings in preparation for the upcoming 20th anniversary event.

4 Anniversary / August

Atlanta—Fukuoka: 20th anniversary features a student visit and a gala event. The Mayor of Fukuoka meets the Mayor of Atlanta. Other events include tree-planting and lantern presenting ceremony, and Memorandum ceremonies. See feature article on page 6.



Events In 2025

1. Luncheon / August

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members enjoyed a luncheon of French classics at Petite Violette.



2. Independence / August

Atlanta—Cotonou: Chair met with the Mayor of Cotonou on a trip for Benin Independence Day.



3. Fundraiser / September

Atlanta—Montego Bay: Fundraising event to provide supplies to the annual health mission in October.



5. Museum / September

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members toured the **Museum of Design Atlanta's** exhibition, "Bittersweet – the Design of Chocolate."

6. Festival / September

Atlanta—Olympia: Committee sponsored a costume display at the Atlanta Greek Festival 50th Anniversary.

Events In 2025

1. Film Expo / October

Atlanta—Olympia: Actress Asimenia Vouliotis, featured in the film Stelios, joins the Atlanta Greek Film EXPO for its 10th year anniversary.



2. Paris / October

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members enjoyed an autumn visit to Paris.



3. Medical Mission / October

Atlanta—Montego Bay: Annual Vin Martin Memorial Health Mission provides dental, medical, vision, gynecological, mammogram and prostate screenings, as well as high school scholarships.



4. Hurricane Relief / October

Atlanta—Montego Bay: Following the medical mission, committee provides relief for Jamaican communities devastated by Hurricane Melissa.

5. Korean Festival / October

Atlanta—Daegu: Committee participates in the Korean Festival sharing traditional culture and values with the Atlanta community.

6. Student Exchange / October

Atlanta—Nuremberg: During their exchange, Atlanta Technical College and Berufsschule B1 Nürnberg students attend a reception at the Halle Foundation in Atlanta.

Events In 2025

1. Director General / October

Atlanta—Taipei: Mayor Andre Dickens welcomes Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office's new Atlanta Director General, Mr. Jared Lin.



2. Riverwalk / November

Atlanta—Toulouse: ATSCC members walked the Roswell Riverwalk on a chilly autumn morning.

3. Support / November

Atlanta—Lagos: Committee provided financial support to the Africa's Children's Fund of Metro Atlanta.



4. Exchange / November

Atlanta—Nuremberg: Student Exchange with Atlanta Technical College and Berufsschule B1 Nürnberg adopts the theme **80 years of the Nuremberg Trials**.



5. Mayor / November

Atlanta—Montego Bay: During their extended hurricane relief mission, AMBSCC members meet with the Mayor of Montego Bay, Richard Vernon.

6. Wonderland / December

Atlanta—Port of Spain: Committee presents a decorated tree at the Winter Wonderland exhibition at Fernbank Museum with the theme 'Our flag, with its bold colors of red, white, and black, is more than a symbol—it is a story of who we are'.

Events In 2025

1. Tech Mission / December

Atlanta—Ra'anana: Guy Tessler, chair, with a delegation from Atlanta to Ra'anana, comprising representatives of the Technology Association of Georgia, and business companies, **meets with Ra'anana mayor Chaim Broyde**.

On return, Mr. Tessler presents Mayor Dickens with a gift from Ra'anana.



2. Migrants Day / December

Fukuoka, Montego Bay, Nuremberg and Port of Spain Sister City Committees showcase cultural traditions, and diversity through food, and cultural traditions at World Migrants Day, organized by the Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs.



3. Holiday Market / December

Atlanta—Nuremberg: Members of the committee welcome friends to celebrate the season at the Christkindl Market in Lawrenceville, GA.

In Germany, the Christkindlmarkt in Nuremberg has a booth in honor of the Atlanta—Nuremberg Sister City relationship.





Atlanta Sister Cities Commission

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COMMISSION LEADERSHIP

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Dr. Margo Alexander, Ancient Olympia
Chair, Brussels
Mr. Nick Modares, Bucharest
Mr. Brandyn Pierce, Cotonou
Mr. John Lee, Daegu
Ms. Keiko Scott, Fukuoka
Dr. Augustine Esogbue, Lagos
Dr. Yvonne Smith, Montego Bay
Mr. David Smith, Newcastle
Ms. Dorothea Hockel, Nuremberg
Ms. Karen Clarke, Port of Spain
Mr. Guy Tessler, Ra'anana
Ms. Alexis Powers, Rio de Janeiro
Mr. Victor Ramirez, Salcedo
Chair, Taipei
Ms. Nina Tickaradze, Tbilisi
Mr. Weslyn Samson, Toulouse