



January 22, 2009 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2009 Youth Conference ~ Belfast, Northern Ireland

July 28-August 2, 2009

Theme: Bridging Differences: Building a Peaceful Future

Help build the next generation of peacemakers...

Duluth Sister Cities International and the Service Learning Program of the Duluth Public Schools invite Duluth youth, ages 15-18, to apply to attend the Sister Cities International Youth Conference to be held in Belfast, Northern Ireland, July 28-August 2, 2009. Up to six students will be selected for the experience in which more than 100 youth from around the world are expected to participate. Applications are due by February 15, 2009.

An informational meeting for students, parents, and other interested individuals will be held at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 28 in Room 302 of Duluth Public Schools Central Administration Building – 215 North 1st Avenue East.

Through activities at Queens University and numerous locations in and around Belfast, youth will explore the various approaches to peacebuilding. Peacebuilding aims to reduce or eliminate the sources of conflict. With the resolution of conflict, individuals can evolve and redefine themselves, their relationships, their community, their society and their world. Conference activities will blend educational, cultural and social experiences that engage and enrich each participant. Youth will:

* Meet a diverse group of like-minded youth from around the world including the United Kingdom, Mexico, Israel, Palestine, Morocco and Germany as well as representatives from NGOs in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

- * Develop ideas for creating a better future by working together with youth from multiple international perspectives through interactive simulations and discussions
- * Gain tangible leadership skills
- * Explore Belfast's rich culture and history
- * Embark on a life changing experience

As with all Sister City delegations, each student will be responsible for his/her own round-trip airfare costs. There may be some scholarship support to offset the \$550 registration fee which includes lodging and meals, daily program and activities, receptions, and transportation and entry fees for off-site activities.

Adults are also invited to apply to be a chaperone for the group.

Upon their return home, the selected students will be obligated to share their experiences within their own high school.

About Duluth Sister Cities International:

Duluth Sister Cities International promotes global understanding through mutual respect and cooperation with cultural, economic and educational endeavors. Duluth's four Sister Cities are Ohara-Isumi, Japan; Petrozavodsk, Russia; Thunder Bay, Canada; and Vaxjo, Sweden

For more information about the International Youth Conference and to download applications, please go to our website: www.duluthmnsistercities.org OR contact:

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