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Los Angeles Seeks Sister-City Journalists for Fellowship Program

LOS ANGELES—LA INC., The Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau, is seeking applications from qualified journalists from countries in which Los Angeles has a Sister City for a weeklong, all-expense-paid professional fellowship program to learn first hand about the city's culture, commerce and communities.

Los Angeles' Sister Cities are: Athens, Greece; Auckland, New Zealand; Beirut, Lebanon; Berlin, Germany; Bordeaux, France; Busan, Korea; Eilat, Israel; Giza, Egypt; Guangzhou (formerly Canton), People's Republic of China; Ischia, Italy; Jakarta, Indonesia; Kaunas, Lithuania; Lusaka, Zambia; Makati, Philippines; Mexico City, Mexico; Mumbai (formerly known as Bombay), India; Nagoya, Japan; Salvador de Bahia, Brazil; San Salvador, El Salvador; Split, Croatia; St. Petersburg, Russia; Taipei, Taiwan; and Vancouver, Canada.

Through a competitive selection process, up to six journalists from media outlets serving LA's Sister Cities will be chosen to participate in the program, which will be held in Los Angeles from May 12-21, 2007. The fellowship program pays for all lodging, meals and events for participants. Airfare and travel expenses to and from Los Angeles for each fellow will be covered up to a maximum of US\$1,500. Applicants must be currently employed as professional journalists and have a minimum of three years of experience. Journalists chosen to participate in the program agree to share the knowledge they gain with their readers, viewers or listeners. Preference will be given to journalists in countries that are a significant source or have the potential to be a significant source of visitors to Los Angeles.

The fellowships will consist of professional presentations on Los Angeles history and current challenges; tours of landmarks and neighborhoods; performances and exhibitions; and meetings with experts on various aspects of the city. The program is intentionally small to allow for meaningful conversations and interactions among the Fellows and Los Angeles residents.

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The first annual Sister City Visiting Journalist Fellowship took place in 2006, with journalists hailing from China, Japan, New Zealand and the Philippines. Sessions included tours, site visits, film screenings, a performance at the legendary Hollywood Bowl, and conversations with experts at the Center for the Study of Los Angeles at Loyola Marymount University, the Getty Villa, Los Angeles World Airports, Morphosis Architects, the Port of Los Angeles, the University of Southern California and Walt Disney Studios.

About the 2006 Fellowship, participant Tanya Wan of the People's Republic of China says, "The Fellowship brought exactly the right information about Los Angeles. The images of LA in my mind are more and more clear, rich and colorful. I believe my readers will get a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of LA through my articles."

Another 2006 Fellow, Alex Vergara of the Philippines, says, "What I found brave and refreshing, is how the Fellowship helped us to see the real L.A. This Fellowship offered a balanced picture—not a sugarcoated one. In addition, we were able to gain access to places and persons not normally within the reach of ordinary visitors. Therein alone lay one of the Fellowship's strengths. The Fellowship covered almost every imaginable aspect about LA. I highly recommend it."

Sponsors for the 2006 Los Angeles Sister Cities Visiting Journalist Fellowship included Air New Zealand; American Film Institute; Autry National Center; Beverly Hilton Hotel; California Institute of the Arts (CalArts); City of Los Angeles; Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles; Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Los Angeles; El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical National Monument; J. Paul Getty Trust; Hammer Museum; Le Petite Retreat Day Spa; The Lobster Restaurant; Los Angeles Conservancy; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Los Angeles Philharmonic Association; Los Angeles World Airports; Loyola Marymount University; Music Center, Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County; Morphosis Architects; New Zealand Consulate General, Los Angeles; Northwest Airlines; Patina Group; Philippine Consulate in Los Angeles; Port of Los Angeles; Shopper Shuttle LLC; Skirball Cultural Center; Walt Disney Company; Wilshire Grand Hotel, *The Official Hotel of the 2006 Los Angeles Sister Cities Visiting Journalist Fellowship*; Universal Studios Hollywood; United Airlines, and the University of Southern California.

Applications for the 2007 fellowships must be received by LA INC. by 5 p.m. PST on Friday, Feb. 9, 2007. Selection of the fellows will occur in February, and the winners will be announced by March 1, 2007.

The Sister Cities Program was created in 1956 by U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower to strengthen partnerships between U.S. and international cities, with the hope that personal relationships fostered through Sister City affiliations would increase trade, cultural exchange and mutual understanding, thereby lessening the chance of future world conflicts. Los Angeles began its Sister Cities program in 1959 with Nagoya, Japan, and now includes 23 Sister Cities on six continents.

For more information on the Los Angeles Sister Cities Visiting Journalist Fellowships and to obtain applications and/or the 2006 Fellowship curriculum, contact: Michael McDowell, Senior Director for Cultural Tourism, LA INC. The Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau, 333 S. Hope St., 18th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90071 or mmcdowell@lainc.us.