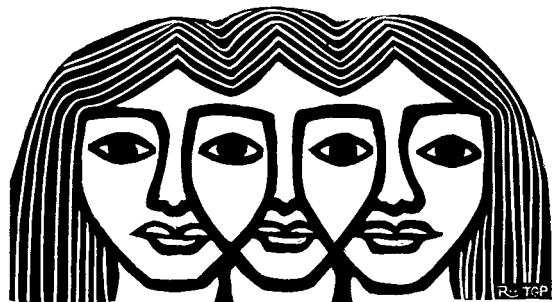


**2003**  
***US-Nicaragua***  
***Sister Cities***  
***Directory***



*Compiled by*



**WCCN**

WISCONSIN COORDINATING  
COUNCIL ON NICARAGUA

September 2003

Dear Friends,

*On behalf of the Wisconsin Coordinating Council on Nicaragua (WCCN), we are proud to present you with the latest edition of the US-Nicaragua Sister Cities Directory. We hope this directory will facilitate the sharing of information between US-Nicaragua Sister Cities, and allow us to learn from each other's experiences and encourage more collaboration in our work.*

*The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Nicaraguan Revolution is right around the corner. As you know, the Nicaraguan Revolution put Nicaragua on the map and allowed many of our organizations to be involved with Nicaragua, changing the lives of many people in the U.S. At the same time, it also allowed us to contribute positively to the lives of many people in Nicaragua. The fact that there are 31 sister cities included in this directory shows us that there is still the energy, commitment and the need for us to exist.*

*As we are sure to have missed some groups along the way, we consider this directory to be a work in progress. If you know of any other groups that are not included in this directory and should be, please let us know. In addition, please let us know if any contact or other information has changed. We hope that everyone will benefit as much as we have from each other's experiences as we move forward and continue our work in Nicaragua. Again, thanks for all the great work!*

*In Solidarity,*

*Carlos Arenas  
WCCN Executive Director*

*Thanks to Lynn VanAirdale and Carrie Hirsch for compiling this information and putting this document together.*

## **Amherst – La Paz Centro Sister City Committee**

### **Contact Information:**

Jeannie Jones  
11 Overlook Drive  
Amherst, MA 01002

### **Status:** Official

**Funding:** Donations, tag sales, small grants, sale of coffee and goodies at Town Meeting.

**Formation:** Established in 1987 by a Town Meeting vote.

**Activities:** Delegations, with a group of 15 in April of 2001, and another of 20 in February of 2003. Delegations participated in work projects- renovating a preschool and building a community center. Over the past 12 years, material aid has been sent in the form of clothes, household goods, tools, and medical equipment. The first placement of volunteers in La Paz Centro occurred during the summer of 2003. We also provided hurricane relief and funds for sustainable small business loans, pig breeding loans, and bicycle loans. In addition, we started a scholarship program for high school students.

**Most Successful Activities:** Delegations. Yearly fund-appeal letter. Consistent fundraising and awareness raising, selling coffee and doughnuts at Town Meeting.

**Challenges:** The breakup of a Consortium of Sister Cities that supported a field representative in Nicaragua and the hiring of a Nicaraguan coordinator in July 2003.

## Ann Arbor/Juigalpa Sister City Committee

### Contact information:

Gregory Fox  
3202 Williamsburg  
Ann Arbor, MI 48108  
(734) 677-4107  
(734) 677-6863 (fax)  
gefox@igc.org or  
Juigalpa@umich.edu

Status: Official

Funding: Private donations, rummage sales, concerts, sales of Nicaraguan art cards, calendars and T-shirts. City budget allows hosting visitors from Juigalpa as well as other expenses such as mailings.

Formation: In 1985 this project began as a local response to Reagan's foreign policy. A ballot referendum in April 1986 called for an end to US military intervention in Central America. A mayor's proclamation established this committee and a city council resolution established the sister city status.

Activities: The organization has resumed activities after a period of dormancy. In the past, we sponsored delegations to Nicaragua and visits of several people from Nicaragua. We also provided material aid, which included a new garbage truck and medical and educational goods. In addition, we raised money for electrical and water lines in Juigalpa, built classrooms, donated equipment for youth baseball teams, and raised money for a mill, composting toilets, and a chicken-raising project.

Most Successful: Past delegations provided the sister city group its most loyal supporters.

Challenges: We ran out of energy when our last big project floundered (a micro loan bank). We stopped meeting about a year ago, but have started again with new enthusiasm after a visit from the mayor of Juigalpa.

## Bainbridge Ometepe Sister Islands Association

### Contact Information:

Kim & Ela Esterberg  
PO Box 4484  
Rolling Bay, Washington 98061  
(206) 842-8148 (Kim & Ela)  
(206) 842-0774 (Lee Robinson, coffee contact)  
kim@bosia.org  
www.bosia.org

Status: Not Official

Funding: Projects financed by the Association are funded by the sale of fair trade, organic, shade-grown "Cafe Oro de Ometepe" cultivated on Ometepe and roasted, packaged, and distributed by volunteers on Bainbridge. Funds donated by residents of Bainbridge Island through the Bainbridge Foundation, and member, non-member, school, group, and institution donations.

Formation: The Association was founded in 1986 after Bainbridge resident Kim Esterberg made a solidarity visit to Nicaragua during which he visited Ometepe and met with several residents interested in forming a sister-island relationship. The first Sister-Island delegation visited Nicaragua in 1988 and have since maintained a mutual and rich relationship with Ometepe.

Activities: Financial support to community generated, organized, and elaborated projects in the health, potable water, and education sectors. Projects have included gravity-fed water systems, reparations and extensions to those systems, community parks, classrooms, educational supplies, medical supplies, health promotion training, libraries, and library books. The Association organizes annual delegations to Ometepe and has had 7 Ometepe delegations to Bainbridge. We also support 25 scholarships for Ometepe high school graduates to study at colleges and universities in Nicaragua, as well as 10 scholarships for teachers to complete their training.

Most Successful Activities: Delegations, collaborative projects, scholarships, and coffee sales.

Challenges: Communication, maintaining dues-paying Association members, and establishing new community partnerships between Bainbridge and Ometepe.

## **Bard/Mid Hudson-Larreynaga Sister City Project**

### Contact Information:

Fred Nagel  
8 Clay Ct.  
Rhinebeck, NY 12572  
fred@acornfilm.com  
www.ulster.net/~fnagel/sisters.html

Formation: Established in 1989.

Activities: Over 35 people from the Hudson Valley have visited Larreynaga since the sister city was established in 1989. Thousands of dollars in medical aid and school supplies have been sent down as well, including a \$1,000/year scholarship fund supported by the Church of Messiah in Rhinebeck. The mission of the 2001 trip was to deliver scholarship money that would enable 35 students to attend elementary school. Also included was a small scholarship for a graduate of Larreynaga who plans to attend college in Leon. The sister city operates a bike project where individuals in Larreynaga pay off their bike. In addition, a health center has been constructed and staffed, and a stove project for the mothers of scholarship students where the mothers construct their own stoves with various materials. We have added a focus on the Latino community in the Hudson Valley with a soccer tournament and a dinner dance. We are also hiring a part time, Nicaraguan coordinator for our sister city, who will live in Leon.

## **Beckley- Mina El Limon Sister City Project**

### Contact Information:

CASA of Beckley  
Dan Doyle  
Box 1074  
Oak Hill, WV 25917  
(304) 574-3173  
(304) 465-5486 (fax)  
ddoyle@marshall.edu

Status: Not Official

Funding: Annual fundraising appeals.

Formation: Our group began in 1986, after several visits from representatives of CASA of Beckley to Mina El Limon. An agreement of friendship was signed.

Activities: We have sponsored four delegations to Nicaragua since 1986, and have hosted Nicaraguan speakers in our community in the US. We also send annual shipments of school and athletic supplies to Mina El Limon. We have been part of the Northeast Sister City Consortium since 1996.

Most Successful Activities: Annual material aid shipments. Children's Art Exchange.

## **Bend-Condega Friendship Project**

### **Contact information:**

Tim Jeffries  
60850 Windsor Drive  
Bend, OR 97702  
(541) 382-9222

Status: In Process

Funding: Donations, fundraising through educational events, raffles, and sales of organic, fair trade coffee.

Formation: In March 1985, members of the Fairfax California Grass-roots Peace and Environment received a sanction to be an official sister city project. In 1991, the Jeffries moved to Bend, Oregon and started a sister city project. This group was hoping to obtain official status from their town council in 1996 when Bend city council was approached to officially adopt the relationship. Central Oregon was much more conservative at that time, so the request was rejected. The political spectrum has broadened since then, so another attempt will be made in the future.

Activities: The project won the support of community leaders, attracted volunteers, donations, and other resources, and increased public awareness via lobbying in the US to end political and economic intervention and cancel "debt". The project also works on educational programs, presents slide shows, and provides outreach/pairing with other civic and political groups. There are annual delegations (now totaling eighteen), and we have provided material aid. Medical aid has mostly been in the form of fitting over 2600 people with prescription glasses, as well as dental and family planning assistance. The group has also set up community sales of organic, fair-traded coffee from Nicaragua and is working on buying from organic coops specifically in Condega.

Most Successful Activities: Delegations, and community education in Bend, Oregon.

Challenges: Political opposition from the US government in the past. Logistical challenges have included the Nicaragua customs bureaucracy, and transporting material via airlines.

## **Bennington – Somotillo Sister City Project**

### **Contact Information:**

Peace Resource Center of Bennington  
P.O. Box 1437  
Bennington, VT 05201  
jaycee@sover.net  
vt.peace@sover.net  
peaceresourcecenter.com/somotillo

Status: Official

Funding: Donations from individuals, churches, school groups, businesses and Rotary Clubs.

Formation: In 1988 a first delegation from Bennington visited Somotillo in response to the US sponsored Contra War, and then in 1990 the Peace Resource Center (PRC) joined five other sister city projects to form a Sister City Consortium, which then hired a coordinator to work in Nicaragua. In 1992 the Town of Bennington recognized the sister city, and in 2001 PRC left the Consortium to establish a direct link with Somotillo.

Activities: Past projects have been delegations, scholarships for Somotillo students, material aid shipments in the form of school and office supplies, medical supplies and equipment, sports equipment and clothing. There have also been & continue to be various community development projects such as the construction of water pipe systems, children's nutrition center, building of classrooms, and a high risk pregnancy center (Sala Materna), revolving loan fund for a pharmacy project and a teacher & health worker bicycle project. Current projects include: The Rural Eyeglass Project, an outgrowth of the Somotillo/Bennington Sister City Project, delegations, school scholarships for elementary & high school students and computer technology, women's chicken project, repair of water wells, support for the high risk pregnancy center, revolving bicycle loan fund, material aid shipments, revolving loan fund to support a bicycle project for teachers and the pen pal correspondence.

## Bloomington-Posoltega Sister Cities

### Contact Information:

Barbara Seitz de Martinez  
Sister Cities- Posoltega  
P.O. Box 1461  
Bloomington, IN 47402-1461  
(812) 855-6724 or (812) 855-6724  
seitzb@indiana.edu  
www.bloomington.in.us/~sci-pos/

Status: Official

Funding: 100% fundraising.

Formation: The sister city relationship began in 1988.

Activities: More than 15 delegations of residents from Bloomington to Posoltega. The organization strives to promote communication and mutual empowerment with projects that focus on the needs of children. We continuously support the Children's Lunch Program for malnourished children. Established a community garden. Delivered medicine, school supplies, lights, and sports and music equipment. Acted as official observers of the 1990 elections. Carried out three eye care missions, providing eye exams and glasses to those in need. Implemented a scholarship program in cooperation with various Nicaraguan universities. Supported community service learning projects and leadership development among youth in both cities, including an award winning Service Learning youth Exchange for high school students. Worked to sister organizations for schools and churches. Exchanged letters between school children in Bloomington and Posoltega. Provided educational forums about Posoltega in Bloomington. Conducted a pilot literacy project for children who had not been attending elementary school. Provided prenatal nutrition and health care training through the work of students and faculty from the I.U. School of Nursing. Brought the mayor of Posoltega, Felicita Zeledon, to Bloomington, for a month-long exchange of ideas and information. Spearheaded the relief effort in the aftermath of the devastation resulting from Hurricane Mitch.

## Boulder - Jalapa Friendship City Projects

### Contact Information:

Gary Mills & Ellen Klaver  
P.O. Box 7452  
Boulder, CO 80306  
(303) 499-0906  
(303) 494-3935 (fax)  
bjfcp@yahoo.com

Status: Official

Funding: 100% donations.

Formation: In 1984 a group of Boulder citizens began the Friendship City Projects in response to the war as an educational, anti-intervention, and peace/development organization. It has always been a community non-profit organization.

Activities: Yearly delegations- in 1994 we sponsored a Nicaraguan delegation to the US and have another one coming up in 2004. Material aid in the form of educational materials, medical equipment and medications. Educational presentations and community talks that have won the support of community leaders, attracted volunteers, and increased public awareness. Two main volunteers in Jalapa, one is a nurse and the other is coordinating the current water project-- two potable water systems have been completed.

Most Successful Activities: Delegations.

Challenges: Lack of interest in Nicaragua, being a small non-profit organization (less money for non-profits), and attracting more volunteers.

## Brookline – Quezalguaque Sister City Project

### Contact Information:

Maxine Shaw  
Brookline-Quezalguaque Sister City Project  
34 Greenough St.  
Brookline, MA 02445  
(617) 232-5824  
maxi.shaw2@verizon.net  
www.sistercity.brookline.ma.us

Status: Official

Funding: 100% Donations.

Formation: The project began in 1985 when chair, Maxine Shaw, was living and teaching in rural Quezalguaque. Friends in Brookline visited and saw the need for school supplies and began sending materials. In 1987, through a Town Meeting vote an official sister city relationship was established between Brookline and Quezalguaque.

Activities: The Brookline-Quezalguaque Sister City Project has provided a great deal of material aid in the form of medical and school supplies, tools for the high school carpentry shop that enabled the construction of desks, plumbing supplies to repair bathrooms, money to purchase a cow to provide milk for rural children, and two motorcycles used by the Ministry of Education to supervise and train rural teachers. Other activities include supporting Quezalguaque's music school, funding a scholarship program, and contributing to the student lunch program. When Hurricane Joan hit Quezalguaque, the Town of Brookline sent a container of powered milk and other aid, and when Hurricane Mitch hit, we raised \$47,000 for relief efforts. In 1989 the organization implemented a project to build and equip a health center, which opened in November 1989. In 2001 the Sister City Project began another construction project to build a library, and had its grand opening in February 2003.

## Burlington/Puerto Cabezas Sister City Program

### Contact Information:

Dan Higgins & Howard Jaentschke  
15 Beech Street  
Burlington, VT 05401  
(802) 860-4076 (Jaentschke)  
dhiggins@uvm.edu  
www.uvm.edu/sistercity

Status: Official

Funding: Yearly stipend from the city of \$2000, supplemented by fundraising, grant writing, and in-kind donations of local merchants.

Formation: In 1984 many residents of Burlington opposed the Reagan administration's aggressive efforts to destroy the Sandinista revolution, finance the Contra War, and destabilize Nicaraguan civil society. The Burlington City Council voted to adopt a sister city in Nicaragua, to begin a "people to people" relationship with residents of Nicaragua. Nicaraguan officials chose the municipality of Puerto Cabezas on Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast to be Burlington's sister city.

Activities: Material aid, especially in the 1990's, including computers, typewriters, sports equipment, educational materials, tree nursery and firefighting equipment. We have focused on projects relating to economic self-sufficiency, indigenous rights, building civil society, and environmental reconstruction. Numerous delegations over the years have included municipal workers, artists, musicians, college students, carpenters, environmentalists, and little league baseball players. The Sister City Program has always found support from community leaders and has kept the program in public awareness by utilizing local cable networks, newsletters, community festivals, and board member visits to area classrooms and conferences.

Most Successful Activities: Exchanges that involved and impacted residents from both the US and Nicaraguan communities.

Challenges: Raising money and keeping the Sister City Program in people's minds is more difficult since Nicaragua is no longer a subject of mainstream media.

## **Casa Baltimore/San Juan de Limay Sister City Project**

### **Contact Information:**

Barbara Larcom  
2640 St. Paul Street  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
(410) 662-6292  
(410) 576-7610 (fax)  
casabalitmore@igc.org

Status: Not Official

Funding: 70% donations, 10% sale of cultural goods, 20% self-pay for delegations.

Formation: In 1985, Nan and Phil McCurdy-Mitchell co-founded Casa Baltimore with support from a committee based at St. John's Church. They sold their possessions to fund their project and moved to San Juan de Limay.

Activities: Delegations to Nicaragua. Sponsorship of Nicaraguans to the US. Material aid including medicine, medical equipment, toys and used clothing. We also fund a revolving loan fund and a sustainable agriculture project, place volunteers in the sister city, and support a child care center and scholarship program.

Most Successful Activities: Revolving loan fund and delegations.

Challenges: Communications – lack of fax or email contact between sister cities; only a monthly phone contact, which has proved helpful.

## **Central Jersey/Masaya Nicaragua Friendship Cities Project**

### **Contact Information:**

Brooks Smith  
170 Watchung Avenue  
North Plainfield, NJ 07060  
(908) 755-2781  
(908) 756-7981 (fax)

Status: Not Official

Funding: 80% individual donations, 20% grants.

Formation: In 1986 several residents traveled to Nicaragua. Upon their return, they chose to form a people-to-people organization.

Activities: We have folded our efforts into the efforts of the organization Peaceworks. In cooperation with Peaceworks, we ship 2 containers per year and organize yearly delegations to Nicaragua.

## **Ciudad Hermana Task Force of Metro Justice (Rochester/El Sauce)**

### **Contact information:**

36 St. Paul Street  
Suite 112  
Rochester, New York 14604  
info@pregnantcow.com  
www.metrojustice.org/ufup.html  
www.pregnantcow.com

Status: Informal

Funding: Donations.

Formation: Metro Justice is a membership organization which works for peace and justice on local, state, national, and global levels. The organization is a result of the merger of Metro Act and The Peace and Justice Education Center, with roots traced back to 1965 when the predecessor of Metro Act, Friends of Fight, was formed. The Ciudad Hermana Task Force is a small group of people who have provided support and financial help to the people of rural Nicaragua for over 15 years

Activities: Every two years a delegation to Nicaragua is organized. Currently, they conduct a rotating crop and cattle loan fund, which enables a collective farm to maintain itself and a scholarship program that provides funds for books, clothing and food for village school children. Past activities have included a potable water project and an electrification project that has brought clean water and electricity to El Sauce, as well as the provision of sewing machines to a women's sewing collective.

## **Concord-San Marcos Sister Cities**

### **Contact Information:**

Steven B. Bloomfield  
76 Prairie St.  
Concord, MA 01742  
(617) 495-2125  
sbloomfield@wcfia.harvard.edu  
concordprairie@aol.com

Status: Official

Funding: All private donations from residents of Concord and nearby towns.

Formation: In 1986 Concord citizens concerned about the growing threat of war between Nicaragua and the US organized a committee to promote a sister city relationship between Concord and San Marcos. In the same year a town meeting vote officially sanctioned the organization.

Activities: Yearly delegations, and a few visits of San Marcos residents to Concord. In 1997, they established a micro-bank with a revolving loan program, which is still in use today. \$30,000 in material aid including a new truck for medical use, complete dental care, medical supplies, and school equipment. We also helped fund a few university students. Currently there is a pen pal project between the sister city elementary and middle schools. Prospective projects include solid waste management and community development in a San Marcos neighborhood.

Most Successful: Micro-finance program and school to school cooperation.

Challenges: Administration; tightening communication and implementation.

## DOS PUEBLOS: New York – Tipitapa Sister City Project

### Contact Information:

2565 Broadway, #173  
New York, NY 10025  
(646) 610-2215  
(212) 531-2525 (fax)  
dospueblosscp@aol.com  
www.tipitapa.org

Status: Official

Funding: Grants, individual donations, and fundraising events.

Formation: In 1987, a sub-committee of the Committee for Non-Intervention in Central America wrote to the Nicaraguan government requesting to be paired with a Nicaraguan sister city. Three months later we received a letter saying we had been assigned Tipitapa. The first “delegation” went to Tipitapa in May 1987.

Activities: We sponsor annual delegations to Nicaragua, and to the US. Every year we try and send material aid to Nicaragua. We pair schools in both cities, and organize educational and cultural events. In addition, we raise funds for a number of social and economic projects in Tipitapa, ranging from children’s feeding centers and pre-schools, to clean water projects, sustainable agricultural projects, a chicken bank, working with street youth, and organizing to defend labor, women’s health, and environmental rights.

Most Successful Activities: We have been instrumental in establishing the Municipal Coordinating Council for Sister Cities twinned with Tipitapa (COMPALCIHT)—now a recognized Tipitapa not-for-profit organization with its own *personalidad juridica*. With COMPALCIHT as our official partner organization, we have worked successfully with a number of projects, and have sustained strong and personal people-to-people relationships, some of which are 16 years old! At the same time, we have maintained the ongoing support of our community in New York, and kept their focus on Nicaragua (when it fell off the front page of the news). Dos Pueblos is a 501(c)3 organization that depends heavily on individual donations.

## Friends of San Juan de Oriente

### Contact Information:

Donald Coan  
640 38th Street  
Sacramento, CA 95816  
(916) 457-0213  
dwcoan@earthlink.net

Status: Not Official

Funding: 95% from sales of pottery from San Juan de Oriente, and a few private donations.

Formation: Peter Feeley (Sacramento Religious Community for Peace) visited a sister city conference in Managua in 1988. There, Peter was introduced to the mayor of San Juan de Oriente. He came back with slides of the community for a meeting which got the sister city relationship going.

Activities: Annual delegations. We also provide educational and some medical material aid. In addition, we work with the local Central America Action Committee on educational and cultural events. Raised funds through sales of pottery from San Juan de Oriente that were used to re-build kilns destroyed by the July 2000 earthquake, to open community library at the public school, to install flush toilets at new Baptist school, and to supply several First Aid stations in town.

Most Successful Activities: The sales of pottery at various church and community events has given us the opportunity to talk to people about our project and recruit participants in our delegations.

Challenges: Stimulating sufficient interest to participate in the board of directors.

Suggestions: A board of directors has led to effective decision making for this group. Remaining politically neutral has allowed this group to work well with the mayor regardless of party affiliation.

## Merced/Somoto Sister City Committee

### Contact Information:

Betty J. Stewart (president) (209) 722-0401  
Shelly Scribner (vice-pres.) (209) 521-6304  
1279 Kensington Drive  
Merced, CA 95340  
bettystewart@neteze.com  
dhetland@comcast.com

Status: Official

Funding: Donations, grant writing, yard sales, raffles, sale of fair trade, organic Nicaraguan coffee, and craft sales. City provides a meeting place and mail the monthly newsletters.

Formation: In 1987, several members of a Central America Support Group applied to the Nicaraguan embassy for a sister pairing. In 1988, Somoto was named the sister city to Merced. They also took on Friendship City status until 1992. In March 1992, city councils of both cities officially voted to sanction sister city status, and we have been active members of Sister Cities International ever since.

Activities: Yearly delegations to Nicaragua, which school supplies, sports and medical equipment are regularly taken. A pen pal program and cultural exchange between school children. A scholarship program which sends \$50 monthly to eight university students has been successful for the past ten years (plus \$5 monthly to seven high school students). The latest project (January, 2002 – September 2002) was buying a used bus for the Somoto soccer team, “ Real Madriz”, which we drove to Somoto. The bus carried 231 boxes of medical and sports equipment that was collected from a “Clean Your Desk” campaign at 16 Merced Schools. A clean water project was complete, which benefited 200 families. We also work closely with a Somoto volunteer organization called the Association for the Development of Somoto (APRODES).

Most Successful Activities: The scholarship program.

Challenges: Attracting young enthusiastic volunteers.

## Milwaukee – Ticuantepe Sister City Partnership

### Contact Information:

Steve Watrous  
2455 West Juneau Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53233  
(414) 933 – 3033  
watrous@csd.uwm.edu

Status: Official

Funding: Not funded.

Formation: In the late 1980s the sister city partnership was officially sanctioned by a city council resolution.

Activities: Delegations with material aid during the 1980s. Habitat for Humanity construction crew in 1990. A few people from Milwaukee maintain minimal contact through election observation delegations, most recently in 2001.

Most Successful: Election observation delegations.

Challenges: The organization is now dormant, lacking a solid contact in Ticuantepe and a committed group in Milwaukee.

## New Haven/Leon Sister City Project

### Contact Information:

Jean Silk, Executive Director  
608 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 562-1607  
(203) 624-1683 (fax)  
nh@newhavenleon.org  
www.newhavenleon.org

**Status:** Official

**Funding:** Funded by private donations, sales of cultural goods such as woven goods, coffee, pottery, and other items.

**Formation:** The NH/LSCP began in 1984 in response to the aggressive posture of the US government towards Nicaragua at that time. Residents of New Haven agreed that a peaceful sister city relationship would better express the will of the American people.

**Activities:** Send at least three delegations to Nicaragua each year. Recent delegations performed community service, explored issues of sustainable development, and pursued research for an academic course. We have sent more than 700 delegates in the past 19 years. We have put a moratorium on sending Material Aid in 2004. Through our Peace and Justice volunteer program, college students and professionals have the opportunity to apply their skills to projects in Leon for a period of a month to a year. Programs in Leon focus on sustainable development in rural communities.

**Most Successful Activities:** Delegations, material aid, and developing a strong non-profit organization in Leon that is staffed by Nicaraguan employees.

**Challenges:** Organizational development as the Leon office grows in size and strength, and the relationship between our two offices evolve.

## Newark United Methodist Church

### Contact Information:

Outreach Committee  
69 E. Main Street  
Newark, DE 19711-4645  
(302) 368-8774; (302) 292-1899  
(302) 368-8705 (fax)  
www.newark-umc.org

**Status:** Not Official

**Funding:** Church budget, which is allotted by the outreach committee.

**Formation:** The relationship with the sister city San Francisco Libre began in 1986 by the Outreach Committee of the Newark United Methodist Church after beginning a relationship with Fr. Bernard Costra and his parish. The aim was to help those in Central America.

**Activities:** In the past, we organized delegations to Nicaragua and sponsored Nicaraguan students to the US, as well as providing material aid which included clothing, eyeglasses, school supplies, and a bus. Currently the church supports a missionary, Nan McCurdy, in San Francisco Libre, who focuses on women's advocacy.

**Most Successful Activities:** Supporting Nan McCurdy and the current missionary in the sister city.

## Newton-San Juan del Sur Sister City Project

### Contact Information:

David and Margaret Morganroth Gullette  
68 Pembroke St.  
Newton, MA 02458  
david.gullette@simmons.edu  
mgullette@msn.com  
www.newtonsanjuan.org

Status: Official

Funding: Donations. Fundraising in Newton.

Formation: The sister city project began in 1988 with a visit to San Juan del Sur by Rodney and Betsy Barker. Projects began in 1989 when Margaret and David Gullette spent three months there.

Activities: Education and health care remain this sister city project's main priorities. We have helped to build or renovate seventeen school houses, and constructed two homes for teachers. In addition, we have helped to install a water-purification system for remote villages. The Newton sister city project also serves as the pass-through for major grant-funded literacy and higher education/health/ economic development projects for adults, especially women. We send annual shipments of school and medical supplies, books, clothing, shoes and toys to San Juan, in addition to organizing many volunteer initiatives, such as work and friendship brigades, and other delegations of Newton community member volunteers to San Juan del Sur.

## Norwalk/Nagarote Sister City Project

### Contact Information:

Tish Gibbs and Virginia Auster  
P.O. Box 382  
Norwalk, CT 06852  
(203) 846-1109, Gibbs  
(203) 846-9288, Auster  
(203) 846-1109 (fax)  
nncsp@sistercityproject.org  
www.sistercityproject.org

Status: Not Official

Funding: Membership donations, grants, sales of coffee, note cards, Guatemalan crafts from Mayaworks, Gift of Stock, Work-A-Thon, shares in Pig Loans, donations, raffle, and bank interest.

Formation: In 1986 the project was founded by Scott Harris and Barbara Hudgins. Others involved included Tish Gibbs and Virginia Auster. All four are still members of the Board of Directors.

Activities: Delegations to Nicaragua and the US. Twice a year used clothing is sent, and the money is then used to contribute to other projects in Nagarote. Other aid sent includes medical and educational material, desks, sewing machines, computers, and other requested items. A local US Montessori School works with teachers in Nagarote in using Montessori methods, currently arranging a Mexican Montessori trainer to visit Nagarote. Each year we conduct a Work-A-Thon where our members volunteer to work a day on a project in Norwalk and solicit sponsors to support them. \$2,000 to \$3,000 is usually raised for the sister city project. A revolving bicycle loan fund to help health care workers, teachers, and other municipal workers buy bikes. We have helped three farmers construct drip irrigation systems and provided an agronomist to assist them in growing organic produce. Loans were distributed to eighteen families to buy pigs as well as paying for an agronomist to assist them in breeding.

Challenges: Since the New England Sister City Consortium has disbanded, we have hired a field representative for Nagarote, which opens up many opportunities as well as financial challenges.

## **Pittsfield/Malpaisillo Sister City Project**

### **Contact Information:**

Jim Moran & Susan Gordan  
306 West Street  
Pittsfield, MA 01201  
(413) 445-5246 (phone & fax)  
bamistad@berkshire.rr.com

Status: Official

Funding: 80% from annual fundraising event (all-day musical festival), 20% individual donations.

Formation: PMSCP is sponsored by Berkshire Amistad. It was founded in 1984 in response to Reagan's policies against Nicaragua. A group of 25 people began to educate themselves on Nicaragua, and decided to initiate a sister city project.

Activities: Delegations to and from the US and Nicaragua. Material aid shipments. Annual fundraiser that sustains the organization. We organized a microenterprise loan program that is primarily utilized by single mothers. In addition, we work with a national Nicaraguan organization, Casa de la Mujer, assisting in providing donated computers, computer classes and possible internet access to a community who usually must travel to Leon for any educational classes.

Most Successful Activities: Annual fundraiser and providing computer access to residents of Malpaisillo.

Challenges: Fundraising and general lack of interest in Nicaragua.

## **Platteville-Mateare Sister City Communities Project**

### **Contact Information:**

Kristi Hart, Chairperson  
5755 West Road  
Potosi, WI 53280  
(608) 763-2927

Status: Official

Funding: In the past, 10% donations, 90% fundraising.

Formation: The sister city was formed as an outgrowth of the Southwest Wisconsin Peace Fellowship in 1990. It formed with the help of the Wisconsin Coordinating Council on Nicaragua (WCCN).

Activities: Currently the organization is dormant. Undesignated funds were used for a donation to the Richland Center-Santa Theresa Sister City. In the past, the organization has sponsored delegations from Platteville to Mateare, and from Mateare to Platteville. Material aid included school supplies, sewing supplies, and occasional furnishings/supplies for a health center. Major focus was books for municipal schools and a collection of hand tools and books for the municipal library.

Challenges: Communication, and changes in mayor's office resulting in lack of response and cooperation.

## Project Minnesota-Leon (PML)

### Contact Information:

Nancy Trechel  
7455 S. Lake Sarah Drive  
Rockford, MN 55373  
(763) 477-6366  
info@mn-leon.org  
www.mn-leon.org/

Status: Not Official

Funding: Individuals 75%, churches 23%, other groups 2%.

Formation: PML began in 1984 through the efforts of Bryce Hamilton and Mary Foster after they participated in delegations to Nicaragua. Fr. Jose Maria Delgado from Leon and Bryce and Mary expressed positive interest for sister organizations. As a result the sister state relationship formed between Minnesota and Leon.

Activities: We sponsor 2-3 delegations a year to Nicaragua, as well as sponsorship of delegations from Nicaragua to the US. Currently PML supports a wide array of projects in Nicaragua such as the Children's Art Project, CEFER, which is an alternative school assisting the academic and vocational needs of rural families and youth, preschool teacher trainings, the Maternal Infant Center/Children's Cafeteria, midwives, and a successful revolving basic grains loan project in the mountain community of Talolinga.

Most Successful Activities: Preschool teacher trainings, CEFER, and the Santa Rosa Health Center.

Challenges: Fundraising, the PML website, and its advocacy component.

## Project Gettysburg/Leon (PG/L)

### Contact Information:

Bruce Bigelow  
49 West Broadway  
Gettysburg, PA 17325  
(717) 334-0556

Status: Official

Funding: Fundraising and pledges.

Formation: In 1987 a small group of people who visited Nicaragua decided to start PG/L, which became a grassroots organization that links the people of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania with the citizens of Leon, Nicaragua through this sister city relationship. On February 13, 1990, the Borough Council of Gettysburg officially accepted Leon as its sister city.

Activities: Regular delegations and special community projects. Among other things, we support a small graduate art school, an alternative school providing agricultural courses, and the education for preschool teachers. We helped to set up a health center for mothers and infants in Santa Rosa, and operate small projects in different communities in Leon. We work with an advisory council of Nicaraguan community leaders and have just begun a long term relationship with two new communities. We maintain a full-time coordinator in Leon, and work in partnership with Project Minnesota/Leon.

## Richland Center-Santa Teresa Sister City Project

### Contact Information:

Jane Furchgott, president  
Stein Goering, vice-president  
P.O. Box 483  
Richland Center, WI 53581  
(608) 583-2431 (608) 583-2966 (fax)  
sgoering@mwt.net

Status: Official

Funding: Donations 70%, benefit events 20%, and grants 10%.

Formation: Our group began in 1987 as a positive gesture towards Nicaragua in reaction to the negative role of the US government supporting the Contras. Connections were made with the Wisconsin Coordinating Council on Nicaragua (WCCN) and the Nicaraguan embassy to get Richland Center paired with Santa Teresa.

Activities: We sponsor delegations to Nicaragua and visits from Nicaraguans to Richland Center. We regularly send medical, dental, and educational supplies to Santa Teresa. Over the past three years, we have worked in the areas of health, community gardens, agriculture, education, sea turtles, and community organizing. One member of our group lived in Santa Teresa from 2000 to 2003, and worked on these various projects with the people from Santa Teresa. Currently, we are concentrating on the villages in Chacocente Wildlife Refuge in terms of community organizing and aid in natural resource conservation. We also helped to build a school in the village of Escalante, and supplied various material for three Chacocente schools. The Richland Hospital is planning a delegation and survey of health care needs in Santa Teresa. We organized sister schools between rural and urban Santa Teresa. We also sponsor speakers on Latin American issues.

Most Successful Activities: Raising Money- our Burrito Supper is a good fundraiser. Slide shows from recent travelers to Santa Teresa.

Challenges: To help create sustainable development and co-manage the Chacocente Wildlife Refuge with local people from Chacocente.

## Tucson – Santo Domingo Sister City Program

### Contact Information:

David Piper, Mark Mayer, Socorro Sastre  
P.O. Box 40043  
Tucson, AZ 85717  
(520) 743-3306; (520) 326-4522  
dpiper@ahsl.arizona.edu  
mmayer1@mindspring.com

Status: Official

Formation: In 1987, a group of Tucsonans showed interest in a Nicaraguan sister city, and a representative attended the US-Nicaragua Sister Cities Conference in Seattle. Most of the people in the group had been involved in the Peace in Central America Coalition. The following year the group formalized as the Tucson-Santo Domingo Sister City Program and a six-member delegation visited Santo Domingo to initiate the relationship. The Tucson City Council passed a resolution on October 2, 1989 formalizing the ties.

Activities: The Program has sponsored many delegations to Santo Domingo, including an engineer and a plumber investigating the water system, a team delivering a school bus filled with Hurricane Joan relief aid, and six official observers of the 1990 elections. Members attended the 1988 and 1994 US-Nicaragua Sister Cities Conferences in Managua, the latter along with counterparts from Santo Domingo working on the water system. Visits by Nicaraguans to Tucson have also been sponsored including Duo Guardabarranco in a major concert in 1991 and the mayor of Santo Domingo in 1995. The Program has provided substantial material aid to Santo Domingo, including the hurricane relief bus in 1987, a shipping container filled with water system supplies in 1994, and lesser amounts of educational, medical, and plumbing supplies at various other times. Clothing was also donated to the general relief effort for Nicaragua after Hurricane Mitch struck in 1998. After a more recent period of inactivity, the organization is initiating efforts to continue to work on the municipal water project in Santo Domingo.

## WCCN's Madison – Managua Sister City Project

### Contact Information:

Carlos Arenas, WCCN Executive Director  
P.O. Box 1534  
Madison, WI 53701  
(608) 257-7230  
(608) 257-7904 (fax)  
wccn@wccnica.org  
www.wccnica.org

Status: Official

Funding: Funding is mostly from individuals small institutional donors, some grants and sales. WCCN receives a small grant from the city of Madison each year to support the sister city project.

Formation: In 1984 the Wisconsin Coordinating Council on Nicaragua (WCCN) was founded in order to promote citizen diplomacy on the grassroots level between the people of Wisconsin and Nicaragua. It was approved by a resolution passed by the Madison Common Council and a declaration from the Madison mayor in 1987.

Activities: WCCN facilitates two main projects, the Nicaraguan Credit Alternatives Fund (NICA) and the US-Nicaragua Women's Empowerment Project. The NICA Fund channels investments from socially responsible investors in the US and Canada to qualified borrowers in Nicaragua supporting community-based economic development. The Women's Empowerment Project focuses on issues of gender inequity and violence against women. Both projects conduct yearly delegations to Nicaragua, as well as sponsoring numerous visits to Madison and other areas by Nicaraguans including the Ocho de Marzo Women's Theatre Group in 1993, 1997, and 2003.

Most Successful Activities: The NICA Fund and the US-Nicaragua Women's Empowerment Project.

Challenges: Continuing to find ways that benefit both the people of Madison and the people of Managua.

## Yellow Springs - Jicaro Sister Village

### Contact Information:

Robert Brecha  
352 Dayton St.  
Yellow Springs, OH 45387  
(937) 767-1348  
Robert.Brecha@notes.udayton.edu

Status: Official

Funding: 90% summer music camp fundraiser concert. 10% donations.

Formation: In 1986 the sister village began by a contact through a Witness for Peace delegation, and was officially sanctioned through a city council resolution.

Activities: Material aid in the form of Filtron water filters that are distributed in the village of Jicaro and its surrounding communities in order to make available clean drinking water. Delegations of students from Antioch College in Yellow Springs who choose a semester in Jicaro as a co-op experience.

Most Successful Activities: Personal contacts and student visits.

Challenges: The distance between sister villages, making it difficult to efficiently supervise projects.

**Notes:**

Nicaraguan Credit  
Alternatives Fund

# The NICA Fund



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**WCCN**  
**P.O. Box 1534**  
**Madison, WI 53701**

**608-257-7230**  
**608-257-7904 (fax)**

**wccn@wccnica.org**  
**www.wccnica.org**