

Young Professional Cultural Experience
Springfield Sister Cities Association

Mission Statement

To invest in the young professionals (YP) of Springfield by affording them a firsthand opportunity to heighten their cultural understanding and broaden their peer-to-peer professional connections on Sister Cities-guided trips to Tlaquepaque, Mexico or Isesaki, Japan.

Community Benefits:

1. Engaged YPs who will carry this experience into the various roles they play in our community including business, education, charitable work and interpersonal relationships.
2. Connected YPs who will value living and working in Springfield for the diversity of opportunities it offers both them and their families.
3. Confident YPs who have a better sense of their local and global communities as they advance in their careers and become corporate and community leaders.
4. Invested YPs who desire to support individuals and nonprofits which will help build a stronger Springfield

Professional Goals

1. Gain a global perspective. In this age of global connectedness workers must be able to perform in diverse environments. Participants will become better equipped to help move their companies forward if they have adequately developed cross-cultural minded knowledge, skills, and abilities.
2. Facilitate peer-to-peer engagements. The YPs will have the opportunity to meet with their foreign counterparts who work in a similar business or trade. Job shadowing opportunities and site tours of businesses will be scheduled. Ensuing idea exchanges will undoubtedly follow. The knowledge and connections made will be long-lasting.
3. Engage creative thinking. Employers will benefit from a fresh perspective. Stepping outside one's comfort zone to experience and embrace new ways of getting things done could translate into greater efficiencies, employee morale and confidence.
4. Foster an appreciation for diversity in the workplace.
5. Develop a well-rounded, culturally aware citizen and strong leader for the years ahead.

Personal Goals:

1. Build positive relationships with fellow trip participants.
2. Attain a greater appreciation for other cultures and ways of life through firsthand experience.
3. Meet new business associates and friends that could develop into lasting connections or potential future business opportunities.
4. Pick up (or dust off) language skills.
5. Enjoy new experiences and gain a greater appreciation and understanding for the world we share.
6. Learn new skills and develop confidence in trying new things.
7. Visit and learn about historical sites and appreciate the progresses mankind has made over the centuries
8. Develop a refined appreciation for global viewpoints
9. Approach problem solving with a global perspective and abandon prejudices.
10. Make a positive impact both for our sister cities and for Springfield

Mark Twain once said, *"Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one's lifetime."*