



Winter

Last year Sister Cities (Albuquerque and Cincinnati) provided laptops to the underground schools and a kindergarten. Genevieve Trainor, Face of Media received the message below. The impact of just one laptop!

This is a message I just received from one of the kindergarten principals we delivered a laptop to (Kazka Kindergarten).

Svitlana (principal) shared that the laptop we brought to her kindergarten increased their online teaching capacity by 200% – she and four teachers had been sharing one laptop among the five of them before we brought them one.

January 21 Mexico/New Mexico Advocacy Day

January 24 ASCF International Tea 12:00pm to 3:00pm at the ABQ Art Museum - Open to the Public

February 21 Mochitsuki - Japanese New Year's event 11:00am to 1:00pm at ABQ BioPark with Sasebo participation

February 21 Chinese New Year event at the Chinese Culture Center, 472 Adam Street SE, Albuquerque, NM 87103 from 1:00pm to 2:30pm

May 2nd Children's Day - Japanese celebration at ABQ BioPark with Sasebo participation. Check the ABQ BioPark calendar for the time

May TBD Lanzhou Delegation in Albuquerque to celebrate the 30 year anniversary of Albuquerque and Lanzhou partnership

June 7 ASCF Annual Meeting time and place TBD



October 3rd Albuquerque 2025 Staying Engaged in a Divided by Pam Feather photo credits: Susanne Pence and Molly Wright

ABQ Global Engagement team and sponsors had the honor of hosting the ABQ 2025 Staying Engaged in a Divided World on October 3rd at the University of New Mexico. Over a 100 UNM Students, ABQ City Government personnel, and Citizens were in attendance.

The conference was opened by Mayor Keller of Albuquerque and Max Gruner, Director of Albuquerque Economic Development Department. Followed by two dynamic guest speakers; Dr. Trita Parsi, Executive Vice President of the Quincy Institute who spoke on "Where in the World Are We? The State of World Affairs" and Jody Olson, Peace Corps Director, 2018 – 2021. She spoke to the attendees about her Peace Corps experiences and views of "The State of World Affairs".



Max Gruner, Director of Economic Development



Mayor Tim Keller



Melora Palmer, Director of ABQ Global Ties,
Dr. Nicole Tami, Executive Director of
Global Education Initiatives, Pam Feather
President of ASCF

October 3rd Albuquerque 2025 Staying Engaged in a Divided World by Fabiola Melendez photo credits Susanne Pence and Molly Wright

I had the honor of participating in a panel discussion on Intergenerational Approaches to Cross-Cultural Exchange alongside students from Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. This amazing panel brought together so many thoughtful and diverse perspectives, each shaped by different life experiences and generational viewpoints. The discussion highlighted how meaningful cross-cultural exchange is strengthened when multiple generations come together to learn from one another.



**Jody Olson, Peace Corps
Director, 2018 – 2021**



**Dr Parsi, Executive Vice President
of the Quincy Institute**



**Intergenerational Approaches
to Cross-Cultural Exchange**

2025 Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

On October 4th, Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation in partnership with the ABQ Arts and Culture Department hosted Andrew Chapuma, Ambassador for King Kanyanta Manga II of the Bemba Tribe in Zambia, Africa and Viktoriia Salova, Artist from Kharkiv, Ukraine. They were able to be right next to the laying out of the envelope on the field, the inflation of the balloons, and the field full of beautiful colors. The balloons were not able to lift off due to wind and atmosphere conditions.

They enjoyed meeting Nan Masland, Director of the Albuquerque Balloon Museum and Lynne Newton, Curator of the Albuquerque Balloon Museum. They had an immersive time at the Albuquerque Balloon Museum.

Thank You to everyone from Everyone at Albuquerque Arts and Culture who helped make this a memorable experience for our guests!



Andrew Chapuma, Ambassador for King Kanyanta Manga II of the Bemba Tribe in Zambia



Left to Right Lynne Newton, ABQ Balloon Museum Curator, Andrew Chapuma, Ambassador for King Kanyanta Manga II of the Bemba Tribe in Zambia, Nan Masland, ABQ Balloon Museum Director, Viktoriia Salova Kharkiv, Ukraine Artist

SCI Leadership Meeting in Tempe, Arizona

By: Andrew Tafoya

The Tempe Conference was quite a memorable experience. Deepening the connection and learning from our regional cities and states was a pleasant experience. To firsthand see and learn the ways in which Tempe Sisters Cities is actively engaging with its international partners to foster student exchanges and enhance engagement between Tempe. Likewise, seeing how the Arizona community bonds together to promote strengthening these relationships was well worth while. Additionally having fun and enjoying the Oktoberfest showcased firsthand how a Sister City relationship has culminated into a cherished staple of the community. The Hackett house, again was a treat to see, a home in which the Sister City relationships are showcased and used as both a learning tool and an economic opportunity to further the mission of Tempe Sister Cities. I enjoyed and learned quite a lot during the trip, and am even inspired to deepen our regional connections in the Southwest.



Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Santa Fe Sister Cities
reunited

Continued....

By: Fabiola Melendez

The Sister Cities International Leadership meeting in Tempe, provided valuable insights and meaningful learning opportunities. Getting to learn about the diverse work of Sister Cities across the globe, gaining insight into how different communities foster international relationships through cultural exchange, education, and economic collaboration. A highlight of the leadership meeting was a behind the scenes look at Tempe's Oktoberfest, where we learned how the event began and how it has continued to grow into a successful annual tradition. The meeting also provided a valuable opportunity to reconnect with fellow New Mexico Sister Cities leaders strengthening relationships within our state while learning more about the city of Tempe and its approach to international partnerships. Overall, the SCI Leadership meeting reinforced the importance of collaboration, shared learning and relationship-building.



Fabiola Melendez with Sister Cities international staff



Sister Cities Chairs



**This Shachi was a
presented to the City of
Phoenix By
its Sister City of Himeji,
Japan in 1991**

SCI Leadership Meeting



Oompah Band at Oktoberfest tour

Lusaka, Zambia receives Lego Robotic Kits from Albuquerque Sister Cities

Grace Foh-Amoaning, Lusaka Sister Cities Liaison for Albuquerque, delivered Lego Robotic Kits to Mr. Tembo class at computer classes at David Kaunda National STEM Secondary School in Lusaka. ASCF is very much indebted to Andrew Chapuma, Ambassador to King Kanyanta Manga II of the Bemba Tribe for carrying "extra" baggage containing the Lego Robotic Kits. Enjoy the pictures of the students learning and building robots for a robotics competition. They have been waiting patiently for the Lego Robotic Kits to arrive!

The Lego Robotic Kits were donated by Cheryl Kerby, a former Middle and High School Technology Teacher. Thank you Cheryl Kerby!



Students with their Lego Robotic Kit



Students working together



Student presenting his work



Students working together

7th US-China Sister Cities Conference by Lin Ye

From October 25–27 and October 28–30, our delegation traveled to China to attend the 7th China US Sister Cities Conference and to visit our sister city. The conference gathered 180 representatives from 28 U.S. states and 36 cities and counties, along with over 200 representatives from 28 provinces in China on October 25 - 27. Participants exchanged ideas on economic development, education, culture, innovation, and people-to-people cooperation. We met with Lanzhou delegation led by the deputy mayor Jin Fang during the conference time.



Lin Ye with Deputy Mayor Jin Fang and delegation



Deputy Mayor Jin Fang and Delegation during a collaboration meeting



New Mexico Sister Cities Delegation



Economic Development Panel

ABQ Delegation visit to Lanzhou by Lin Ye

We accepted the invitation from our sister city and conducted a productive on-site visit on October 28 - 30. The delegation met with local officials and partners, visited key cultural and economic sites, and discussed opportunities for expanded exchange and cooperation. The visit strengthened mutual understanding and identified priorities for future collaboration in education, culture, economic development, and youth engagement.

A major focus of the visit was preparation for the 30th anniversary of our sister-city relationship next year. Both sides expressed strong interest in holding commemorative events in each city and developing special programs to highlight three decades of partnership.



Lanzhou, China from the air



Zhongshan Bridge



The delegation meeting with local officials and partners



Lanzhou airport art

Connecting Classrooms: A Cultural Exchange Between Albuquerque and Hualien by: Yu-Lin Shen

Our recent cultural exchange project brought Albuquerque and Hualien closer together than ever!

In the fall of 2025, the Hualien Committee facilitated a dynamic cultural exchange between students from Albuquerque Public Schools' Career Enrichment Center and their peers at Hualien Senior High School in Taiwan. The project launched with the Albuquerque students producing short films introducing themselves and the unique landscapes and heritage of New Mexico. This gave Hualien students a front-row seat to New Mexican culture, and sparked an interactive dialogue, with Hualien students providing feedback in both English and Chinese and voting on their favorite presentations. One of the top videos can be accessed here:

<https://youtu.be/gew79M3cFlc?si=ZHIIYB21DaeinXO>

The highlight of the program occurred on November 12, 2025, when students bridged a 15-hour time difference for a spirited virtual meet-up. The energy was high as students chatted in English and Chinese for an hour. This bilingual exchange was so well-received by both cohorts, leaving everyone eager for our next virtual gathering this spring!



Online virtual session with all students meeting each other



Hualien Senior High School students



Teacher helping students

Some 2025 Highlights from Sister Cities across New Mexico By Richard Buckler

Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation (ASCF) Treasurer/ Sister Cities International's (SCI) NM State Rep/SCI Zambia Country Rep

What is the purpose of Sister Cities, started by President Eisenhower almost 60 years ago?

- Fostering global peace and understanding through direct community-to-community partnerships
- Creating people-to-people bonds that go beyond government, focusing on cultural, educational, trade, and development exchanges to build mutual respect, solve problems together, and promote prosperity
- Under the core vision of citizen diplomacy, promoting peace one individual and one community at a time, transcending borders for shared learning and development.

Four cities in New Mexico officially participate: Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Las Cruces, and Clovis. More information may be available from newsletters and news posted at respective websites, such as <https://www.abqsistercities.org/> and <https://lcnmsistercities.org/>.

Here's an overview of some of the happenings:

2025 was an eventful year for Sister Cities in New Mexico, as well as in several of our International Cities partnered through Sister Cities International (SCI).

- The City of Albuquerque asked ASCF to partner with Artists at Risk (out of Finland) to host Kharkiv, Ukraine artist Viktoriia Salova for the entire year, culminating in a special art showing on December 14 at the Albuquerque Museum. Ms. Salova returns to Ukraine in January.
- Joining forces to help supply 28 laptops to a couple of underground elementary schools in Kharkiv were the Kharkiv committees in Albuquerque and Cincinnati, Ohio.
- The Consul of Mexico, Patricia Pinzón, engaged with Albuquerque's Chihuahua and Guadalajara Committees in several ways, such as the Cinco de Mayo celebration, and the promotion of stronger economic and cultural ties with ASCF's committees and the NM Hispano Chamber of Commerce. Reciprocal visits occurred in May and September.
- Trips to Germany were offered in June this year through the respective Las Cruces and Albuquerque sister city programs. Las Cruces sent a mayoral delegation to their German sister city of Nienburg celebrating its 1000 th year old birthday, while Albuquerque visited its sister city of Helmstedt. Both German cities are in the Lower Saxony area of Germany.

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- In September Albuquerque participated in the SCI Japan-U.S. Summit in Osaka, Japan prior to then visiting its sister city of Sasebo—kicking off the 60 th anniversary of partnership coming up in 2026.
- In October Albuquerque also sent Lanzhou Chair Lin Ye to the 7 th Annual U.S.-China Sister Cities Summit in Hangzhou, China, after which Chair Ye was able to visit Lanzhou to help start planning for a September 2026 trip to celebrate Albuquerque’s 30 th sister city anniversary with Lanzhou.
- Santa Fe Sister Cities President/former SCI Board Chair Carol Robertson Lopez was a keynote speaker at the 7 th Annual U.S. China Sister Cities Summit, having been instrumental 7 years ago to start this annual event.
- During 2025, Albuquerque has been working on adding back Gijon, Spain as a sister city, as well as establishing a special friendship city relationship with Jericho, Palestine.
- Rehovot, Israel was visited just this December by Albuquerque-Rehovot Committee Co-Chair Andrew Leverett to hand deliver a letter from Mayor Keller to Mayor Matan Dil.
- SCI needed some additional help this year with the passing of Pat Fallin, a stalwart in SCI circles, especially in Oklahoma, Colorado, and California. Pat was a longtime SCI board member, SCI Oklahoma State Representative, and passionate citizen diplomat. Her many duties were divided up, and I was asked to take on the responsibility of to run the monthly Zoom meetings for all SCI State Representatives across the U.S.
- With President Eisenhower founding the sister cities program in 1956, SCI will celebrate its 70th anniversary from July 22- 26th , 2026, with festivities planned in Washington D.C. More info to come.

Here’s an overview of some of the happenings with Zambia:

During 2025, as SCI’s Country Representative to Zambia, I was required to hold two nation wide Zoom meetings called “Roundtables,” the first in April, and the last in November. These roundtables are usually recorded by SCI, with the November 2025 roundtable still available for viewing at SCI’s Vimeo link: https://vimeo.com/1137043884?&login=true#=_

This recording (about 1 hour 20 minutes in length) is jammed packed with information on what we in New Mexico are attempting to do in Zambia (Albuquerque with its Zambia sister city of Lusaka; Santa Fe with Livingstone; Clovis with Kasama). Los Angeles has been involved for almost 60 years also with Lusaka and is currently the only other city in the U.S. partnered with a city in Zambia.

Some of the November roundtable highlights included:

- Understanding how Sports Diplomacy, and the upcoming July 2026 FIFA World Cup, can be used to make connections with our Africa sister cities.
- Zambia’s Ambassador to the U.S., His Excellency Chibamba Kanyama emphasizes the importance of the Lobito Corridor Project, aiming to unlock Zambia’s economic....

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potential by creating an efficient route for critical minerals and other goods. The Project has received strong support from the U.S., European Union, and African governments.

- Overview of 4 “Lobito Corridor” cities in Zambia which would like to join Sister Cities.
- Update from Dr. Jian Zhu on progress made since December 2024 in the Economic and Humanitarian Projects, especially in Northern Zambia.
- Dr. Mwelwa Mulenga, V.P of Infrastructure and Programs for the Los Angeles-Lusaka Sister City Committee, highlights an important achievement to help children in Zambia with the purchase of MRI imaging equipment for the University of Lusaka’s Children’ Hospital.
- Update from Kasama Mayor Theresa Kolala on the importance of sister cities for her “northern province” region.
- Albuquerque-Lusaka Committee Chair Deidre Gordon’s report on Albuquerque’s education projects supporting:
 - Zambian students attending Universities here in New Mexico—this year 2 students graduated with master’s degrees, and 2 others with bachelor’s degrees.
 - The latest student to come to New Mexico (Chitembeya, son of King Chitimukulu) is now attending Western NM University as a freshman. His brother Nkumbula, already here for 4 years, graduated in May from UNM, and is now gaining work experience related to his degree in Architecture.
 - Robotic equipment and support for the computer classes at David Kaunda National STEM Secondary School in Lusaka

Now on a sad note:

We are extremely saddened to report that Her Worship Mayor Theresa Kolala of Kasama (partnered with Clovis, New Mexico, but also involved with various humanitarian projects with Albuquerque) passed away in early December after a very short illness. Thoughts and Prayers for her surviving family (mother, brother and two daughters), her city, and Zambia, who lost a rising star fighting for equality and justice within her country. We also keep in our thoughts and prayers the family of Dr. Harold Bailey, former Chair of the Albuquerque-Lusaka Committee, who also passed away in January earlier this year. Rest in Peace.

Examples of Richard's slides

Sister Cities Programs Overview Albuquerque-Lusaka Committee



Deidre Gordon—
ASCF Lusaka Chair
(Left) with Grace Foh-
Amoaning-Lusaka In-
country Coordinator for
ASCF



Pam Feather—
President,
Albuquerque Sister
Cities (ASCF)

HIGHLIGHTS in 2025:

- Chitembeya Kanyanta, a 2nd son of King Chitimukulu, started at Western University in August
- Robotics ramps up at David Kaunda National STEM Secondary School in Lusaka



Pastor Andrew Chapuma,
Royal Emissary
for King
Chitimukulu
attending
Albuquerque's
2025 Balloon
Fiesta.

Andrew meeting with
Zambian
students
Haggai, Lloyd,
and
Chitembeya at
Western
University in
Silver City,
NM.



Sister City Partnerships in Zambia



LUSAKA:

- Los Angeles 1968
- Albuquerque 2014



LIVINGSTONE:

- Santa Fe, New Mexico 2012



KASAMA:

- Clovis, New Mexico 2012



General Consul Ukraine Visit with City Officials and Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation

Albuquerque had the pleasure of hosting a visit from Tarasiak Vitalii, General Consul of Ukraine and Pavlo Moiseichenko, Consul for Economic Cooperation from Houston, Texas on December 11th at City Hall.

Albuquerque City Government officials in attendance were: Alan Armijo, International Liaison for Mayor Keller, Max Gruner, Director of Economic Development Department and Monica Michell, Deputy Director of Economic Development Department. Pam Feather, President of Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation and Nataliya Edelman, Co-Chair of Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation were also in attendance. The potential of opening up economic and business relations opportunities between New Mexico and Ukraine were discussed. Albuquerque City Officials proposed sending mutual trade delegations in the near future. Other topics discussed were Energy (wind and solar), Water resources, Film Industry, and Drone engineering development.



Monica Mitchell, Deputy Director EDD, Pam Feather, President ASCF, Pavlo Moiseichenko, Consul for Economic Cooperation, Alan Armijo, International Liaison for Mayor Keller, Tarasiak Vitalii General Consul of Ukraine, Max Gruner Director of EDD

Viktoriia Salova, Kharkiv Artist: Art Show at the Albuquerque Art Museum

December 14, 2025, the City of Albuquerque Department of Arts and Culture and the Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation hosted an Art Display for Viktoriia Salova from Kharkiv, Ukraine at the Albuquerque Art Museum.

Viktoriia presented paintings and creative projects she completed during her 2025 Artists at Risk residency in Albuquerque. She acquired new inspirations from her travels in New Mexico. We will miss her!

You can view her work at Viktoria Lubov gallery art on <https://www.vselubov.com>



Viktoriia Salova and guests



Viktoriia Salova and Andrew Connors, Director of Albuquerque Art Museum



Pam Feather President of Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation, Viktoriia Salova, Artist Dr. Shelle Sanchez, Director of Albuquerque Arts and Culture Department

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Viktoriia Salova's Art Show at the Albuquerque Art Museum



Viktoriia Salova artwork

Viktoriia Salova artwork



Dr. Shelle Sanchez, Viktoriia Salova,
Karl Ortiz, Elsa Melendez

Welcome to the Board- Mark Nelson, the new Guadalajara, Mexico Co-Chair

Mark is a native of Albuquerque. He holds a Doctor of Pharmacy from the University of New Mexico and a Master of Arts in international relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. He also studied Spanish at the Universidad de Guanajuato in Guanajuato, Mexico. He previously served on the board of the Nob Hill Neighborhood Association, and enjoys mentoring students at his church. He is passionate about cross cultural engagement and building ties between the United States and Latin America. Mark is excited to help strengthen bonds between Albuquerque and Guadalajara, as he has previously traveled there and the surrounding areas of Jalisco.



Welcome to the Board Miguel Sabol the new Alburquerque, Spain Cochair

Miguel Sabol is an international education professional dedicated to fostering global connections through cultural exchange, citizen diplomacy, and inclusive programming. He serves as an International Education Advisor in the Global Education Office at the University of New Mexico, supporting international students and scholars from admission through post-graduation work authorization. A former Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Brazil, Miguel has also worked with Instituto Cervantes Albuquerque, Ashoka's Ayni Community, and Global Ties ABQ, advancing initiatives that promote cross-cultural understanding and international collaboration. A lifelong advocate for global engagement, Miguel first studied abroad in Spain at age 16 and has since participated in programs such as the Korea-America Student Conference and the Critical Language Scholarship. He is an active member and former leader of the Global Shapers Albuquerque Hub, where he leads community-driven projects on equity and development. Miguel holds a B.A. in International Studies and Spanish and an M.A. in Latin American Studies from UNM.



Andrew Tafoya Leverett meets with Mayor Matan Dil of Rehovot, Israel

Visiting Rehovot, Israel was both a privilege and a refreshing experience. Seeing firsthand a community that we share so many common bonds with and learning about our shared vision for a better future left me with much hope for future joint endeavors. Chatting with Rehovot Mayor Matan Dil, I quickly realized that Rehovot is a family centered city that prioritizes education and quality of life for its residents. Poised as being the Israeli “city of Science and Culture,” I quickly learned why. Rehovot boasts several well known institutions such as the Weizmann Institute, BINA Research Services, the Hebrew University, the Peres Academic Center, as well as the Kaplan Medical Center: all making Rehovot a city of the future and elevating scientific discoveries for the betterment of humanity. Additionally, strolling the streets of Rehovot, I gained a sense of satisfaction among the residents. Clean streets, an abundance of schools, many local and regional economic opportunities being cultivated within the city. Likewise, Mayor Dil and I had the chance to speak at length about joint initiatives between our two cities such as academic exchanges, scientific and technological knowledge sharing, and perhaps direct economic investment. We remarked at the many common challenges our cities both share in terms of energy and water, and discussing ways in which we can solve these challenges together. I’m left with a sense of pride that I was able to represent Albuquerque, New Mexico and be an instrument of positive change in this dynamic relationship with our Sister City Rehovot, Israel; a relationship that was cultivated back in 2008. I believe that the time is right, and that I have seen and felt on both sides than many in our communities wish to take the step forward and truly make this a working relationship that both complements and cultivates positive outcomes for all involved.



Andrew Tafoya Leverett with Mayor Matan Dil



Mayor Matan Dil receiving a letter from Albuquerque Mayor, Tim Keller



City of Albuquerque Office of the Mayor

Timothy M. Keller | Mayor
Samantha Sengel, EdD | Chief Administrative Officer
Patrick Montoya | Chief Operations Officer
Terry Brunner | Chief of Staff
Matthew Whelan | Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Carla Martinez | Associate Chief Administrative Officer

October 27, 2025

The Honorable Matan Dil
Municipality of Rehovot
2 Bilu St, Rehovot
PO Box 1111, Israel
matan_dil@rehovot.muni.il

Dear Mayor Dil,

On behalf of the City of Albuquerque, I am writing to express my utmost support for our Sister City program with Rehovot, Israel and my intent to continue deepening our bilateral friendship.

Rehovot and Albuquerque share common concerns about water availability and climate change and are both homes to programs and resources that address these challenges. It is my firm belief that through our Sister City relationship, we can continue to collaborate and develop critical solutions that address our shared challenges. Since the establishment of the Albuquerque-Rehovot Sister City partnership in 2008, our two cities have participated in many exchanges between leaders in our scientific, business, educational and cultural sectors.

Currently, I'm proud that our Albuquerque-Rehovot Sister City project has partnered with the Water Resources Action Project (WRAP), a non-profit environmental organization that seeks to improve water stewardship in schools in the Middle East and the Navajo Nation with inadequate water resources through building and promoting the use of rainwater harvesting systems and water science education. WRAP is currently working with 2 schools in Rehovot (HaShita and Sarid schools) and a school in Lod (Al Zahara) to promote environmental education and cross-cultural projects. Over the past few years, schools in the greater Albuquerque area have partnered with schools in Israel to publish an e-book about environmental education and participate in an international citizen science program. Looking to the future, potential collaborations between Rehovot's scientific institutions such as the Weizmann Institute and Albuquerque's University of New Mexico could produce innovative solutions to our common challenges, which then could be pursued jointly by our two high tech industries. In addition, there is potential for fruitful exchanges between the science museums in Albuquerque and Rehovot.

I am inspired by the international cooperation that has resulted from our Sister City relationship and look forward to our continued partnership focused on resolving our most pressing climate concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy M. Keller".

Timothy M. Keller
Mayor of Albuquerque

cc: Alan Armijo, International Liaison for Mayor Keller
Pam Feather, President of Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation
Malcolm Siegel, Albuquerque Rehovot Sister City Chair
Andrew Tafoya Leverett, Albuquerque Rehovot Sister City Co-Chair



עיריית רחובות
לשכת ראש העיר
Municipality of Rehovot
Office of the Mayor

December 22, 2025

The Honorable Timothy M. Keller
Mayor of Albuquerque
City of Albuquerque

Dear Mayor Keller,

Thank you for your thoughtful letter and for the inspiring way you described the relationship between Albuquerque and Rehovot. I deeply appreciated your reflections on the importance of cooperation between cities as we navigate shared global and local challenges.

I would also like to personally thank Andrew Tafoya Leverett for visiting Israel and for meeting with us here in Rehovot. His openness, professionalism, and genuine interest in strengthening the ties between our cities were truly appreciated. Please also accept my sincere thanks for the thoughtful gifts that were sent.

Beyond the renowned Weizmann Institute of Science, Rehovot is a center of knowledge and innovation, home to a unique cluster of academic and medical institutions, including the Hebrew University's Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment, the Peres Academic Center, and the Kaplan Medical Center. Together, they position Rehovot as a true "City of Science and Culture", where research, healthcare, and high-tech industry converge to create global impact.

I was particularly drawn to your focus on water, climate, and sustainability - issues that are central to Rehovot's local agenda. We are committed to becoming a "Green City", prioritizing urban forestry, sustainable water management, and innovative climate adaptation strategies to ensure a high quality of life for our residents. I believe our shared focus offers meaningful opportunities for mutual learning and professional exchange.

I see international city relations as an important bridge - connecting people, knowledge, and opportunities. Following my conversation with Andrew, I believe there is genuine potential to deepen the cooperation between Albuquerque and Rehovot.

To that end, I would be delighted to visit Albuquerque in October 2026, accompanied by a small professional delegation. My goal is to "renew our vows" of friendship, to get to know your city's assets firsthand, and to experience the wonderful city I have, until now, only read about. I believe such a visit will provide the perfect opportunity to witness your achievements and solidify our partnership for years to come.

As we approach the holiday season and the beginning of a new year, I wish you, your family, and the people of Albuquerque peace, good health, and success. I look forward to our meeting in 2026.

Warm regards,
Matan Dil
Mayor of Rehovot

Rehovot. עיר המדע והתרבות | Rehovot. City of Science and Culture