



Cover Memorandum/Staff Report

File #: 25-1376

Agenda Date: 10/29/2025

Item #: SP.1.

TO: Mayor and Commissioners
FROM: Jeffrey L. Oris, CEcD, Assistant City Manager
THROUGH: Terrence R. Moore, ICMA-CM
DATE: October 29, 2025

RECOGNITION OF STUDENT VISITORS FROM DELRAY BEACH'S SISTER CITY OF MIYAZU, JAPAN AS PART OF THE ONGOING EXCHANGE OF CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO CITIES.

Recommended Action:

The City Commission is asked to recognize and welcome Tsugumi Hori, Mihito Mizutani, Rikuto Siota, Reo Taga, Yosuke Takeshita, Suzuha Ueoka, and Tugumi Yano as honored student visitors from Delray Beach's Sister City of Miyazu, Japan.

Background:

Miyazu, Japan, and Delray Beach, Florida, Sister Cities relationship was inspired by the generous donation from Mr. George Morikami. In 1906, Mr. Morikami immigrated to the United States joining the Japanese farming community in South Florida known as the Yamato Colony. Many of these Japanese farmers were also from Miyazu. Eventually Mr. Morikami purchased land in Delray Beach which is now the home to the Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens. In 1973, after more than 65 years of farming, Mr. Morikami donated 200 acres of his land to Palm Beach County to establish a park. He passed away three years later. In 1977, the Morikami Museum opened on that land, realizing Mr. Morikami's dream of a permanent bridge between the two great cultures of East & West. That same year the relationship between Miyazu & Delray Beach formalized as "Sister Cities."

In 1999, Sister Cities of Delray Beach sent its first group of high school students to Miyazu to act as student ambassadors between the two cities. Likewise, Miyazu also sent some of their high school students to Delray Beach. Since then, a group of student ambassadors from Delray Beach has visited Miyazu every two years to continue the exchange of cultural understanding and friendship, with Miyazu students visiting about every two years. The students share homestays and attend school with their host brother or sister. They tour the area with host families and city representatives, visit with city officials, and enjoy cultural exchange. This student exchange program has established life-long friendships, and many of the students have maintained relationships with their host families, including visiting again. Unfortunately, the streak was broken in 2020 when travel was restricted due to the Covid pandemic. Sister Cities of Delray Beach renewed the exchange with Miyazu and sent 5 Student Ambassadors to Miyazu in June 2024 to continue this vital part of the Sister Cities mission. This year, Delray Beach is honored to receive 7 students from Miyazu, Tsugumi Hori, Mihito Mizutani, Rikuto Siota, Reo Taga, Yosuke Takeshita, Suzuha Ueoka, and Tugumi Yano, who are continuing this exciting exchange and friendship between our cities.

City Attorney Review:

N/A

Funding Source/Financial Impact:

N/A

Timing of Request:

The students are visiting during the week of October 28 thru November 2nd.