

Steven Brewster, (408) 535-8168
San José Office of Economic Development

**San José and Dublin, Ireland, Today Kick Off the 20th Anniversary
of Their Sister City Relationship at Welcome Breakfast**

“Twinning” of the two cities to be marked by arrival of Prime Minister of Ireland

SAN JOSE, CALIF.—(March 13, 2006)—The 20th anniversary of the sister city designation between San José, California, and Dublin, Ireland, began today with San José Mayor Ron Gonzales hosting a celebratory kick-off welcome breakfast for the Dublin Lord Mayor Catherine Byrne and members of the Dublin Sister City Delegation.

Established in 1986, the San José & Dublin Sister City Program relationship was initiated by then Mayor of San José, Tom McEnery, and the current Prime Minister of Ireland, Bertie Ahern, then Lord Mayor of Dublin. The program, known as “twinning” in Ireland, has thrived throughout its twenty-year existence serving to nurture cultural, economic, artistic, sporting, and educational ties between San José/Silicon Valley and Dublin.

“Irish Week in San José celebrates two decades of strong friendship between our energetic cities and our two countries. Our communities share a passion for the arts, and are proud of the robust, productive businesses that call both places home. Our residents, companies and universities are enriched because cross-cultural collaboration motivated by the Sister City partnership,” said Gonzales.

Emceed by KRON-TV anchorwoman, Catherine Heenan, the welcome event, a traditional Irish breakfast complete with bangers (sausages) and rashers (bacon), was held at the Silicon Valley Capital Club, on the top floor of the Knight Ridder Building, in the heart of downtown San José. The 360-degree view from one of the tallest buildings in the City provided a geographical overview for the day about to unfold. The welcome breakfast was followed by a flag-raising ceremony held a few blocks away on the plaza of the new San José City Hall. Designed by Richard Meier, the 18-story building served as a contemporary backdrop to the annual ceremonial proceedings that included bagpipes and a children’s choir.

Program aids Irish and U.S. marketplace leadership

After a tour of city hall and its landmark glass rotunda, the delegation took a break from the pomp-and-circumstance and got down to business. As part of their goal to learn more about current Silicon Valley technologies, they were treated to a tour of the IBM Silicon Valley Labs hosted by Jeanette Horan, Vice President, Worldwide Information Management and General Manager, IBM Silicon Valley Labs. During their stay, they also will visit the San José headquarters of online auction giant, eBay, as well as the new San José BioCenter, a state-of-the-art lab and business space for high potential bioscience companies, located in San José's Edenvale Technology Park.

“The sister city mission is about working to build cooperation at the municipal level, promote cultural understanding and stimulate economic development with each other. To this last point, we want to help both Irish and U.S. companies grow and sustain positions in the global marketplace by strengthening relationships and continually building our business networks that will benefit companies on both continents,” said David Oliver, President of the San José & Dublin Sister City Program.

According to Paul Krutko, Director, Office of Economic Development, City of San José, there are more than 35 Silicon Valley companies with an Irish presence, including Adobe, Cadence Design Systems, Cisco Systems, eBay, Flextronics, IBM, Quantum and Xilinx. “Companies understand that success depends largely on having a positive business climate and a strong, well-educated talent pool to produce high value, ground-breaking products and services. Both of these attributes have helped to earn Dublin as being the top technological hotbed within the European Union. Likewise, it has kept San José in the spotlight as the world's center for innovation,” Krutko said.

To further that spirit of innovation and deepen economic ties, the Prime Minister of Ireland, Bertie Ahern, will join the Dublin delegation during his five-day U.S. visit. His visit will culminate in the traditional presentation of a bowl of shamrock to President George W. Bush on Friday. While in San José, Ahern will be engaged in business development talks with San José business and civic leaders and will also take part in the Spirit of Ireland Award Dinner, 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 14. The Dinner honors those individuals and/or organizations whose accomplishments have exemplified the relationship between San José/Silicon Valley and Ireland. Recipients have included Gordon Moore of Intel, John Lewis of Amdhal, Wim Roelandts of Xilinx, Nobel Peace Prize recipient John Hume, and President Bill Clinton as well as The National Theatre of Ireland (The Abbey Theatre) and the San Jose Repertory Theatre. For tickets to the Spirit of Ireland Award Dinner, visit, www.sanjosedublin.org.

Other Irish-themed sporting and cultural events demonstrate breadth of San José /Dublin tie

Throughout the weekend prior to the March 13 welcome breakfast, the Dublin delegation experienced first-hand the impact of Irish culture in San José and Silicon Valley. After a transatlantic, transcontinental

flight on Friday, March 10, they were welcomed by Ray O’Flaherty at his pub, O’Flaherty’s Pub, located in San José’s historic San Pedro Square dining and entertainment district.

On Saturday, they were treated to a luncheon—sponsored by the Irish Week Committee and organized by Irish Week Committee Member and former San José City Council Member, Charlotte Powers—at Clos La Chance Winery, in nearby San Martin, and an evening concert performance with the Dublin Youth Symphony Orchestra performing along with the San Jose Youth Symphony Philharmonic Orchestra.

Sunday began with an Irish Mass and reception at St. Joseph’s Church in Mountain View. Later in the afternoon, the group attended the Ireland vs. California Olympic Style Boxing, presented by the San José Sports Authority and the Irish Week Committee.

“The past two decades are only the beginning of our vibrant and active Sister City relationship with Dublin. We look forward to exploring new, innovative and creativity ways in the next 20 years that we can share opportunities to benefit the families of San José and Dublin,” Gonzales said.

Gonzales will make his final visit to Dublin as Mayor in September.

About the City of San José’s Office of Economic Development

The City of San Jose's Office of Economic Development (OED) is committed to a vital, competitive San Jose economy that increases prosperity for people and companies and enhances City revenues. The Office guides the City's economic strategy, provides assistance for business success, helps connect employers with trained workers, and provides art and cultural resources to our community. For more information, please visit, www.sjeconomy.com.

About the City of San José

From its founding in 1777 as California's first city, San Jose has been a leader, driven by its spirit of innovation. Today, San Jose stands as the largest city in Northern California and the Capital of Silicon Valley—the world's leading center of innovation. The city, the 10th largest in the U.S., is committed to remaining a top-ranked place to do business, to work and to live. For more information, visit, www.sanjoseca.gov.

###