

Letter: Howard builds bridge to overcome tsunami tragedy

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During this election season there have been numerous town halls, news articles, and editorials addressing the candidates and the offices they are collectively vying to win. Defining those best qualified and suited for local leadership should never be centered on partisan affiliation, but rather on the needs of the community.

In my years of service both as a minister and a local elected official I have come to understand that leadership is not a role you are given; it is earned through hard work and vision paired the ability to share both with others.

I have no doubt that all of those who are running for office are good people with good intentions, but there is one person that I am confident is not only qualified, but committed to do the work our community needs: Chris Howard.

During my two terms on the Crescent City Council, it has been my honor to work side-by-side with Supervisor Howard on many endeavors, and I believe the City and the County are better partners today because of those efforts.

Possibly the most significant challenge we faced together was building a bridge and connecting two communities which were both affected by similar tragedies. The catalyst for this connection began with our

students who had a vision to bring hope to students in Rikuzentakata, Japan, by returning a small boat named Kamome which washed ashore in Crescent City in 2013.

Building from this effort, Chris Howard and I worked towards a vision of a Sister City relationship founded on the principles of our children's selfless act to bring hope to a community devastated by tsunami. That vision is now a reality.

The U.S. Embassy in Tokyo and Sister Cities International has highlighted our relationship as a model for grassroots diplomacy drawing on how two communities were brought together through times of hardship and loss.

Chris and I stood together in the United Nations for World Tsunami Awareness Day representing the partnership between the United States and Japan in building a safer future for our children.

When NBC sports learned of our story, they chose to make us their feature during the 2021 Olympics, and 30 million viewers had the opportunity through this documentary to see the very best about our community.

As the Chair of our local Visitor Bureau, I can tell you that we are now seeing the return on that exposure, that wouldn't have been possible without the hard work and vision of Chris Howard.

Thank you, Chris Howard, for your family's tireless work and selfless contributions to making our community a better place for all.

Blake Inscore

Crescent City Council Member, and

Pastor of First Baptist Church