



International Sister Cities OF ROCHESTER, NY, INC. **2022 ANNUAL REPORT**



Bringing the
World
a little
Closer



Malik D. Evans, Mayor



City of Rochester, NY
Rochester City Council

The ISCOR 2021/22 program year reflected the welcome end of COVID-19's restriction of sister cities activities. Exchanges resumed and new activities launched, bringing life back to our international friendships. Here are highlights reported by the committee chairs. – *ISCOR Executive Committee*

Alytus, Lithuania

The committee purchased 120 books, worth \$2700, from a bookstore in Alytus to supplement the current inventory of Lithuanian books at Rochester's Central Library. They cover a wide variety of topics and include both English and Lithuanian language works. A faculty exchange with SUNY Geneseo brought the Alytus College Director of International Relations and Communications, Rozalija Radlinskaite, to Rochester and Geneseo in June.

Bamako, Mali

The new year began with the warm exchange of letters between incoming Rochester Mayor Malik Evans and Bamako Mayor Adama Sangaré. The committee has established a student internship project to document its history since 1975. We mourned the deaths of past chair Clyde Forbes in Rochester and Mrs. Haby Sangaré in Bamako (former guest of the late Jean Cappellino and mother of Altiné Traoré - former Association for Teen-Age Diplomat Exchange Student). The committee has been engaged in conversation with Malian Student Allahsera Auguste Tapo, an RIT Doctoral Candidate, regarding a realization of his doctoral dissertation: a digital voice translation of English/French to Bambara. Nine Malian college students, including seven from Bamako, visited Rochester on a US State Department grant in October, at the same time that the Ambassador of Mali to the US Sékou Berthé and two of his staff came to Rochester; all visited educational and civil society institutions to build new contacts for our sister cities relationship. A vibrant and well-attended welcoming reception was held at City Hall; they were also featured on the Fox/Rochester Morning Show Good Day Rochester.

Caltanissetta, Italy

The Caltanissetta municipality and sister cities organization began production of a new edition of the "Bridges" online exhibits, featuring artists from Caltanissetta and Rochester, in December 2022 and a student exhibit in March 2023.

Hamamatsu, Japan

The committee gave the community a wonderful experience of Japanese culture and language at the May 2022 Memorial Art Gallery Asian Pacific American Heritage Celebration Day. Origami irises were given to visitors to the booth, a reflection of the special iris hybrids gifted to Hamamatsu for the Pacific Flora 2004 exposition. Visitors delighted in folding origami crafts, and in games challenging their chopstick skills and learning Japanese phrases and customs.

Kraków, Poland

The Mayor's Office of Kraków invited Kraków's partner cities to submit videos for the Kraków website, *Magiczny Kraków*, of physical locations that are associated with their literary figures. The KRSCC worked with the Rochester Public Library Media Center and with Carnell Jones, video producer and a senior in the Rochester City School District, to prepare a video featuring Frederick Douglass. Upon request of Kraków mayor Jacek Majchrowski to Mayor Evans for assistance for refugees from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the committee raised \$21,357.36, including \$10,000 sent directly by the Polish Heritage Society of Rochester and a \$1000 donation from Linkages of Rochester, manager of our sister cities relationship with Velikiy Novgorod, Russia. Working with the PHSR and the St. Stanislaus Kostka RC Church, the committee recruited a local trumpeter, 2022 Pittsford Mendon High School graduate Molly Collins, to play the Kraków "Hejnal" trumpet fanfare at the August 5&6, 2022, Polish Arts Festival.

Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic

The committee has begun exploration of youth baseball and softball exchanges between

Rochester City Recreation and suburban teams and Puerto Plata teams.

Rehovot, Israel

In July, as part of the observance of the 50th anniversary Rochester-Rehovot connection, City Council member Mitch Gruber met with Rehovot Deputy Mayor Yaniv Markowitz in Rehovot to exchange greetings and official gifts. In August several adults and youth who have traveled to Rehovot joined in a Zoom meeting to review history of the relationship, share experiences, and discuss how the overseas adventure broadened their perspectives.

Rennes, France

Students from Rennes attended RIT, Nazereth College, and University of Rochester, nine in Fall 2021 and eight in spring 2022. The committee took them on community tours, to sport events, and local cultural sites. We continued to develop our relationship with Alliance Française de Rochester, which co-hosted our annual Bastille Day picnic with us at Mendon Ponds Park. Eric Beaty, chair of our Rennes counterpart sister cities committee, visited in mid-July and Kitty & Nick Jospé hosted a potluck dinner in his honor. Eric met with Matt Marshall, Associate Dean in the College of Engineering at RIT, to talk about current projects at the college.

Velikiy Novgorod, Russia

Despite Pandemic and other prohibitions on in-person exchanges, during Fall 2021 Linkages maintained ties with friends in Velikiy Novgorod by trying to set up a virtual tutorial system for teachers of English. It participated in a Sister Cities International online Roundtable for US-Russian sister cities exchanges. These efforts were brought to an abrupt halt by the Russian Federation's vicious invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, leading to a suspension of formal activities by the Linkages Board and issuance a statement of shock and dismay over the Federation's action. In solidarity with the Irondequoit-Poltava Sister Cities Committee, Linkages donated funds to the United Ukrainian American Relief Committee and to the Kraków committee's fundraising for Ukrainian refugee relief in Kraków. In affirmation of its mission and values as a sister city organization dedicated to peaceful people-to-people relations, it has attempted to maintain cautious contacts with colleagues in Novgorod in hopes of re-establishment of relations after the war.

Waterford, Ireland

The Munster Express, the provincial newspaper based in Waterford, announced to its readership that James Patrick Smith, dual citizen of the US and Ireland, had been appointed Mayor of Rochester in December 2021, succeeding Mayor Lovely A. Warren. The article profiled his time living in Ireland, his political and administrative career in the Rochester region, and his support Rochester Irish-American community projects including dedication of the Col. Patrick O'Rorke Bridge over the Genesee River.

Würzburg, Germany

The post-Covid easing of travel restrictions has enabled exchanges to resume. Associate Dean John Hain of the Eastman School of Music, and Cathy Hain, Associate Vice President, Rochester Institute of Technology, represented Rochester at the opening of the 2022 Mozartfest in May. Visit Rochester hosted Lena Henkelmann of Würzburg as an intern throughout the month of May. In June Lord Mayor Christian Schuchardt and Anuschka Heid of the Würzburg International Office visited Rochester. Deputy Mayor Martin Heilig and then-Deputy Mayor James Smith met online in July to discuss initiatives. In August, Jorg Richter visited Rochester during his third cross-country bicycle tour of the United States, raising funds Rare Pediatric Diseases. RIT Professor Dr. Karl Korfmacher taught at the University of Applied Sciences Würzburg-Schweinfurt, during the fall semester as part of his sabbatical. Our 58-year partnership is alive and well. We look forward to continued close connections.

Xianyang, China

While City and committee leaders exchanged holiday greetings through the year, the relationship was overall inactive.

CONTACT US:

For more information about ISCOR:

Call (585) 428-7045 or visit CityofRochester.gov/SisterCities

Or write to: International Sister Cities of Rochester, NY, Inc.

Malik D. Evans, Mayor

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