



International Sister Cities OF ROCHESTER, NY, INC. **2024 ANNUAL REPORT**



Bringing the
World
a little
Closer



CITY of ROCHESTER
Malik D. Evans, Mayor

The ISCOR 2023/24 program year saw continuation of long-term relationships, culmination of several initiatives, and the launch of new activities, reinforcing the life of our international friendships. Here are highlights reported by the committee chairs.

– ISCOR Executive Committee

Alytus, Lithuania

The committee worked with the Lithuanian organizations in Rochester in two cultural celebrations in 2024: Lithuanian National Independence Celebration with a Lithuanian folk singer and dancers participating from abroad and the Lithuanian Christmas Eve Holiday Event celebrating Lithuanian customs, traditions and culture.

Bamako, Mali

On April 1st, the committee sent a holiday greeting “Prayerfully United 2024” . . . May There Be Peace” was sent to our Sister City with “Reflections on the beauty and power of faith alignment and prayers for peace” during Easter and Ramadan. Committee members attended and enjoyed the melodic acoustic Malian sound at the April 19th Eastman School of Music World Music Series concert by Grammy Award winning Malian Singer Oumou Sangare. On stage, they presented to her a beautiful floral bouquet and official greetings from the City of Rochester. In Summer committee supporters Bah and Joyce Harris-Tounkara, founders of Washington, DC, Operation Mali, reported that the final box of donated eye glasses reached Bamako. Thanks to a \$1,000 donation from Security Consulting and Training, Inc., of Rochester, four new laptop computers were purchased for shipment to Bamako through the assistance of RobotsMali, Operation Mali, and Malian Ph.D. candidate at RIT Allahsera Tapo, in December.

Caltanissetta, Italy

The committee sorted through a rich store of books and mementoes collected by our late chair Rosalba Pisaturo over the decades of her leadership and donated them to local Italian-American organizations and the Rochester Public Library.

Hamamatsu, Japan

The committee gave the community a wonderful experience of Japanese culture and language at the May 2024 Memorial Art Gallery Asian Pacific American Heritage Celebration Day. Visitors delighted in folding origami crafts, and in games challenging their chopstick skills and learning Japanese phrases and customs. It continued planning for cooperative projects with Buffalo-Kanazawa committee.

Kraków, Poland

In May 2024 the Nazareth University choir, led by Professor Zbigniew Granat, toured Poland and performed in Kraków. The committee, working with the Polish Heritage Society of Rochester and the City of Rochester, planted a Northern European oak in Maplewood Park near the Rose Garden to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the sister cities relationship. It made Kraków and Rochester contacts for Rochester-based DEEP Arts theater organization for visiting Kraków Jewish heritage sites and the Kraków Jewish Community Center in Fall 2023, and for a Rochester public showing of its film Moses Man—Finding Home and a presentation by the Kraków JCC Jonathan Ornstein CEO about the Kraków JCC’s multi-million dollar assistance program to Ukrainian Refugees in Kraków. The committee led production of the Polish Heritage Society of Rochester’s 2023 and 2024 Wigilia Dinners, a public celebration of Polish Christmas Eve traditions.

Velikiy Novgorod, Russia

Although formal activities remain in suspension due to the Russian war in Ukraine, Linkages of Rochester sent New Year and other holiday greetings to contacts in the city administration and to friends in Novgorod via e-mail. Members of Linkages also remain in touch with friends and colleagues in Novgorod by e-mail.

Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic

Working with City Recreation, the committee has initiated a youth baseball exchange project with a Puerto Plata youth baseball training program. In June 2024 the initial exchange team of twelve boys, 12-15 years old, traveled to Puerto Plata for training and games with the Puerto Plata team and tours of the countryside. Project costs were supported by the City of Rochester, the families, a New York State grant obtained through the Rochester-Monroe County Youth Bureau, and private donations. Recruitment and practice for a second year has begun.

Rehovot, Israel

With encouragement and support from Dan Morgenstern, new chair of the Rehovot committee, Al Kinel, committee supporter and president of the New York-Israel Chamber of Commerce, organized a CHIPS and Photonics business development conference at the Rochester Jewish Community Center featuring the Israeli business NewPhotonics and former New York City mayor Bill DiBlasio. The event was supported by the Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce, Greater Rochester Enterprise, Empire State Development Corporation, and local universities.

Rennes, France

The committee welcomed six exchange students from Rennes, all attending RIT, in January, hosting them at la Maison Française at Nazareth University and, in April, at a Rochester Redwings baseball game. A delegation from Rennes led by Mayor Natalie Appéré visited in April. An exhibit of artwork of Rennes delegate Joel David was displayed at the City Hall Link Gallery. The University of Rochester presented Rochester Mayor Malik Evans and Mayor Appéré with the inaugural Rennes Global Engagement Champion Award at the opening reception of the exhibit.

Waterford, Ireland

Rochester Mayor Malik Evans and Monroe County Executive Adam Bello co-led a delegation of local sister cities and business leaders in October to visit Waterford and Sister County Cavan. In Waterford they visited cultural institutions and business development agencies including the Southeast Technical University (formerly Waterford Institute of Technology), Bausch & Lomb-Waterford, and the Waterford Central Library.

Würzburg, Germany

Eastman School of Music Dean Jamal Rossi and his wife Pam represented Mayor Evans and the City of Rochester at the Würzburg Mozart Festival in May. They helped plant a tree in a park in the Hubland development (former site of the US Army Leighton Barracks) honoring the 60th anniversary of our partnership. Würzburg deputy mayor Martin Heilig visited Rochester over Labor Day weekend, calling at Rochester Institute of Technology and City Environmental Services, and touring Finger Lakes wine country. Dr. Martin Pracher of the University of Würzburg, a former ATAD exchange student 35 years ago, lectured at the Rochester Downtown Central Library on Art, Forgeries and Forgers.

Xianyang, China

Chinese New Year's greetings were exchanged between Mayors. Xianyang held an international art show at which each sister city was invited to submit pieces of art that reflects their city and/or their culture. Rochester submitted a series of paintings showing historical vessels that operated out of Charlotte (Rochester) harbor on Lake Ontario. Discussions have started on another student exchange in 2025.

CONTACT US:

For more information about ISCOR:

Call (585) 428-7045 or visit [CityofRochester.gov/SisterCities](https://www.cityofrochester.gov/SisterCities)
Or write to: International Sister Cities of Rochester, NY, Inc.

Malik D. Evans, Mayor

City Hall, 30 Church St., Rm. 308A | Rochester, NY, 14614

Follow us:

 [Facebook.com/ISCORnews](https://www.facebook.com/ISCORnews)  [Twitter: @ISCORnews](https://twitter.com/ISCORnews)

Board of Trustees

Malik D. Evans, Mayor	Daniel Morgenstern, Rehovot
Carolee A. Conklin, President	Kevin Loughran
Patricia Uttaro, Vice-President	Cheryl Marshall
Patricia Donoghue, Secretary	Jefferson Svengsouk, MD, Hamamatsu
Michael Leach, Treasurer, Kraków	Mitch Gruber
Cathy Rappazzo, Rennes	Thomas O'Connell, Waterford
Paul Caccamise, Velikiy Novgorod	Mark Dowdell, Waterford
Jolanda Chesonis, Alytus	Martha J. O'Connor
Michael Coniff, Xianyang	Sharon Garofanello, Caltanissetta
Dean Ekberg, Würzburg	Relton Roland, Puerto Plata
Lee Johnson, Ex-Officio	Mitchell Rowe
Kim Jones	Alicia Ward, Bamako

LEADERSHIP: ISCOR mourned the passing in 2024 of vice-president Les Knox, a member of our board for nearly 50 years. Long-time Trustee-at-Large, vice-president, and President since 2009 Carolee Conklin will pass the leadership to Patricia Uttaro in January 2025. On behalf of the full board, the Executive Committee gratefully recognizes and thanks these leaders for their dedicated service.