



Liberian artist visits; Dayton links to a new Sister City

- News from the Dayton Sister City Committee -

Release Date: Tuesday, July 2, 2019

Contacts:

Amanda Grieve, Gallery Director, Dayton Society of Artists, 937-228-4532, director@daytondsa.org

Thomas Siafa, Sr., Chair, Monrovia Subcommittee, Dayton Sister City Committee, 937-776-6277, tsiafa@gmail.com

Arch Grieve, Dayton Sister City Committee, 937-333-2368

The Dayton Sister City Committee (DSCC), in cooperation with the Dayton Society of Artists (DSA), is pleased to host international artist Patrick Gono of Monrovia, Liberia, one of Dayton's six sister cities.

Gono will be the first artist-in-residence for the Dayton Society of Artists and will have studio space at the Front Street Building. Gono will be in Dayton for most of July and will exhibit his work at the DSA's High Street Gallery, beginning July 5.

Gono is a self-taught artist and was inspired early by cartoon characters, namely from Marvel and Disney productions. As he grew, he found inspiration in nature and artists that came before him, such as Renoir and Rossetti. He won the Value of Biodiversity art competition held at the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia in 2011. Gono now lives in Monrovia, creating hyper-realistic pieces, and desires to make a name for Liberia and its people through his art.

"Being selected for the artist-in-residence is like the final picture of my dream of bringing light to show the colors of peace we need to shine and prosper, to show the power and bond of art, and to help others discover their potential," Gono says. "This is truly a dream come true...as I am a bridge between two cities now, my aim is to make sure my pillars and cables and concrete are solid so as to ensure a lifelong connection between Dayton and

Monrovia."

Though Dayton has been a sister city of Monrovia since 1972, the relationship has been dormant for over six years. Recently, a renewed interest in Monrovia, led by the DSCC Monrovia Chair Mr. Thomas F. Siafa, Sr., brought forth the partnership with the Dayton Society of Artists and the artist-in-residency program. Siafa has resided in the Dayton area for 29 years and visits Monrovia frequently on mission trips.

Gono's work will show alongside the DSA's Crossing Boundaries exhibit from July 5 to August 17 at the High Street Gallery, 48 High St. (Hours: 6 to 9 p.m. on First Fridays, noon to 5 p.m. on other Fridays and Saturdays). The DSA and DSCC will also be collecting art supplies, which are scarcer and more expensive in Liberia than in the U.S., to send back to Monrovia with Gono.



Patrick Gono will attend his exhibition opening on Friday, July 5, 6 p.m., 48 High Street.

The Dayton Society of Artists has served local artists since 1938, to connect, support, and educate artists and the community. Visit daytondsa.org to learn more.

The City of Dayton and the Borough of Rushmoor in the United Kingdom have signed a new sister city agreement that will enhance economic, cultural and educational ties. This is Dayton's first new sister city link since 1999, when Dayton and Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina, became sister cities.

The agreement was signed at the Dayton Air Show on June 22, with Commissioner Matt Joseph representing Dayton and Councillor and Leader David Clifford representing the Borough of Rushmoor, along with Chief Executive Mr. Paul Shackley. The signing was attended by local, state and national dignitaries enthusiastic about the prospect for a meaningful new relationship.

The Borough of Rushmoor contains two towns, Aldershot, the home of the British Army, and Farnborough, the location of the first powered flight in the U.K. and home to one the largest and most important air shows in the world.

A sister city agreement with Rushmoor is a perfect fit for Dayton. Not only do the two have a long aviation history, but like Dayton, Rushmoor also has a robust aviation-oriented economy and is interested in collaborative enterprises.

In addition to the Dayton Air Show, the Rushmoor delegates visited the grave sites of the Wright brothers and Paul Laurence Dunbar and toured downtown Dayton, the Dayton Art Institute, and the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force.

"It was a real pleasure to meet and talk with our guests from Rushmoor," said Commissioner Joseph. "I am excited about following up with them on the many

potential areas of cooperation between our cities. I also want to thank the many people here in Dayton whose hard work made the visit such a success."



Likewise, Leader Clifford remarked "We feel we met many of the important business and education leaders in town and got a great idea of the potential links between our two municipalities."

Work is already underway to follow up on these initial contacts.

The Dayton Sister City Committee provides community leadership to promote Dayton internationally and increase global awareness of its residents through developing and maintaining active Sister City relationships.

###

