



200 YEARS  
ANNIVERSARY

The graphic features the number '200' in a large, gold, outlined font. The word 'YEARS' is written in a smaller, gold, sans-serif font inside the first zero, and 'ANNIVERSARY' is written in a smaller, gold, sans-serif font inside the second zero. A red and white striped ribbon with a blue field containing a white star is draped across the right side of the '00'. To the left of the '200' is a cluster of gold stars of various sizes.

175<sup>TH</sup> LIBERIAN INDEPENDENCE  
& BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

*Gala & Fundraising  
Dinner*

FRIDAY JULY 29, 2022  
VILLA MILANO BANQUET &  
CONFERENCE CENTER

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

"Passion is the key essential force that drives our success it determines everything that we think and do!"



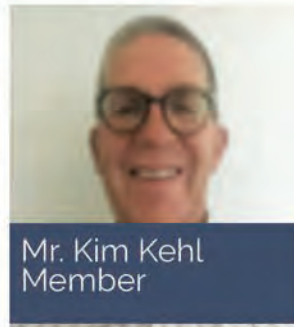
Mr. Hale Lafayette Harmon  
Chairman



Mr. James McCabe  
Member



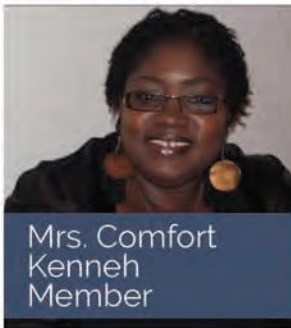
Mrs. Maima Kamara  
Member



Mr. Kim Kehl  
Member



Rev. Dr. Alexander Sumo  
Vice Chairman



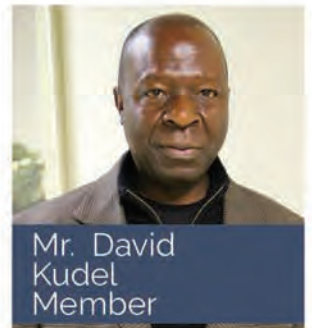
Mrs. Comfort Kenneh  
Member



Mrs. Kanah Heckman  
Member



Mr. Winston Cooper  
Secretary



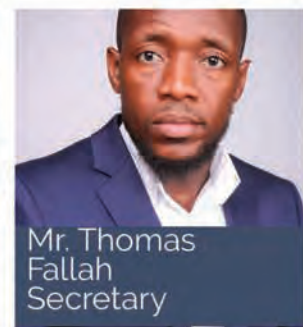
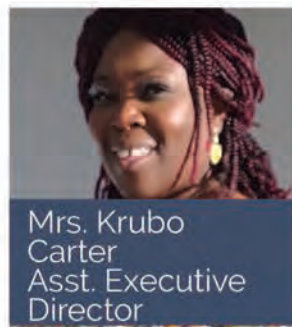
Mr. David Kudel  
Member



# EXECUTIVE TEAM

"Do the difficult things while they are easy and do the great things while they are small. A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step."

Lao Tzu



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

*"I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."*

*Michael Jordan*



As Executive Director of Liberians in Columbus Inc., affectionately known as LICI, it is a privilege to champion this great cause. Liberians in Columbus Inc is the de facto community organization for Liberians in Central Ohio since the early '80s. We are becoming one of Columbus's fast-growing new American communities since our civil war in the late '80s to early 2000s. Approximately 10,000 Liberians reside in Central Ohio, predominantly on the Eastside and Northside of the city limits.

In 2015, Community Research Partner was retained by Franklin County Job and Family Services to conduct a need assessment of Liberians in Franklin County. The results astounded us, and we decided to use them as the driving force for this historic project.

The research found that Liberians in the County are younger than the general population. Many of our youths, ages 16 and 17, could be preparing to go to college or entering the workforce. Yet, college enrollment in our community is relatively low, and unemployment is astonishingly high. Furthermore, Liberians with college degrees often find that academic degrees earned overseas are not as helpful or comparable to those achieved in the US. Many degree holders find it difficult to find employment in their chosen fields in the US. Consequently, there is high unemployment within the Liberian population, creating stress, isolation for individuals and families, and financial and economic insufficiencies.

As a result, many Liberian households are earning low incomes and living below the federal poverty line. More than half of this population segment is without health insurance or lack access to healthcare. But our most significant challenges and needs are access to education, jobs, mental health services, resources, and information.

The research results became the motivating force for our community leaders to advocate for this growing New American Community. We embarked on this project, not knowing where it will lead us. However, the idea of a community center excited our members, and they bought into this project. Community members contributed as low as \$1 and as high as \$1000 + to purchase the land. We are relying on the same collective will of the community to see this project to the end.

We are pleading with every Liberian in the Diaspora to please help us make this dream a reality. Our pleas go out also to our local community - whether through strategic partnerships, grants, or philanthropic dollars - we need your help. This project is symbolic of the hope and aspirations of our community, showing that everything and anything is possible. Join us to give hope to the hopeless.

ALPHA TONGOR

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PRESIDENT



# COMMITTEE & VOLUNTEERS

## 175TH INDEPENDENCE, BICENTENNIAL & FUNDRAISER GALA COMMITTEE

Joycelyn Yvette Tubman-Goodridge, Chairlady  
Alpha Tongor, LICI Acting Executive Director  
Zari Tongor, LICI Marketing Director  
Maima Kamara, LICI Board Member  
Rebecca Wetee, LICI CFO/Treasurer  
Grace Kolliesuah, Chair, LICI Strategic Planning Committee  
Marie Sherif, Chair, LICI Grants Committee  
Joe Sawo, LICI Financial Analyst

## OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS

Disc Jockeys Ben Tarr, P,  
EZ and Master P  
Attorney Morgan Harper  
Ray Jones  
Lindora Howard  
Maroon Arts Group  
Anna Marie Harmon  
Madina Harmon  
Mrs. Angel Hill-Mathais  
Phenomenal Women  
Bea Itoka  
Shiloh Joy Myers  
Grace Chelsea Clay

Feegbair Porte Allison  
Venus Brooks  
Estella Bracewell  
Jebbeh Willie  
Teresa Goodridge  
Helen Kamanda  
Lois Shaka  
Mechienma Zokrah  
Helena Saah  
Dora Ernst  
Lorpue Koisee  
Patricia Kamara  
"Kaipai"



# AUCTION, DONORS & PATRONS

## SILENT AUCTION DONORS

With partners like you, we can make a difference.

Bamazi Talle  
Nora Musu Art  
Telfar  
Team Liberia  
Bradford Portraits  
Home Depot- Reynoldsburg  
Zarlux  
Airborne Hosted By Joe  
Makeup By Musu  
Nothing Bundt Cakes-Reynoldsburg  
Chairman Hale Lafayette Harmon  
Eats By Eyah TV  
Mr. & Mrs Foday Kenneh  
Mrs. Zari Tongor  
Mrs. Marie Sherif  
Mrs. Yvette Tubman Goodridge

## PATRONS

Mrs. Arimentha Russ  
Fran Frazier  
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Nimely  
Ms. Hawa Braima  
Mrs. Rebecca Wettee  
Mrs. Dora Ernst  
Mr. & Mrs. Iris Gee  
Mrs. Rebecca Wettee  
Mr. & Mrs. Yeargar Karnga  
Mr. Samuel Braima Sr.  
Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Harmon  
Jo Carmona  
Mrs. Maria Lidia Baez  
Mr. Fausto Baez

## GROUP

### CORPORATE TABLES

Ultimate Care Supported Living LLC  
Alpha Tongor  
Marie Sherif  
SeniorSelect Center  
Eminent Emmanuel S. Wettee  
Ultimate Home Healthcare Services Inc.  
Nora Musu Art  
Nora Musu Art  
SeniorSelect Center  
Alpha Tongor MK GROUP  
Eminent Emmanuel S. Wettee  
Friends For Michele Reynolds  
Central Ohio African American Chamber  
of Commerce

## DOOR PRIZE DONORS

Cheesecake Factory Easton-Gift Cards  
175th, Bicentennial and Fundraiser  
Event Committee-  
Commemorative Liberian - American  
Double Waving Crossed Flags  
Friendship Lapel Pins

## SILENT AUCTION MONITORS

Mr. Sayon Cooper  
Mr. Abdul Sherif  
Mrs. Feegbair Porte Allison  
Mr. Alex Macke  
Ms. Helen Kamanda



# CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

### LICI CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

A community of approximately 10,000 citizens in Central, Ohio facing numerous obstacles impacted by the social determinates of Health (SDOH) is embarking on building a community center as a central place to provide needed services.

### WHY

Since 1986, our fundamental value has always been to promote and empower Liberian cultural pride, advance social and economic development towards building a safer thriving community.

### HOW ARE WE DOING IT:

In 2019, members of the community rallied and supported the purchase of 1 Acre land located on the far east side of Columbus to build a 14,000 square facility.



Scan To  
Support Our  
Efforts!



### SERVICES

- Health and Mental Health Services
- Youth skill development
- Community Clinic
- Elderly care services
- Early Childhood healthy environment
- Education/Awareness
- Food Security Community Development
- New Immigrant Services

### FUNDING STRATEGY

**\$1,500,000**

Government Funding .....	\$500K
Individuals & Social Media.....	\$200K
Foundation Grants .....	\$425K
Corporate Funding.....	\$225K
LICI Events.....	\$150K

# PROJECT OVERVIEW II



**LICI Community Center will be a 14000 SQ facility in the Eastland Neighborhood in the Far East Columbus, Franklin County, Ohio which will impact the lives and provide services to over 40,000 diverse residences in the community.**

Selecting a site for the community center was very strategic. The future center will sit on a 1acre of land owned by LICI on Kimberly Parkway, off the Hamilton Road Corridor in the Eastland Area. This area is strategically located between I-70 and Big Walnut Creek in the southeast quadrant of Columbus, where eighty percent of the Liberian population resides. This area is consider an "Asset Dessert" of the city and has been in decline for many years. The City of Columbus recently embarked upon a planning process designed to generate a revitalization plan for the corridor and address the signs of disinvestment and decline. Crime rate in the area has been on a rise and poses threat to many families and residents. Community based organizations like LICI does not have a strong presence or have the resources to provide services to families who are in need. The Eastland area is now part of an "opportunity zone," an area that local and state officials have deemed blighted and in need of investment.

Our 14,000 SQ facility will be home to a multi-purpose gymnasium for young boys and girls in the neighborhood to remain engaged through recreational activities, tutoring and afterschool programs, computer lab and other social services programs. Our free clinic will provide equal access to healthcare to our marginalized and New American communities. Other programs will include workforce development and counseling services which ties into our poverty reduction strategy and empowering our families.



# PROJECT OVERVIEW

Liberians have been migrating to the United States for over four decades. In Central Ohio, nearly 8,000 Liberians work and reside, according to the American Community Survey. LICI's 2015 Internal Poll puts that number Even higher, 10,000.



## NEED ASSESSMENT

In 2017, Franklin County Job & Family Services commissioned Community Research Partners, CRP to conduct a study on the needs and challenges of the Liberian community in Franklin County.

The research found that Liberians in the County are younger than the general population. Many Liberian youth ages 16 and 17 could be preparing to go to college or entering the workforce; yet, college enrollment in the community is relatively low, and unemployment is astonishingly high. Furthermore, Liberians with college degrees—and many of them—often find that academic degrees earned overseas are not as helpful or comparable to the desired employment they seek within the US. Consequently, the high unemployment within this small population creates stress for individuals and families and financial and economic insufficiencies.

## ADDRESSING THE NEEDS

As the oldest New American community in Central Ohio migrating from a war-torn nation, there are real opportunities to ensure that Liberians settling in Central Ohio are provided the right resources to succeed and become productive members of society.

In 2019, members of the community rallied and supported a 1 Acre of land purchased on the far east side of Columbus. This endeavor was an exciting accomplishment for Liberians and Columbus, and our diaspora community. With the collaboration of public and private partnerships, a 14,000 SQ facility will house programs for Liberians residing in Central Ohio and the immediate neighborhood on the far east side of Columbus. The Facility will house programs for families, youth, and the elderly.



# TRANSFORMING LIBERIAN COMMUNITIES IN THE DIASPORA

Up until the 1980s, Liberians primarily limited their travels to the United States. Students, in particular, made up a bulk of that population. The country had a relatively stable democracy and a prosperous economy. Not many needed to travel.

Unfortunately, the 1980 Military Coup nudged the first wave of refugees and asylees out of the country. Followed by the 1989 Civil War, which forced a larger flux of Liberian migrants to the United States shores. The United States Government granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to protect recipients from deportation and provide work permits.

We are all somehow the products of those exercises. Residents, parents, and families of many states, including Ohio; we are healthcare professionals, entrepreneurs, leaders, public servants and volunteers contributing to the growth and development of America. Nevertheless, our collective needs and wants as immigrants have grown far beyond the organization those founding fathers envisioned. We are, therefore, tasked as new generation of community leaders with the responsibilities of determining what path we pursue and where we want to see our community go.



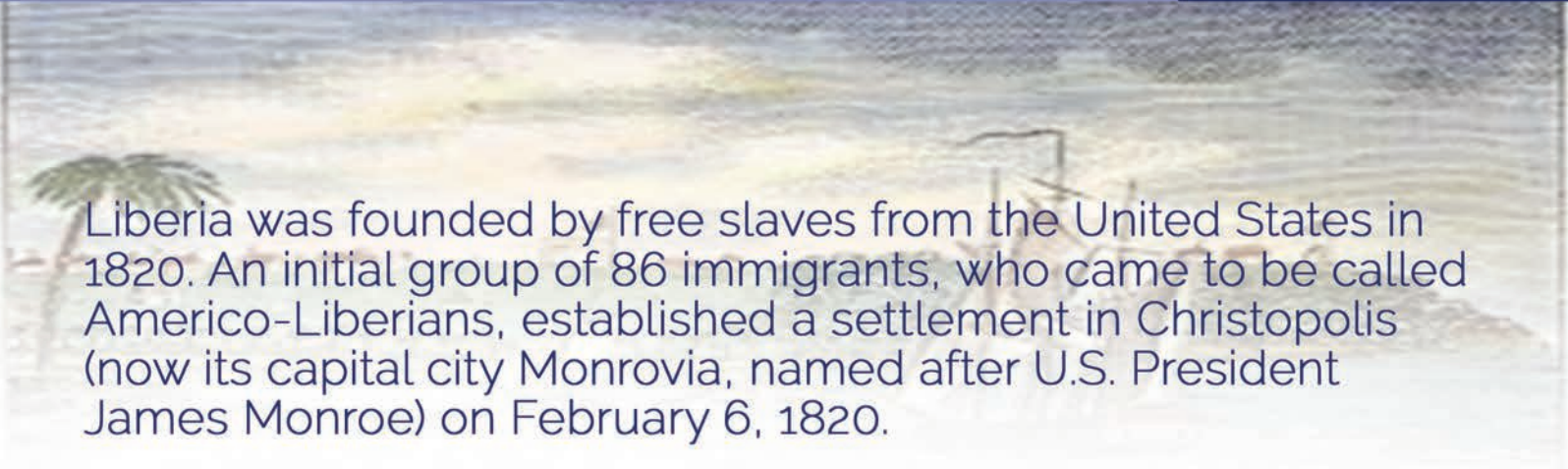
EMPOWERING

COMMUNITIES, TRANSFORMING

LIVES



# OUR HISTORY



Liberia was founded by free slaves from the United States in 1820. An initial group of 86 immigrants, who came to be called Americo-Liberians, established a settlement in Christopolis (now its capital city Monrovia, named after U.S. President James Monroe) on February 6, 1820.

Liberia received its independence on July 26, 1847, from The American Colonization Society. The country is in Western Africa along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean and shares land borders with the countries of Sierra Leone, Guinea, and the Côte d'Ivoire. Liberia is slightly larger than Ohio and is made up of forested plains, plateaus, and low mountains. The official language is English and has a population of 3.887 million.

Liberia is a country of great ethnic diversity and abundant natural resources. As Africa's oldest independent republic and a founding member of the United Nations, Liberia enjoyed many years of relative prosperity and good relations within both the African and International communities especially the United States of America. Liberia was traditionally noted for its academic institutions, iron-mining, and rubber. Political upheavals beginning in the 1980's and a 14-year civil war (1989-2003) destroyed Liberia's economy and brought a steep decline in living standards. The nation is now in the process of rebuilding after more than twenty years of civil unrest and warfare.



## LIBERIA's CONNECTION TO OHIO

### EDWARD JAMES ROYE, 5TH PRESIDENT OF LIBERIA



Edward James Roye was born into a prosperous African American family in Newark, Ohio. Roye was a descendant of the Igbo tribe. His father, John Roye, managed a ferry across the Wabash River at Terre Haute, Indiana and acquired considerable land in Terre Haute as well as Vandalia in the neighboring state of Illinois. As a result of the family's financial standing, young Edward was able to attend Ohio University in neighboring Athens, Ohio.

In 1836, upon the premature death of his father, Roye relocated to Terre Haute where he established the community's largest barber shop, boasting a 79-foot (24 m) high barber pole, "the tallest in western Indiana". In 1846, attracted by the American Colonization Society, Roye immigrated to Liberia and set up business as a merchant. Within three years of his arrival, he became active in Liberian politics. Before being elected president he served as Speaker of the Liberian House of Representatives and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia.

In addition to Newark, Ohio, since 1972 the city of Monrovia has been a sister city to the city of Dayton and maintains an ongoing relationship.



# OUR HISTORY

## LIBERIA AND IT'S TIES TO THE UNITED STATES



1. Joseph Jenkins Roberts 1st and 7th Pres. of Liberia born in Norfolk, Virginia 2. President Edwin Barclay (right) and U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt during World War II, January 1943 3. Pres. William V. S. Tubman US visit with JFK in 1961 4. Pres. Jimmy Carter 1978 visit to Liberia with Pres. William R. Tolbert Jr. 5. Pres. Samuel K. Doe 1982 visit to The White House with Pres. Reagan 6. President George W. Bush Jr. 2008 visit to Liberia with Her Excellency Pres. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf 7. Pres. Bill Clinton 2008 visit to Liberia-Clinton Global Initiative 8. Former 2006-2008 US Ambassador to Liberia Linda Thomas-Greenfield 9. Her Excellency Pres. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf visits Secretary of State Hilary Clinton at the State Department in Virginia 10. Her Excellency Ellen Johnson Sirleaf 2010 visit with Pres. Obama 11. US Ambassador to Liberia, Ambassador McCarthy reflects "The ties that binds us goes beyond friendship...." speaking on June 30, 2022, at the United States Embassy near Monrovia commemorating the US 246th Independence Day Anniversary which is officially observed on July 4th.





## WHAT IS LIBERIA BICENTENNIAL?

The Liberian Bicentennial is an important threshold in Liberian history. This year long event provides a historic opportunity to commemorate the arrival of the settlers on January 7, 1822. It was January 7, 1822, that a small group of free Black Americans from the United States huddled on the island then known as Dozoa; the newcomers would eventually rename it Providence Island. The Island, along with land on the adjacent Cape Mesurado, had been acquired the previous December from the indigenous chiefs by the American Colonization Society (ACS). For these Black Americans, the settlement was a relief.

Some had lingered in Sierra Leone homeless since departing the United States in 1820. But why were they homeless, and why did they come to what must have been a strange place? From the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, 12 million enslaved Africans were forcibly placed in ships for the voyage to the "New World," or the Americas, that is, North America, South America, Central America, and the Caribbean or West Indies. Approximately 2 million perished during the traumatic journey across the Atlantic Ocean.

Those who survived labored on plantations producing agricultural staples, including sugar, cotton, rice, and coffee. By the 1800s a small number had obtained freedom through various means: some slave owners allowed the enslaved to earn money and purchase their freedom. Others were emancipated for meritorious service, such as, serving in the America War of Independence and preventing disaster like arson. The number of free Black people continued to grow. For example, by 1820 it was 233,524 having climbed from 59,524 in 1790.

But slave owners perceived this growing presence as a source of threat because former slaves did organize rebellions against slavery. This fear contributed to the formation of the ACS in 1816. Its membership included slave owners and those who were convinced that free Blacks would never attain equality and justice in the United States. Ultimately, the ACS concluded that emigration to Africa was the best opportunity for free Blacks to achieve political and economic freedom. In 1819 the ACS was blessed with funds from the US Government. Those funds were part of the money that Congress had allocated for the repatriation of enslaved Africans liberated from slave ships, because of the 1808 banned on the importation of enslaved Africans into the United States. With the funds, the ACS began its "voluntary" emigration plan. True, faced with the racial discrimination and injustice, many free Blacks chose to leave the United States on their own free will.

But many enslaved people confronted a stark choice: their owners would emancipate them if they emigrated to Liberia; unsurprisingly, about a third of all emigrants were emancipated on to emigrate to Liberia. In 1820 the ACS's first emigrants of eighty-six free Black landed on Sherbro Island in Sierra Leone. Some perished from various causes, including the African fever, a disease that is now known as malaria.

On January 7, 1822, the emigrants finally settled on Providence Island. Several months later, April 25, 1822, they moved to the mainland. But those indigenous people that opposed the land transfer launched two major back-to-back attacks that same year, in November and December 1822. The December battle was previously observed on December 1 as a national holiday called Matilda Newport Day.

What does all this mean for the Bicentennial? Certainly, the Liberian Government is articulating its goals for the Bicentennial, e.g., promoting tourism and a positive climate for foreign investment, along with emphasizing Liberia's pivotal contribution to the global Black leadership or Pan-Africanism.

January 7, 1822, represents the beginning of our convergence as a people: indigenous people welcomed fellow Africans from their centuries-old Diaspora. January 7, 1822, likewise, embodies our division, as the first battles between the free Blacks and the indigenous people commenced in 1822. More conflicts followed. The Government of Liberia continues to demonstrate an unwavering commitment to national unity during this yearlong Bicentennial commemoration. Specific unification projects and policies are being implemented as well.



# OUR HISTORY

## COMMEMORATING 200 YEARS OF U.S.A.-LIBERIA TIES MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER



1. US Ambassador Michael McCarthy recognizing the 200th anniversary of the arrival on Providence Island at the Liberian Government commemoration kick off. 2. Liberia Bicentennial Logo 3. US Ambassador Michael McCarthy with Dr. Bill Allen, Chair of the Historical Society of Liberia 4. The Liberian President George M. Weah along with US. Ambassador. 5. Representatives Meeks, Beatty, and Carter prepare to toss flowers into the Mesurado River in memory of the first American immigrants who arrived on Providence Island in 1822. 6. Representative Meeks, who represents a congressional district in New York, was joined by Representatives Ami Bera of California, Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, Joyce Beatty of Ohio, G.K. Butterfield of North Carolina, Brenda Lawrence of Michigan, and Troy Carter of Louisiana. 7. President Biden delegation to Liberia Bicentennial Celebration along with President George Manneh Weah and First Lady Clar Weah led by Ms. Dana Banks, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Africa at the National Security Council, U.S. Ambassador to Liberia Michael McCarthy, Mr. Lonnie Bunch, Sec. of the Smithsonian Inst. and Rev. Dr. Teresa Jefferson-Snorton, Bishop of the Fifth Episcopal District of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and Chair of the Gov. Board, National Council of Churches in the US. 8. Senior Director Banks speaking at the Bicentennial Celebration at SKD Stadium. 9. Mr. Lonnie Bunch speaking with Roland Martin, U.S. media personality and founder of the Black Star Network, and Minister of Youth and Sports Wilson

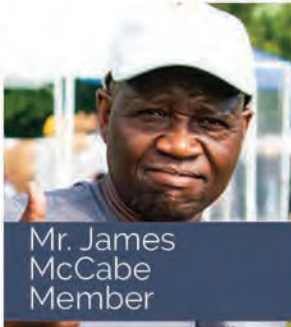


# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

"Passion is the key essential force  
that drives our success it  
determines everything that we  
think and do!"



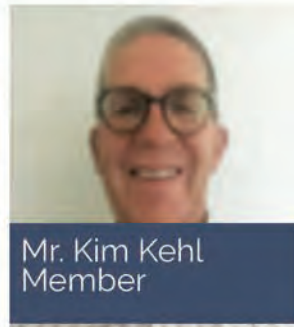
Mr. Hale Lafayette  
Harmon  
Chairman



Mr. James  
McCabe  
Member



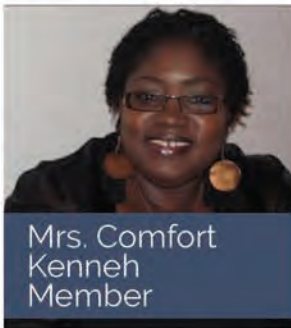
Mrs. Maima  
Kamara  
Member



Mr. Kim Kehl  
Member



Rev. Dr. Alexander  
Sumo  
Vice Chairman



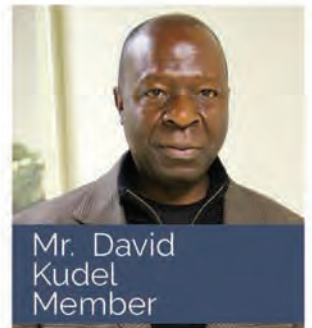
Mrs. Comfort  
Kenneh  
Member



Mrs. Kanah  
Heckman  
Member



Mr. Winston  
Cooper  
Secretary



Mr. David  
Kudel  
Member



# THE PROGRAM OPENING

Mistress of Ceremony.....Morgan Harper  
Attorney and Community Leader

Cocktail Reception.....Silent Auction  
6PM-7PM 6PM-9PM

## *Introduction*

Drum Call....."Kaipai"

United States and Liberia National Anthems.....Mrs. Angel Hill-Mathais

Invocation .....Liberians Ministerial Council of Ohio

Welcome Remarks.....Mrs. Yvette Tubman-Goodridge  
Chairlady, 175th Independence, Bicentennial and Fundraiser Gala

The Perspective.....Mr. Hale Lafayette Harmon  
Chairman, LICI Board

Supporting Organization Sponsorship Remarks .....Mrs. Marie Sherif  
Chief Administrative Officer & Child Development Council of Franklin County Inc.

Telfar LLC/Team Liberia .....Mr. Sayon Cooper  
Telfar LLC/Team Liberia, Coach

## *Liberia's Bicentennial and 175th Independence Oration*

Introduction of Orator.....Ms. Estella Bracewell  
Executive Assistant, LICI Grant Committee

Liberia's Bicentennial and 175th Independence.....City Councilmember Wynfred Russell

Introduction of Ambassador.....Winston Cooper  
Board Member, LICI

Remarks.....Mr. George SW Patten Sr.  
Liberia's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United States of America,  
Canada and Mexico



# THE PROGRAM FUNDRAIZER

## Keynote Speech

Introduction of Guest Speaker.....Mrs. Kana Heckman  
Board Member, LICI  
Guest Speaker .....Hon. Latyna Humphrey  
Ohio House of Representatives, District 26

## Dinner & Entertainment

Dinner.....Musical Interlude  
Drums....."Kaipai"  
Cello and Violin "Nloli Sikelel iAfrica (South Africa National Anthem).....Anna Marie and Madina Harmon  
Cello "Gavotte" .....Madina Harmon  
Remarks .....Ms. Minerva Grant  
National Executive Vice President, ULAA

## Lifetime Achievement Award For Advocacy

Introduction of Lifetime Achievement Award Winner.....Mr. Joseph Sawo  
LICI, Member, July 29, 2022, Event  
Remarks .....Emminent Emmanuel Sunnyboy Wetee

## Fundraiser

Fundraiser Moderator.....Mr. Ray A. Jones  
C.E.O. The Jones Company of America  
LICI Capital Campaign Presentation.....Mr. Alpha Tongor  
LICI Acting Executive Director  
Mrs. Grace Kolliesuah, Chair, LICI Strategic Planning Committee  
The Art of Given.....Dr. Michele Reynolds  
This Dream Needs To Become A Reality.....Shiloh Joy Myers  
8th Grader Groveport Madison Middle School North  
Introduction of Fundraiser Launcher.....Mrs. Comfort Kenneh  
Former President of LICI Curent Board Member, LICI  
Fundraiser Launcher.....Hon. Wilmot J. Collins  
Mayor, City of Helena, Montana  
The Fundraiser .....Mr. Ray A. Jones  
C.E.O. The Jones Company of America



# THE PROGRAM AWARD PRESENTATION

## *Award Presentation*

Community Service.....Mrs. Nensah McCabe, Chair, LICI Phenomenal Women  
Strategic Leadership.....Mrs. Grace Kolliesuah, Chair LICI Strategic Planning Committee  
Community Impact.....Mrs. Marie Sherif, Chair, LICI Grants Committee  
Marketing Excellence.....Mrs. Zari Tongor, LICI Marketing Director  
Dedicated Service.....Mrs. Rebecca Wetsee, LICI CFO/Treasurer

## *Remarks*

Mrs. Yvette Tubman-Goodridge  
Chairlady, 175th Independence, Bicentennial and Fundraiser Gala

*Enjoy and Have a  
Splendid Evening!*



# NATIONAL ANTHEM



## "The Star-Spangled Banner"

O say can you see, by the dawn's  
early light,  
What so proudly we hail'd at the  
twilight's last gleaming,  
Whose broad stripes and bright  
stars through the perilous fight  
O'er the ramparts we watch'd were  
so gallantly streaming?  
And the rocket's red glare, the  
bomb bursting in air,  
Gave proof through the night that  
our flag was still there,  
O say does that star-spangled  
banner yet wave  
O'er the land of the free and the  
home of the brave?



## "All Hail, Liberia, Hail!"

All hail, Liberia, hail! (All hail!)  
This glorious land of liberty  
Shall long be ours.

Though new her name,  
Green be her fame,[a]  
And mighty be her powers,  
And mighty be her powers,

In joy and gladness  
With our hearts united,  
We'll shout the freedom  
Of a race benighted,

Long live Liberia, happy land!  
A home of glorious liberty,  
By God's command!



# LATYNA M. HUMPHREY

*State Rep.*  
COLUMBUS, OHIO



Representative Latyna M. Humphrey serves the people of House District 26. Representative Humphrey was born in Columbus, Ohio and raised on the near east side. She is a proud graduate of the Columbus East High School. A single mom who worked her way through college at Columbus State and Franklin University. Representative Humphrey's highest priority is the same as so many others, to give her son a better start in life than she had. Guided by her faith, Representative Humphrey's life experience instilled her with a deep sense of compassion, forgiveness, hard work and an unshakable trust in God. She has always held a deep concern for those in our community who have been marginalized and left behind.

She has dedicated her career to uplifting people in poverty and making our community more equitable for everyone. Community service is not new to Representative Humphrey as she helped with aid during the Flint Water Crisis. There, she volunteered to help with data entry for the American Red Cross and served at local food kitchens. This experience led her to get involved here in Columbus with local organizations such as the YWCA, YMCA, Central Ohio Young Black Democrats, NAACP-Columbus and the Franklin County Democratic Party where she serves as Secretary of the Central Committee.

In 2019, Representative Humphrey became the Community Outreach Coordinator for Franklin County Auditor, Michael Stinziano. Later, she joined the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas as Bailiff to the Honorable Judge Carl A. Aveni, II. In addition, Representative Humphrey is a two-time author and has been featured in multiple national publications and was guest speaker at Columbia University, The Ohio State University, the National Society of Leadership and Success, Brooklyn College, Hampton University, and many others.



# WILMOT COLLINS

*Mayor*  
HELENA, MONTANA



Mayor Wilmot Collins, was born, raised and partially educated in Liberia, West Africa. His early childhood was in Firestone, Liberia where he attended elementary school. He later attended Carroll High School at Grassfield, Nimba County, upon graduation he attended the Ricks Institute Junior College, where he obtained an Associate of Arts degree in General Studies, he later matriculated to the University of Liberia, where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and a minor in Sociology; while attending the University of Liberia, Wilmot's thirst for knowledge led him to also attend the Liberian Foreign Service Institute, there he obtained a certificate. Upon Graduation from the University of Liberia, Wilmot began teaching at the SOS Children's Village in Matadi, Monrovia.

When Liberia got engulfed in its civil war, Wilmot and his wife fled to Ghana and eventually ended up in Montana. Wilmot's career started off by being a janitor at an elementary school and later joined the U. S. Army and Naval Reserves and recently retired after 22 years of service. While in the service Wilmot obtained his Master of Science in Human Resources Degree and is presently working on his PhD in Forensic Psychology.

Wilmot has held many positions: Administrative Officer: VA Montana – Facility Management, Adjunct Professor: University of Montana – Helena College, Child Protection Specialist – Montana Department of Health and Human Services, and Immigration Service Officer – Department of Homeland Security.

And most recently in 2017 Wilmot became the first black mayor in Montana's history, since 1889. In November of 2021 Wilmot won his second term as Helena, Montana's Mayor. Wilmot has served on many boards: LIRS (Lutheran Immigration and Refugees Service), UNHCR – Refugees Congress, United Way for Lewis and Clark County, Montana Human Rights Network and Montana Immigrant and Justice Alliance.

Wilmot is married to Maddie Collins who is a Nurse Practitioner, and the marriage was blessed with two children. Jaymie their daughter is serving in the U.S. Navy overseas and their son Bliss is living and working as a project manager for King County (Seattle, WA) With whatever time Wilmot finds he loves to fish and hike with his wife Maddie



# WYNFRED RUSSELL



*City Council*

BROOKLYN PARK, MN

Wynfred Russell is a global health and public policy professional with more than 15 years of experience. He is the Founder and Director of Health Equity at ACER and coordinates the State of Minnesota COVID-19 response project. In November 2018, Wynfred became the first Black person to be elected a Brooklyn Park City Councilmember. He is now running for Mayor of Brooklyn Park.

During the Ebola outbreak, he led a \$7.9 million USAID-funded Ebola response project in southeast Liberia. He also managed a multi-million-dollar Global Polio Eradication Program in northern Nigeria, serving 2.2 million children under five, 1.6 million parents, and distributed more than twenty-four million vaccinations and 8 million medicines and dried goods.

Even though he works in the public health space, Wynfred has experience and a deep passion for education, and taught for six years and served two years as a public health researcher at the University of Minnesota. He has also taught at Century College and North Hennepin Community College.

Wynfred has served on a variety of advisory committees on good governance, educational access, and the elimination of health disparities. He is a recipient of Minnesota's Human Rights Award, which praised him for his service to the State. He is the 2018 Virginia McKnight Binger Unsung Hero Award recipient for his work to improve the lives of people around the world. His academic training includes public policy, community health, education, and communication studies.

"It is not about thinking alike; it is about  
**THINKING TOGETHER.**" -  
Wynfred Russell



# RAY JONES

## CEO

THE JONES COMPANY OF AMERICA



Mr. Ray Ayton Jones, often affectionately referred to as the Connector, has a distinguished record of achievement in the private, public and community sectors. He is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of The Jones Company of America (TJCOA). In this capacity he directs the organizations consulting efforts in introducing and strengthening U.S. companies who desire to do business or outside the United States and provide business strategies for both private and non for profit organizations seeking to improve their organizational quality, productivity and overall character. Prior to his founding of TJCOA, he collectively served as Chief Contract Negotiator - Chairman of the Cost Containment Committee - Director of Purchasing and Assistant Director of Materiel Management for Saint Anthony Medical Center (Now O.S.U. Medical Center) a 400 + bed facility. He became highly recognized for his extraordinary achievement in negotiating millions of dollars in annual savings and efficiencies through administration of the Medical Centers materiel and distribution system. In addition, he served in a consulting capacity to the Franciscan system's national purchasing group. During that time, he successfully negotiated one of the largest prime vendor contract agreement on behalf of the Franciscan healthcare system resulting in millions of dollars in saving throughout their national healthcare system. Mr. Jones served as a consultant to Children's Hospital of Columbus and provided best-practice strategies to increase savings and operational efficiencies to the hospital's Department of Materiel Management.

In addition, he provided leadership support to Ohio Hospital Association (OHA) and served as a consulting Healthcare Executive to provide development support to Member Products, Inc. (MemPro). In that capacity, Mr. Jones worked with OHA's Chief Executive Officer to create and market unique products and services that benefited its member hospitals. He served as one of the founders, Principal and Executive Vice-President for M-Engineering, Inc. one of Ohio's premier mechanical, electrical, structural, fire protection and telecommunication engineering consulting firms. Starting out with a team of approximately fifteen technical and administrative staff, in less than three years the firm grew substantially and became recognized by Business First, as one of the top 20 consulting revenue producing engineering design firms in Central Ohio. Recognized for his leadership and passion to increase minority business throughout the marketplace for those within the architectural and engineering industry, Mr. Jones was voted on to serve as Chairman of the Ohio Minority Architects and Engineers Association. Most notably, with offices in Columbus - Dayton - Cleveland, Ohio and Atlanta, Georgia and considered to be the largest Black owned consulting civil engineering design firms in Ohio, Mr. Jones served as the Vice-President of Marketing and Business Development for John E. Foster and Associates, Inc., specializing in the planning, design of roadways, bridges, building structures, airports, infrastructures to include sanitary storm and water related projects. As a direct result of his efforts the company experienced the largest revenue growth in its history. Mr. Jones's public service record includes serving as Special Assistant to the Ohio Treasurer of State. In this capacity, Mr. Jones assisted the treasurer by managing the Treasury's Department of Research, Program Development and Constituent Services. In addition, he spearheaded development of the first comprehensive disaster relief and contingency plan for the office of the Treasury. Mr. Jones, also served as Special Assistant to former Secretary of State, J. Kenneth Blackwell. In that capacity he served as Secretary Blackwell's liaison to the Ohio constituency. During that time, he forged public private partnerships to improve civic literacy and social responsibility among thousands of Ohio's youths. He created and implemented a Speakers Bureau aimed at educating and marketing the services offered by the Office of the Ohio Secretary of State which was promoted through the Ohio Spirit Initiative program. During that time Mr. Jones, developed and created a booklet, which served as a guide for new citizens residing in Ohio, entitled Citizenship Matters. The booklet was translated into English, Spanish and Somali and received national recognition from the National Secretaries Association.



# MORGAN HARPER

*Attorney*  
AND COMMUNITY LEADER



Morgan Harper, an attorney and community leader, was previously a Democratic candidate for U.S. Congress. Born to a teenager, Morgan lived in a foster home before being adopted and raised in Columbus by a public-school teacher. She received scholarships to attend Tufts (BA), Princeton (MA) and Stanford (JD).

During the Obama administration, she served as a Senior Advisor at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) responsible for protecting consumers against predatory lenders. Morgan is the co-founder of Columbus Stand Up! a grassroots community organization that has mobilized volunteers across Central Ohio to serve the community and is the Director of Policy and Advocacy at the American Economic Liberties Project.



# LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT

## THE EMINENT EMMANUEL "SUNNYBOY" WETTEE



The Eminent Emmanuel Sunnyboy Wettee is a lifelong public servant, a voice for the voiceless, who empowers the next generation and serves as an advocate for Liberians across the globe. An educator of over 25 years, a husband, a father of five, a grandfather of four, a community leader, a change agent, and a proud Liberian. Growing up as a child in Liberia, his desire to make a difference, led him to serve as Class Ppresident in elementary school, a Liaison between the student body and school administrators advocating for the needs of students. With such an unstoppable passion, he also held numerous leadership positions throughout middle and high school including President of his sophomore, junior and senior classes. At Bassa Teen Age Junior School, Eminent Wettee was elected the President of the Student Government in 1980. During his time in high school at The Booker Washington Institute (BWI) in 1983, the student body led a strike for better education and resources. As the Civil Right Icon, John Lewis famously said, and I quote "always get into good trouble' off quote. Eminent Wettee got into good trouble as an advocate for the student body. The school administrators considered him as the ringleader and expelled him from BWI. With overwhelming support, the student body rallied around him and advocated for his re-admittance to BWI. The administrators reluctantly agreed, with the promise that he will not serve in student government again during his school tenure and he graduated in 1984.



# LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT

## THE EMINENT EMMANUEL "SUNNYBOY" WETTEE

Such a setback, one would think will discourage Eminent Wettee. After high school, He enrolled at the University of Liberia in 1985 and joined the Student Unification Party (SUP) and began studying computer programming at a nearby the West Africa Computer Science Institute. He later worked as a Work Station Operator at the Fourth World Bank Educational Project at the Ministry of Education in Liberia. and d In 1988, he was accepted into a Chinese student exchange program studying Computer Science at the Tsinghua University in the People's Republic of China but left the program earlier due to the breakdown of diplomatic relationship between The People's Republic of China and Liberia in 1989.

In August 1991, he came to America and eventually landed in Columbus, Ohio. His immigrant story is one of perseverance and dedication but also remains true to his advocacy for his homeland Liberia. He continued started studying computer science at Columbus State Community College where he obtained Associate Degree in Micro Computing Technology in 1994, received a bachelor's degree in Computer Science in 1997 from Franklin University and later an MBA from Franklin University in 2000 and a second masters in E-commerce from the University of Maryland University College in 2005. His love for continuous learning is evident as he is an "off and on" PHD candidate in information Ssystems at Dakota State University. He also served as Adjunct Computer Science Faculty at DeVry University, Franklin University, University of Phoenix, Ohio Dominican University, and Columbus State Community College. Since his employment on November 16th, 1992, by the State of Ohio working for the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC), Eminent Wettee has held the following positions: Clerk, Computer Operator I, Computer Programmer Analyst II, Computer Programmer Analyst III, Computer System Analyst, and now a Business Process Analyst.

One will wonder, where does this man find the time to do all of this? And I am not done yet, Now Let us get to The Real Mr. Wettee, The Eminent Emanuel Sunnyboy Wettee, a Lifelong Public Servant, a Voice for the Voiceless, who empowers the next generation of leaders and serves as An Advocate for Liberians across the globe. Despite his busy schedule, he continues to be a champion for Liberia.



# LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT

## THE EMINENT EMMANUEL "SUNNYBOY" WETTEE

**Liberians in Columbus Inc. (LICI)-** Former Secretary General, Vice President, and President where he actively advocated for the Liberian community as part of the greater Columbus Community meeting with elected officials and serving as their liaison for the community.

**Federation Of Liberian Association in Ohio (FOLAO)-** Former Extended and Secretary General where he actively advocated for all Liberians at the state and local level.

**Union of Liberians in the Americas (ULAA) -** Doyen of the National Leadership Council. Because of his leadership role and exceptional record across the Liberian Community of getting things done, in 2005 he was appointed Vice President of ULAA and later elected President from 2006 to 2008.

**U.S. Immigration Initiatives-** Advocated for 3 step processes TPS (Temporary Protection Status allow the Liberians to remain in the US.) The status was changed to DED (Deferred Enforcement Deportation) that avoided the deportation of over 10K Liberians resulted to the Liberian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act under President Donald Trump which led to Liberians gaining green cards and eventually citizenship.

**All-Liberian Conference on Dual Citizenship (ALCOD)-**In his continuous quest to serve, in 2012 he was elected Chairman of ALCOD in Washington DC as a conference hosted by the Embassy of Liberia and Diaspora Originations to formulate plans to achieve dual citizenship in Liberia. Unfortunately, Liberia 14-year civil war caused countless Liberians to seek refuge in other countries throughout the world, subsequently giving up their Liberian citizenship. His lifelong commitment and success in public service prepared him for his new role as he began working on a global level to establish Dual Citizenship for All Liberians in the Diaspora. Currently, the Liberian law only recognizes Liberian citizens that have not seek citizenship elsewhere no matter the reason. Mr. Wettee took the dual citizenship law to a referendum "A Humungous Task" and managed to get it pass at the House of Representative in Liberia and at the Liberian Senate. It is now on the desk of President George Weah's for signature. His current fight via ALCOD flagship program, the "Once a Liberian, always a Liberian" objective is creating the pathway for Liberians in the diaspora to be recognize as Liberians in their homeland with dual citizenship or nationality

**Commitment -** He maintains his memberships at his Alma Mata in Liberia Booker T. Washington Institute; still continually active in LICI, FALOA and in ULAA as recent as May 2022 Mr. Wettee was seen in a swamp at a Cleanup Campaign at Red Light in the City of Paynesville, Liberia and participated in BWI's 93rd anniversary and gave the Eye Right at the parade. He travels throughout the US and the World working on various initiatives for his people. This man does not miss a Community Meeting unless he is out of State or out of the Country; In his eyes, and the eyes of his people, he is a real nationalist and always puts Liberia First!!!!



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*Rae Holloway-Collins*

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