



AGENDA

International & Multicultural Advisory Committee (IMAC) Meeting

Feb 1, 2017 * 7:00-8:30 pm

Vision Room, CA Headquarters

Welcome & Introductions

Chair's Report – Valerie Montague

Program Manager's Report – Laura Smit

Approval of Dec 7, 2017 Minutes

Reports from Sister City Committees

- **Cergy-Pontoise** - Debra Paper
- **Tema** – Susan Olubi, Vice-Chair
- **Cap-Haitien** - Momina Malik, Chair
- **Tres Cantos** – No Chair
- **China** Planning Committee – Hui Dong, Vice-Chair

CA's Letter to the Business Monthly

Columbia's 50th Birthday

- Art show
- March 19 Kick-off, 11:30 – 4:30 pm

IMPORTANT DATES

- IMAC FY17 Meeting Dates (1st Weds): 2017: April 5, June 7
- Deadline for Sister Cities Exchange Applications: Feb 17
- Info Sessions: Build Haiti Foundation's Global Leadership Program: Feb 23, March 30 at 7pm
- World Languages Café – 4th Tues: Feb 28, Mar 28, April 25
- International Book Club: Feb 11, Mar 8, Apr 12
- Columbia's 50th Inaugural Day Celebration – Mall in Columbia – Sun, March 19, 2017
- Sister Cities 50th Birthday Art Show – June 8 to July 23
- Next Culture Fest: *Oceania: Australia, New Zealand & Pacific Islands*– May 7, 2017

Milton Matthews Column in the Business Monthly, Jan 2017

This year, Columbia Association had the privilege of hosting two distinguished, accomplished speakers: UMBC President Freeman A. Hrabowski III and Rob Breymaier, executive director of the Oak Park Regional Housing Center.

Both spoke as part of CA's Community Building Speakers Series, which seeks to stimulate us to discuss, engage and build our sense of community in Columbia. Both speakers touched on topics related to diversity, which is one of the cornerstones of our community.

From the time Columbia was founded, it was intended to be based on equal opportunity for people of all races and any socioeconomic status.

"It is important for all of us who are selling houses or lots or renting apartments in Columbia to understand that Columbia is a truly open city," James Rouse, Columbia's founder, wrote in August 1967 at a time when Howard County's schools had only recently been desegregated.

Rouse wanted Columbia to not only be a city where everyone could live; he also wanted Columbia to be a place where we all lived together — a true community. And so his vision, which became reality, also included interfaith centers where numerous religions and denominations could share the same roof, and combined mailboxes where neighbors would meet and engage in conversation with each other.

His vision was one reason why Columbia has long attracted so many to move here and then stay here. Our diversity was one of the many reasons that *Money Magazine* named Columbia the best small city to live in.

Columbia Association continues to contribute to Rouse's vision, helping to facilitate a community that is diverse in its makeup and needs.

CA's International Exchange and Multicultural Programs provide several shining examples.

Every year, CA hosts Culture Fests that celebrate cultures from different countries and regions of the world. These events often are held in a partnership with the Howard County Library System. It's a chance for residents from those countries to show what makes their country and culture unique, and for the community in general to learn about and enjoy elements of those cultures.

Over the years, the Culture Fests have reflected just how diverse Columbia and Howard County are, with spotlights on East and South Asia, North Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, Western and Eastern Europe, Russia, Ghana, South America, Central America and Mexico. On Jan. 22, CA will host HaitiFest, which follows the recent signing of a sister city agreement with the community of Cap-Haitien.

Every month, CA hosts the World Languages Café. As you walk through the room at the East Columbia 50+ Center, you will hear conversations in languages from around the world. The speakers may be recalling their childhood languages, or they may be people who are learning a new language, trying to improve their fluency, or just enjoy meeting new people from different cultures. For information on these and other programs, please visit ColumbiaAssociation.org/multicultural.

In addition, Columbia Art Center's galleries have included exhibits spotlighting art of a wide spectrum of cultures. The Art Center also hosts its Salon Series, monthly presentations that occasionally cover multicultural themes.

Fostering a diverse, inclusive community goes beyond race and religion. CA continues to offer programming for all ages, and we are focused on ensuring that CA has ADA-friendly facilities, making reasonable modifications to enable people with disabilities to participate in CA programs and activities. The improvements to our pools and other facilities are ongoing.

CA's summer camp options include Access to Nature Camp, an inclusion program for campers with disabilities or other special needs that has modified versions of camp activities while also ensuring that campers participate alongside their peers in the usual Nature Camp activities.

Columbia residents all live together. Our community is not just homes in neighborhoods and villages. It is a place where we walk, run and ride alongside each other on the pathways; where we play in pools, on athletic courts and fields and in the open space; where we watch movies and concerts next to each other on summer evenings; and where we have come to appreciate all that we have here — which includes who we are.

In 2016, Columbia Association (CA) had the privilege of hosting two distinguished, accomplished speakers: UMBC President Freeman Hrabowski III; and Rob Breymaier, executive director of the Oak Park Regional Housing Center.

Both spoke as part of CA's Community Building Speakers Series, which seeks to stimulate us to discuss, engage and build our sense of community. Both speakers touched on topics related to diversity, which is one of the cornerstones of our community.

From the time Columbia was founded, it was intended to be based on equal opportunity for people of all races and any socioeconomic status. "It is important for all of us who are selling houses or lots or renting apartments in Columbia to understand that Columbia is a truly open city," Jim Rouse, Columbia's founder, wrote in August 1967, at a time when Howard County's schools had only recently been desegregated.

Rouse wanted Columbia to not only be a city where everyone could live; he also wanted Columbia to be a place where we all lived together — a true community. And so his vision, which became reality, also included interfaith centers, where numerous religions and denominations could share the same roof, and combined mailboxes, where neighbors would meet and engage in conversation with each other.

His vision was one reason why Columbia has long attracted so many people to move here, then stay here. Our diversity was one of the many reasons that Money magazine named Columbia the best small city to live in.

CA continues to contribute to Rouse's vision, helping to facilitate a community that is diverse in its makeup and needs.

CA's International Exchange and Multicultural Programs provide several shining examples.

Every year, CA hosts Culture Fests that celebrate cultures from different countries and regions of the world. These events often are held in a partnership with the Howard County Library System. It's a chance for residents from those countries to show what makes their country and culture unique, and for the community in general to learn about and enjoy elements of those cultures.

Over the years, the Culture Fests have reflected just how diverse Columbia and Howard County are, with spotlights on East and South Asia, North Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, Western and Eastern Europe, Russia, Ghana, South America, Central America and Mexico. On Jan. 22, CA will host HaitiFest, which follows the recent signing of a sister city agreement with the community of Cap-Haitien.

Every month, CA hosts the World Languages Café. As you walk through the room at the East Columbia 50+ Center, you will hear conversations in languages from around the world. The speakers may be recalling their childhood languages or they may be people who are learning a new language, trying to improve their fluency or just enjoy meeting new people from different cultures. For information on these and other programs, visit ColumbiaAssociation.org/multicultural.

In addition, Columbia Art Center's galleries have included exhibits spotlighting art of a wide spectrum of cultures. The center also hosts its Salon Series, monthly presentations that occasionally cover multicultural themes.

Fostering a diverse, inclusive community goes beyond race and religion. CA continues to offer programming for all ages, and we are focused on ensuring that CA has ADA-friendly facilities, making reasonable modifications to enable people with disabilities to participate in CA programs and activities. The improvements to our pools and other facilities are ongoing.

CA's summer camp options include Access to Nature Camp, an inclusion program for campers with disabilities or other special needs, that has modified versions of camp activities while also ensuring that campers participate with their peers in the usual Nature Camp activities.

Columbia residents all live together. Our community is not just homes in neighborhoods and villages; it's a place where we walk, run and ride alongside each other on the pathways; where we play in pools, on athletic courts and fields, and in the open space; where we watch movies and concerts next to each other on summer evenings; and where we have come to appreciate all that we have here — which includes who we are.

E-mail Milton.Matthews@ColumbiaAssociation.org with questions and/or comments.