

Mayor Rhodes-Conway: Madison sister city delegation headed to Kanifing, The Gambia

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This week, Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway will lead a 20-person delegation from Madison, WI to its sister city Kanifing, The Gambia. This trip is coordinated by the Mayor's Office, Office of State Representative Samba Baldeh, the Madison-Kanifing Sister City group and partners in The Gambia, including Kanifing Municipal Council, Banjul City Council, the Ministry of Higher Education, and the University of The Gambia.

The sister city relationship between Madison and the municipality of Kanifing dates back to May 2016. In 1998, aligned with City of Madison Resolution 44907, Madison began establishing and supporting sister city partnerships with the belief that person-to-person ties are critical to understanding all cultures and promoting global peace. City of Madison sister city relationships aim to develop lasting friendships on the human level and to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and views. The City of Madison has established nine sister city relationships around the world.

"I am happy to be leading this group to visit with our friends in Kanifing, and to deepen the City of Madison's relationship with our sister city. We are in an era where building global relationships and understanding is vital. I look forward to sharing and learning with colleagues in The Gambia, and most importantly, bringing back information about educational, economic and cultural opportunities to our community here in Madison," said Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway.

During her time in The Gambia, Mayor Rhodes-Conway will meet with a number of stakeholders key to maintaining the Madison-Kanifing Sister City partnership. It is an opportunity for the Mayor to learn how this partnership, which has included

collaborations with City of Madison libraries, streets and fleet departments, can be extended to other areas of support and collaboration.

In particular, the Mayor will spend significant time with the Mayor of Kanifing, Talib Ahmed Bensouda. Mayor Rhodes-Conway will participate in an official MOU signing ceremony between Madison College and the University of The Gambia. She will pay a courtesy visit to Mayor Rohey Malick Lowe of the capital city of Banjul, who visited her earlier this year in Madison. Finally, the Mayor will visit President Adama Barrow, who has previously lent support to work of the Madison-Kanifing Sister City partnership.

“In a time when the world seems to be in perpetual turmoil, these kinds of relationships underscore our resilience and highlight our common human need in developing lasting friendship,” said Jerreh Kujabi, President of the Madison-Kanifing Sister City partnership.

“I am proud to bring together the people of The Gambia — the nation of my birth — with my friends and colleagues of my adopted home and the City of Madison. I know we will have much to learn from each other,” said Representative Samba Baldeh, a native of The Gambia, who led the establishment of the sister city partnership in 2016.

The delegation members, who will each pay their own way, includes several representatives from the City of Madison: Deputy Mayor Dr. Linda Vakunta, Department of Civil Rights Director Norm Davis, Madison Library Director Greg Mickells, and Office of Business Resources Manager Saran Ouk. Other delegates include Martha Stacker from Dane County, Geoff Bradshaw from Madison Area Technical College, Dr. Roxie Hentz, President for CEOs of Tomorrow and other Madison residents.