



Baltimore Sister Cities
Esprit de Corps
 MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
For volunteers, committee members, and leaders



**Baltimore Sister Cities Presents
 Raising the Curtain on Race**

Virtual Zoom Workshop
 August 25, 2020 7-8:30pm
 No charge

Baltimore, one of the oldest cities in the United States, is also known as Charm City and a City of Neighborhoods. Its rich history includes waves of immigration but also years of racial injustice right up to the present day.

Our guests for this evening will share personal stories on the Black and immigrant experience in Baltimore, focusing on systemic, institutional and structural racism and the role of white privilege. Our speakers for this learning experience are all members of Baltimore Sister Cities – Geri Byrd, Mayor's Office representative and BSC Vice President; Diana Zilberman, BSC Education Champion, and Teresa Leslie, Baltimore Rotterdam Sister City Committee.

This is a global conversation on race and ethnicity in Baltimore City, part of BSC's ongoing commitment to care for each other and work to improve our community, our city, our country and our world. Watch your email for your invitation!



**There's No Substitute
 for Volunteers**

Tharwat Abouraya
 President

Our volunteers are colleagues. In fact, we shouldn't even talk of "volunteers" anymore; they are really "unpaid staff." We at BSC try to provide the sort of training and support that will enable our unpaid staff to meet their goals and our goals.

Philanthropy and volunteerism are part of America's history. People formed associations. They formed communities before they formed governments. Out of that spirit came the tradition of giving and volunteering.

Our member volunteers are truly dedicated. And we can depend on their goodwill. We are creating a community of achievers.

Our (volunteer) Executive Team job is helping people achieve.

There is no greater achievement than to help a few people get the right things done. That's perhaps the best definition of being a leader.



Collaborating to Benefit Baltimore

By Karen Leggett

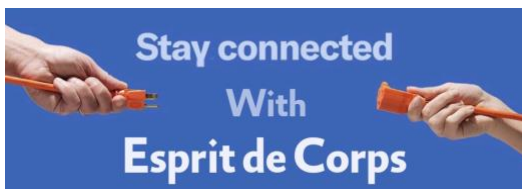
Co-Chair, Baltimore Luxor Alexandria Sister City Committee



The Baltimore Luxor Alexandria Sister City Committee is using the talents of its individual members to help other nonprofits in Baltimore. [Empowered Women International](#) trains immigrant and marginalized women to start their own businesses, using skills they already have in cooking, crafts, art, etc. BLASCC member Kate Campbell Stevenson, a former EWI board chair, made the connection to Alexandra Boycheck, who provides EWI's training programs in Baltimore. Two more BLASCC members – Delila Khaled and Athar Bayoumi – mentored EWI women and provided feedback on their business plans.

“I watched five women give their pitches and spent the night helping each one tweek and improve their pitch. It felt like I was on Shark Tank!” said Athar. Delila especially appreciated the opportunity to support a local minority-owned business that helps women of color improve their health and well-being.

BLASCC is also working with Baltimore's [Mera Kitchen Collective](#) to offer training resources in conflict resolution, personal financial literacy and diversity issues. Mera Kitchen employs immigrant chefs who provided catering services in the pre-pandemic era. Now with the help of a [GoFundMe campaign](#), Mera Kitchen chefs are cooking free meals for community members and frontline health workers in Baltimore.



Gislin Dagnelie

BSC Grant Champion,
Baltimore Rotterdam
Treasurer &
BSC President Emeritus

Gislin Dagnelie would have been a native of

Rotterdam, had not his dad decided to move the family to Utrecht so he could get a year of fellowship training. So Gislin spent his first months in Utrecht and then his next 17 years in Rotterdam. Although he went to Groningen for college and lived in Amsterdam for 12 years before coming to Baltimore, he still considers himself a Rotterdammer. In 1986 Gislin joined the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins, where he is still working today, researching various ways to remedy blindness.

Joining the Baltimore Rotterdam Sister City Committee did not happen till 2007, when he accidentally learned about its existence at an international fair organized by the City. Having first joined an international exchange program at age 11 (through CISV, an organization in which he remains an active volunteer to this day) and thus recognizing the importance of community-based international programs, it was a natural step for him to join BRSCC. A few years later he became the BRSCC chair, and when a group of active members from the different Sister City Committees banded together to form BSC, Inc. as a non-profit in late 2015, Gislin became its first president, a position he held for 4 years.

Gislin remains active as the treasurer of BRSCC and has no plans to give up volunteering for BSC, Inc. He feels that the Covid-19 pandemic has thrown us some serious lemons, but that it is up to us to turn them into lemonade, by boosting virtual exchanges and collaboration with our Sister Cities. Of course it helps that the time difference with Rotterdam is only 6 hours...



News from BCSCC

By Michelle Lee, co-chair
Baltimore Changwon Sister City Committee

The Baltimore Changwon Sister City Committee (BCSCC) arranged via Baltimore Sister Cities, Inc., to send a congratulatory letter and video from Baltimore Mayor Young to Changwon City for their 10th anniversary celebration of the merging of three formerly independent cities into one unified Changwon.

On July 1, 2010, the new Changwon City was created from the merger of Masan, Jinhae, and Old Changwon. Changwon City's growth and progress during these 10 years has been truly remarkable. Mayor Young's congratulatory letter was received by Changwon Mayor Huh, seen speaking below, to be published in an Encyclopedia of Urban Diplomacy.



In a sign of our times, his colleagues are seen in the background wearing masks. We can only hope that a solution to this pandemic is found soon, so that we may resume our normal lives and committee activities.



BSC Board Voting Directors

Bylaws: 4.3. Composition

The Board shall be composed of one Director representing each Sister City Committee, two Mayoral appointees, one of whom shall be the Sister Cities Liaison from the Office of the Mayor, one Director representing the Baltimore Development Corporation, one Director representing the Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts, and such other Directors as the Board shall resolve to invite as representatives of other constituencies, such as organizations whose goals and activities can further the mission of BSC, Inc. All Directors will have voting rights in Board decisions. Each *Associate Sister City Committee*, as defined in Art. 6.2, will be entitled to designate a non-voting observer to the Board. The board may co-opt individual members of BSC, Inc., as non-voting observers, for a renewable one-year term. The composition of the Board of Directors shall reflect the diversity of the community being served, taking into account race, gender, economic status, age and other factors. Directors shall serve in a fiduciary capacity, and may not use proxies from their constituency to attend meetings or vote on issues in front of the Board, except as set forth in Article 4.4.

SHARE WIDELY TO ALL YOUR NETWORK

JOIN OUR TEAM

Baltimore Sister Cities

Great Networking Opps

Interested email president@baltimoresistercities.org

501C3 Nonprofit - VOLUNTEERS
Executive Officers
Secretary -
Asst. Secretary -
Asst. Treasurer

The next Esprit de Corps will be published during the 4th quarter.
This newsletter will become a quarterly publication,
as we are not receiving needed submissions of articles
from member Committees.