

# LAO NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Number 2

June 2025

stronger together

## Message From the President



Dear Community Members:

I am genuinely excited to greet you and want to express my heartfelt appreciation for your support!

A year ago, when we took on leadership roles, we did so with a clear vision: to rebuild and uplift our community. We believed then, as we do now, that by coming together, we can foster an inclusive and resilient community that thrives—not only in the National Capital Region but across Canada.

Thanks to your support—and by building on the work of our predecessors—we are moving our community forward in incredible ways. While we are proud of what we have achieved together so far, we recognize that there is still more work to be done.

As we continue the final year of our mandate, through March 2026, we want to assure you that we remain inspired and fully committed to creating meaningful pathways to progress for this community—with you, and for you.

That's why we are excited to share that several key initiatives are now underway, including programs focused on women and youth empowerment, seniors' engagement, and newcomer support—all made possible through the City of Ottawa's Emerging Community Needs Funding.

These initiatives are for you, designed with something for everyone. So, we encourage you to come out, get involved, and bring your energy to enjoy them.

Our community grows stronger through your voice and involvement. Let's keep growing—together.

Yours in service,

Nyaquoi Suah

President, Liberian Association of Ottawa



LAO Officials meet with former Liberian President, Madame Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in Toronto, Ontario

## Sharing Experiences from the 2025 Women's Convention

Mmes. **Williametta Weekie Moulton** and **Georgia Seidi**, two esteemed members of our community, represented the **Liberian Association of Ottawa (LAO)** at the **2025 Women's Convention** held in Waterloo, Ontario.

Organized annually by the **Liberian Association of Canada (LAC)** as part of its **Women Empowerment Projects**, the convention aims to strengthen women's capacity in **leadership, advocacy, and employment**. The 2024 convention was previously hosted in Montreal, Quebec.

The 2025 convention, held from **May 30–31**, took place under the inspiring theme: **"Women Leadership: Power, Embrace, and Excel."**

Miss Coleen James, Regional Councilor for Waterloo, delivered the keynote address. Drawing from her journey as an immigrant woman, she shared the barriers she overcame on her path to becoming a city Counselor.

Mmes. **Moulton and Seidi** will share insights from the convention during the **Women's Empowerment Cycle**, organized by the **Liberian Association of Ottawa** on **June 28, 2025**, as part of our community's **Culinary Evening** celebration.

For more information about this and other planned activities, please refer to the **LAO 2025–2026 Activity Calendar** available on our website.



## COMMUNITY UPDATES

**THE LAO WOMEN**  
INVITE YOU TO  
**A CULINARY EVENING**  
SAVE THE DATE **JUNE 28, 2025**  
FREE!  
Session: 3pm-6pm  
Tasting: 5pm  
TO BE ANNOUNCED  
WHAT IS HAPPENING ON THAT DAY?  
The women will come together to enhance their culinary skills by preparing traditional Liberian dishes. This gathering will celebrate our rich heritage, foster learning, and strengthen sisterhood in our community.  
Come out and support the women. They will treat us to authentic Liberian cuisine, cold drinks, and a lineup of classic Liberian music. It's a full cultural experience you won't want to miss!

### Liberian Culinary Evening

Hosted by the **Liberian Women in Ottawa**

Join our woman for a vibrant celebration of **Liberian cuisine and culture!** Discover why Liberia's rich and culinary tradition is one of Africa's best-kept secrets. In this special event, organized by the **Liberian Women in our community**, will feature:

- A wide variety of **authentic Liberian dishes**
- **Classic Liberian music** to set the mood
- Cultural sharing, storytelling, and community bonding

This event celebrates **Liberia's rich cultural heritage**, promotes **unity and learning among women**, and invites everyone to enjoy the warmth of Liberian hospitality.

**Admission: FREE!**

**Date:** Saturday, June 28th, 2025  
**Time:** 3:00 PM (Cooking/receipt learning)  
6:00 PM (The community will join the Women)

**Venue:** 1103-B Naughton Street, Ottawa

For more information, please contact:

**Dekote (Dee) Woods-Mosindi**

Secretary General, Liberian Association of Ottawa

### LAO Consoles the McCauley Family

On **Sunday, June 21, 2025**, a three-person delegation from the **Liberian Association of Ottawa (LAO)**, led by President **Kelvin Nyan Suah**, traveled to **Cornwall, Eastern Ontario**, to extend condolences to **Regina and Gabriel McCauley**, who recently lost their son, **George Peace McCauley**. George tragically passed away on **May 12, 2025** in a **drowning incident in Monrovia** and has since been laid to rest.

President Suah was accompanied by Ms. **Julietta Jablasone**, LAO Advisor, and **Mr. Darius Saquah Williams**. On behalf of the entire **Liberian community in Ottawa**, the delegation conveyed heartfelt sympathies and presented flowers to the grieving family. The delegates also presented individual envelopes—as their tokens of support.

As outlined in the **LAO Bereavement Guidelines**, financial assistance is provided only to **due-paying members** of the association during times of loss. However, in a strong show of unity and compassion, **President Suah** is encouraging community members to reach out and express their condolences to the McCauley family directly.

Let us continue to stand together in times of sorrow and offer comfort to those in need.

### Planning for Liberia's 178th Independence Day

The Executive of the Liberian Association of Ottawa (LAO) has announced a series of events to celebrate Liberia's 178th Independence Day.

#### **Independence Day Dinner Ball – July 26, 2025**

On July 26—the day Liberia declared itself a free and sovereign nation—the LAO will host an elegant **Dinner Ball and Dance** at the **Ukrainian Banquet and Convention Hall**, located at 1000 Byron Street. This event will feature a vibrant display of Liberian cuisine, traditional cultural performances, and inspiring speeches from LAO officials and invited guests.

#### **Family Day Celebration – August 3, 2025**

following the official celebrations, LAO will host a **Family Day** event on **August 3** at the iconic **Vincent Massey Park** in South Ottawa. This gathering is designed to bring families together to dine, dance, and connect in a relaxed, festive atmosphere. As always, the Association will provide food, and community members will volunteer to serve and entertain.

These events are a wonderful opportunity for Liberians in Ottawa to showcase their talents in music, poetry, and cultural arts. They also serve as valuable networking occasions for newly arrived Liberians to connect with long-time residents, share contacts, and support each other's integration into the local community.

Most importantly, these celebrations strengthen our bond with Liberia and ease the homesickness that often accompanies life in the diaspora. Join us in honoring our heritage, building community, and celebrating the spirit of Liberia!

### **Community Training Workshops: Organized by the Liberian Association of Ottawa (LAO)**

A significant number of our community members will benefit from a series of training sessions organized by the **Liberian Association of Ottawa (LAO)**, scheduled to run **July 12, August 16**, and on **September 27, 2025**. These workshops are designed to support participants in gaining essential knowledge about **Canada's asylum and immigration processes**. The Workshops will be facilitated by the Dennis Immigration Services (Immigration Sync), a Windsor based Immigration Services Provider.

The sessions are part of the LAO's **Community Engagement Projects**, funded under the **City of Ottawa's Community Engagement and Empowerment Program (CEEP)**. Workshop topics include:

- **Settlement Services**
- **Canada's Asylum System**
- **Legal Services for Newcomers**

In **March 2025**, the LAO received a **humanitarian grant of \$24,350 CAD** through the City of Ottawa's **Emerging Community Need Funding** initiative. This grant supports local organizations in delivering settlement and legal education services to community members in need.

Additionally, in **early May 2025**, the LAO Executive released the **2025–2026 Special Events Calendar**, which outlines the association's community engagement training sessions and other

major events.

To view the **Special Events Calendar**, visit our website:

We encourage all interested community members to participate and benefit from these important workshops!

### SPOTLIGHT: Pastor Christian G. Doekpar



In community life, we often associate impact with longevity—believing that those who have been around the longest or achieved the most materially are those who contribute the most. But time and titles aren't the only measures of commitment. Some individuals, even in a short time, make lasting impressions and meaningful contributions.

**Pastor Christian G. Doekpar**—affectionately known as “**Pastor Chris**” in the Liberian community of Ottawa—is a shining example of such an individual.

Though relatively new to the community, Pastor Chris has made a **remarkable impact** in a short span. From the moment he joined the **Liberian Association of Ottawa**, his leadership, spiritual guidance, and dedication to peace and unity have been felt across the board. At community meetings and events, when discussions become difficult or tensions rise, Pastor Chris is often the steady voice of reason—offering wise counsel and calling for unity.

He is regularly invited to **lead prayers and benedictions**, a role he carries out with humility and grace. His consistent contributions and commitment did not go unnoticed: in **2024**, he was **overwhelmingly elected** to the **Board of Directors** of the Liberian Association of Ottawa.

Pastor Chris came to Canada from the **Republic of South Korea**, where he was already serving as a **Spiritual Caregiver**. He arrived in Ottawa to **pursue further studies** while continuing his ministry. His devotion to both education and service is evident in the many **workshops and spiritual sessions** he organizes, often promoted through the community chatroom. His church congregation, supported by his wife **Eva** and their sons, has quickly grown into a vibrant multicultural fellowship that includes members from diverse nationalities.

Thanks to his tireless efforts, **Pastor Chris has become a respected Liberian voice within Ottawa's broader religious community**, representing our values of unity, compassion, and spiritual care.

#### Make a difference in your community

You can volunteer in one or more of the following areas:

- Event planning
- Committee works
- Community outreach
- Fundraising, etc.

#### Benefits of volunteering with the Liberian Association of Ottawa?

- Make meaningful contributions to your community
- Meet new people and build relationships
- Gain valuable experience and skills
- Enhance your resume and professional network

### UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

You are invited to LAO's  
**Canada BBQ & Birthday Bash**  
6282 Stablewood Place  
July 5th @ 4 PM  
Members can pay their dues at the BBQ

**FAMILY DAY PICNIC**  
Join us for a delightful day of fun, food, and festivities!  
Sunday, August 3, 2025 | 11 AM-8 PM  
Vincent Massey Park  
Heron Rd, Ottawa  
Ticket - Free!

You are invited to  
**LIBERIA'S 178<sup>TH</sup>**  
Independence Celebration & Dinner Ball  
AUGUST 2, 2025  
6:00 PM - 1:00 AM  
The Ukrainian Banquet and Convention Hall  
1000 Byron Avenue, Ottawa, ON  
DRESS CODE: FORMAL ATTIRE  
TICKET - \$60  
@lac.ncr.ca@gmail.com

THE MEN OF LAHN INVITES YOU TO OUR  
**FATHER'S DAY**  
BBQ AND GAMES IN THE PARK  
SATURDAY JUNE 28TH  
Location: Charles Daley Park, 1969 N SERVICE Rd, LINCOLN, ON L2R 6P9  
Time: 12:00 PM  
Fun games, lots of food and good music  
Come and celebrate Father's Day with the men of LAHN

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