



Champion Award Ceremony Remarks
Dr. Jane Gatewood, Vice Provost for Global
Engagement, University of Rochester
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Rochester, USA

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, esteemed Mayors of Rochester and Rennes, the delegation from Rennes, and our wonderful community in Rochester.

I am Jane Gatewood, the Vice Provost for Global Engagement, and it is my honor to be with you this evening as we officially inaugurate the University of Rochester's Global Awards ceremony.

Today marks a significant moment in our university's history and in Rochester's history as we honor individuals who have exemplified our commitment to international engagement and collaboration on a global scale.



I am thrilled to stand before you as we recognize the profound contributions of two remarkable leaders: Mayor Nathalie Appéré of Rennes, France, and Mayor Malik Evans of Rochester, USA.

Rochester and Rennes have shared a sister city relationship for 56 years, a relationship that has fostered cultural exchange and collaboration between our communities.

In particular, it is worth noting the longstanding partnership between the University of Rochester and the University of Rennes, which dates back to the 1960s. This partnership includes a summer program in Modern Languages and Cultures with courses and immersive cultural experiences in Rennes, as well as an exchange program in economics with Université de Rennes I and a language instruction exchange program with Université de Rennes 2.



Mayor Nathalie Appéré's visit to Rochester comes as a continuation of the successful exchange between our cities. Her leadership and dedication to fostering international partnerships have been instrumental in strengthening ties between Rochester and Rennes.

Mayor Malik Evans' tireless efforts to promote community engagement and global collaboration have left a lasting impact on our city. His commitment to Meliora – our university's motto meaning ever better - extends beyond Rochester, embodying the spirit of our university's global mission. I was honored to join the mayor and a Rochester delegation to Rennes last year, together with Matt Hurlbutt of Greater Rochester Enterprise.

During our visit, I had the privilege of meeting with our esteemed partners and friends in Rennes at Université de Rennes I, Université Rennes 2, and ENSAI (École nationale de la statistique et de l'analyse de l'information).



On this visit, it really touched me to see that Rennes Ville et Métropole, centered in the City of Rennes, dedicated a square in honor of Frederick Douglass. Mr. Douglass's great-great-great grandson, Kenneth Morris, who is also the president of Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives, and US Consul General in Rennes Elizabeth Webster were present for the celebrations.

This trip led by Mayor Evans was a clear reminder of the importance of citizen diplomacy and how mutual understanding between countries and people can be built and sustained for the next generations by individuals committed to global cooperation.

And this is exactly why the University of Rochester Global Champion Award holds immense significance. Today we recognize these two individuals and all the team members behind them who continue to demonstrate unwavering commitment not only to growing the partnership between our two cities and universities, but also to fostering stronger international community



engagement more generally and to re-imagining learning practices on a global scale.

By recognizing these global champions, we hope to inspire future generations of students, faculty, and community members from both countries to engage in meaningful cross-cultural exchange, contribute to a more inclusive, innovative, and interconnected world, and make a positive impact on the world stage.

Today, we celebrate not only the achievements of Mayor Appéré and Mayor Evans but also the enduring friendship between our cities and universities.

Thank you.