

***DATI Kukatonon Peace Project Formal & Initial Launch, Saturday November 16th @  
Providence Baptist Shrine: Charles Boimah Blake, Sr. Guest Speaker!***



Saturday November 16<sup>th</sup> will be a significant milestone in Liberian history! It will mark Phase One of the formal launch of the DATI Kukatonon Peace Project in Liberia. The historic event will take place at an historic site, the Old Providence Baptist Church Shrine on Broad Street in Monrovia. The Providence Baptist Church Shrine is where the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Liberia was signed one hundred and seventy-two years ago.



***Hon. Charles Boimah Blake, Sr.***

The guest speaker for the event is Honorable Charles Boimah Blake, Sr., Assistant Director General for Projects and Programs, National Bureau of Concessions, Republic of Liberia. He is a former Board member of DATI-USA and he is an accomplished finance/sales professional and business developer in both franchised and independent retail markets over the past 25 years. Manjah C. B. Blake will speak on the topic: “The Pivotal Role of DATI and Liberian Youths in Peacebuilding in Liberia.”



Boimah will speak against the backdrop that during the Liberian Genocide Liberian children and youths were used by Liberian warlords and politicians as child soldiers and combatants. But now, Dehkontee Artists Theatre, Inc. (DATI) and its collaborating organization the Kukatonon Peace and Reconciliation Initiative, Inc. (KPRI), are training and encouraging Liberian youths to serve as Peace Advocates in their respective communities and neighborhoods. In pursuance of this goal, two DATI chapters were established early this year in Monrovia, Montserrado County and Harper, Maryland County, respectively.



*DATI Maryland Chapter*

Approximately fifty college students from various institutions of higher learning in Liberia enrolled in the two-and-a-half-month virtual DATI/KPRI Peace Advocate Training Program. Thirty registered in Harper, Maryland and twenty-two in Monrovia. The course included four two-page papers on each candidate's cultural heritage, their personal experiences during the Liberian Genocide, Understanding the process of mediation and cultural diversity and tolerance, and a deep dive in Pan African philosophy and Afrocentric literacy, to give trainees a good grounding on Liberian history and culture as Peace Advocates.

## *Why the DATI Kukatonon Peace Project Is Needed in Liberia*



*DATI USA*

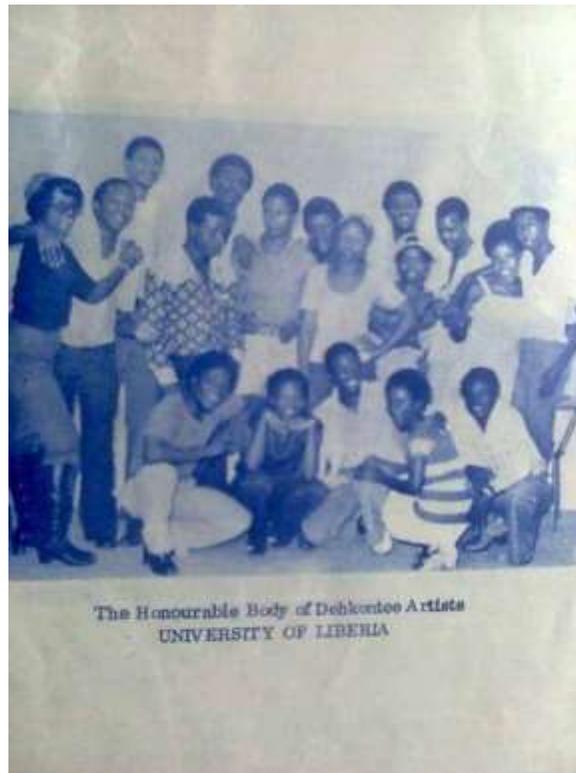
DATI Kukatonon Peace Project is direly needed in Liberia due to the fragile Liberian peace process that was stalled since the submission of the Liberia Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Report in 2009. Since then, ten years ago, there has been no national conference held to address the stalemate in the Liberian peace process and/or to ratify the TRC Report so that a war and economic crimes court can be established to bring perpetrators of the Liberian Genocide to justice based on the rule of law and the Constitution of Liberia.

Also, it is noteworthy to state that for the very first time Liberian youths who were victims of the Liberian Genocide will publicly appeal to the Liberian nation and people to warmly embrace their peace initiative, and to work along with the youths to promote peace and reconciliation and the reinstatement of genuine rule of law in Liberia.

The hosts for this event are members of the DATI Montserrado Chapter. 19 college graduates and students who signed up and received virtual training in peace education, mediation, and cultural awareness under the adept professorship of Dr. Joe Gbaba will be inducted as DATI Peace Advocates.

DATI Peace Advocates will receive certificates for successful completion of their training and will perform a peace drama entitled: "Our Women Are Not Your Chickoos and Iron Titties". The play promotes gender equity and frowns on sexual harassment and denial of equal rights to Liberian women. Based on the availability of funding, DATI Peace Advocates will begin their official duties in their respective communities and neighborhoods. They will tour the entire country in 2020 to promote peace and reconciliation and literacy through the performing and visual arts and conduct literacy classes for Liberians who want to learn how to read and write

## *About DATI*



*Original DATI members 42 years ago*

Dehkontee Artists Theatre was established forty-two years ago at the University of Liberia (UL) in 1977 by Liberian playwright and artist/scholar Dr. Joe Gbaba and conscientious UL students who felt the dire need to promote Liberian and African arts and culture through the performing and visual arts and literacy on the continent of Africa and around the world.

This celebrated performing arts group over the decades put Liberia on the world map of culture, held several presidential and Executive Mansion and State House performances for several African leaders (Tolbert of Liberia, Fred Akkuffu, Jerry John Rawlings of Ghana, First Vice President S.I. Koroma of Sierra Leone), entertained world class diplomats from around the world that were accredited near Monrovia and Freetown, Sierra Leone, and performed in the United States at some of the prestigious performance sites such as the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, The Ibrahim Theatre in Philadelphia and the Bowie Center for the Performing Arts in Bowie, Maryland, among others. DATI's vision is to establish an African school of the performing and visual arts in Liberia and the United States, respectively.

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