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Symposium engages campus as part of the global community

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Wednesday February 12, 2020

By Shannon Miller

Editor's note: Felix Nkongho Agbor Balla will not be able to deliver the Global Voices Symposium keynote address because of recent developments in Cameroon. University Alumni Chair in Humanities Julius Amin will serve as the keynote speaker. His address is titled, "A Dayton, Ohio, Community Casts Two Challenging Questions: Why Does Africa Matter? Why Care About Cameroon's Anglophone Crisis?"

Since its inception in 2018, the Global Voices Symposium has worked to foster a broader definition of community at the University of Dayton by encouraging students, faculty and staff to promote a global consciousness and awareness on campus and beyond.

The 2020 Alumni Chair in Humanities Global Voices Symposium March 2-3 will build on the last two events, using personal stories from participants to inform and educate attendees about the changing face of college campuses in a global age.

“Global means everyone,” said Julius Amin, professor of history and the University’s Alumni Chair in Humanities. “This symposium is a continuation of engaging the campus as part of the global community.”

The two-day symposium will feature four panel discussions with alumni, faculty, staff, students and community leaders addressing topics related to creating inclusive communities, with an emphasis on issues related to difference, race, gender and human rights around the world. A keynote address at 7 p.m. March 3 concludes the event.

The symposium begins at 3 p.m. March 2 with a panel addressing the importance of global awareness on campus and in the greater Dayton community. Panelists include UD faculty and staff, and participants from the city of Dayton, Sinclair Community College and Miami University.

At 9:30 a.m. March 3, current students will share their thoughts on bringing international perspectives to campus during a panel discussion about their experiences studying abroad.

“When students go abroad and come back to the University, they often don’t have a place to share their experiences,” Amin said. “We want this to be an avenue for those discussions.”

A lunchtime session, “Alumni Voices of the African Immersion Experience,” will give UD alumni who participated in the Cameroon immersion program as students the opportunity to share the lasting impact of that experience and how it informs their current perspective on the interconnected nature of the global community.

Felix Nkongho Agbor Balla, a barrister in Cameroon and founder and chair of the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa, will deliver the keynote address at 7 p.m. March 3, in Kennedy Union ballroom. Amin said Balla’s address, “The Struggle for Minority Rights in Africa: The Case of Cameroon’s Anglophone Conflict,” is crucial to understanding current events across Africa as the central African nation of Cameroon often serves as a microcosm of the continent as a whole.

All events are free and open to the public. The buffet lunch March 3 is available on a first-come, first-serve basis.