

---

## **Pittsburgh honors its sister city with a declaration of Donetsk Day**

---

**by Olena Romanenko**

PITTSBURGH - By the decision of the City Council of Pittsburgh, February 15 was declared Donetsk Day.

In attendance at this declaration and official welcoming ceremony were a group of Ukrainian journalists, comprising 10 reporters from print and electronic media in the Donetsk Oblast, and members of the Pittsburgh-Donetsk Sister Cities Committee.

The national flag of Ukraine was raised in council chambers; it will stand permanently in the chambers alongside those of other countries in which Pittsburgh has official sister cities. The emblem of the City of Donetsk also will remain in Pittsburgh.

Donetsk and Pittsburgh became sister cities in September 1999, when a delegation of five people from the Pittsburgh-Donetsk Sister Cities Committee returned from Ukraine with an agreement signed by the mayor of Donetsk, Volodymyr Rybak. The agreement was also signed by Pittsburgh Mayor Tom Murphy.

This sister city relationship did not come about accidentally: both cities have a very similar history of development. Donetsk today resembles Pittsburgh of 50-60 years ago. After World War II, Pittsburgh was known as the steel capital of the world. The city and its environs housed many steel mills and other industries related to coal mining. Today in place of the closed mills and mines stand new high-techn businesses; former steelworkers and miners have learned new professions or left the region to find employment elsewhere.

But Pittsburgh and Donetsk are drawn together not only by their industrial heritage. Pittsburgh has the fourth largest Ukrainian community in America. Over 20,000 Ukrainian Americans live in the city. Many of these Ukrainian Americans have never been to their historical motherland and don't know the Ukrainian language, but they maintain their traditions, and protect and know Ukrainian culture and history. Over the last several years they have invited guests from Ukraine into their homes.

The Donetsk journalists, who stayed in Pittsburgh most recently as participants of the Community Connections program, stayed with such families. This cultural exchange program is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

Since 1996 over 130 representatives from the Donetsk Oblast have taken part in this program.

---

Copyright © The Ukrainian Weekly, April 30, 2000, No. 18, Vol. LXVIII

---

| [Home Page](#) |

---