

Monday, September 28, 2015

Celebrating Rochester: Honors College collaborates with school in England

From the cozy confines of Oak View Hall, students in Oakland University's Honors College recently chatted via video link with students at Rochester Grammar School in Rochester, Kent, England. The discussion marked the beginning of a yearlong collaboration in which students at both schools will share experiences of living and learning in two Rochester cities nearly 4,000 miles apart.

A tale of two cities

During the video discussion, students from both schools shared ideas for the collaboration, as well as tidbits about their respective cities. Nestled near the base of the River Medway, about 30 miles east of London, Rochester, Kent is closely tied to history and popular culture. Charles Dickens lived in the area and set many of his novels there. Historic Leeds Castle, located in Kent, is a popular tourist attraction and film location. A scene from "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1" was also filmed in Kent.



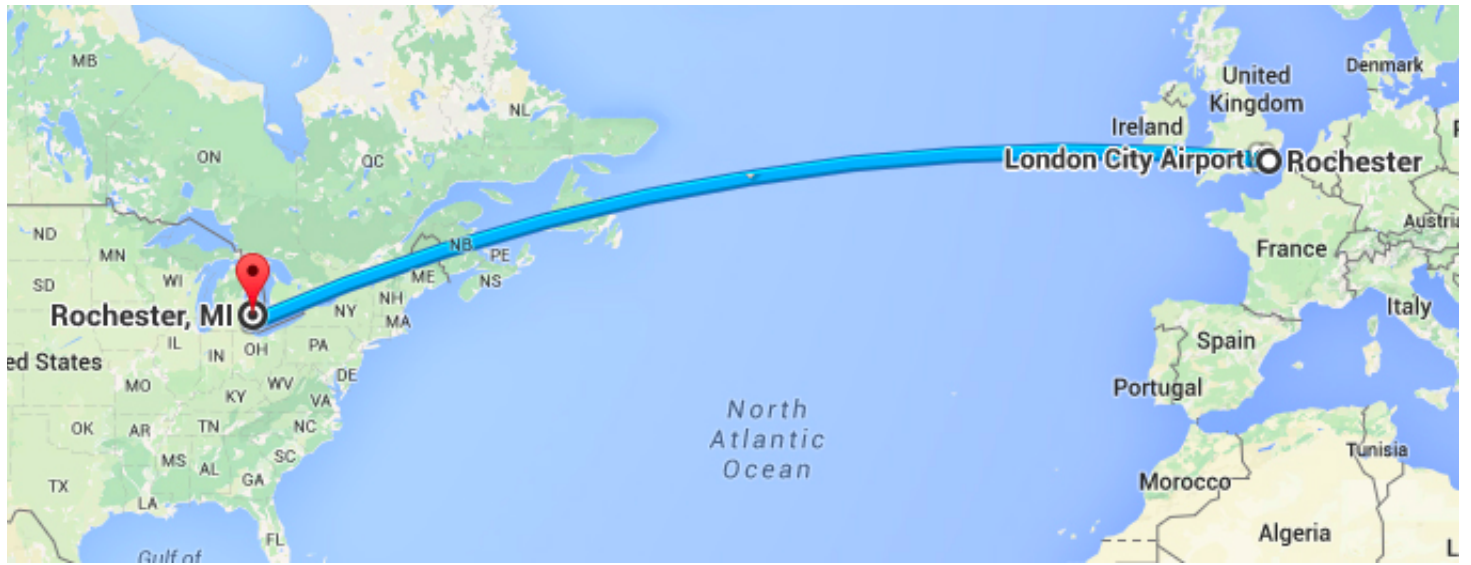
Honors College Dean Graeme Harper (foreground) speaks via video link to students and staff of Rochester Grammar School in Rochester, Kent, England. At right, Rochester High School Principal Neil DeLuca (in blue), Assistant Principal Pasquale Cusumano (in white), and Assistant Principal Casey Wescott (in blue) also took part in the discussion.

OU students shared some of the highlights of Rochester, Michigan, including its Fire and Ice Festival and downtown attractions. The students were joined in the video discussion by Honors College Dean Graeme Harper, as well as the principal (Neil DeLuca) and assistant principals (Casey Wescott and Pasquale Cusumano) of Rochester High School. The mayor of Rochester, Michigan, Jeffrey Cuthbertson, is also supporting the collaboration. He visited Rochester Grammar School while overseas this month.

"During 2016, we'll be leading an international collaboration, involving high schools, where the two Rochesters will share stories through the experiences of students who have grown up in these two linked places in different parts of the world," Dean Harper said.

Dean Harper said the collaboration will run through 2016 and culminate in 2017 as OU celebrates its 60th anniversary and the Honors College marks 40 years in existence. At the same time, Rochester, Michigan will reach its 50th anniversary as a city and 200th year since settlers first arrived.

For more on OU's Honors College, visit oakland.edu/hc.



Rochester, Mich. and Rochester, Kent, England are nearly 4,000 miles apart. (Google Maps)