



Outstanding Educator Program off to good start

At last week's meeting, Rotary Club of Utica welcomed New York Mills High School seniors Kristen Despina and Judy Chen. Judy, who is working on her Mandarin skills, was greeted by Roger Breslow in Mandarin. Please read Kristen's and Judy's biographies, which can be found on page two of this newsletter, to learn more about these outstanding students. Kristen and Judy will join us again at our weekly meeting on March 19.

This week we welcome Emma Ferguson and Widad Ibrahim from Proctor High School. Emma intends to study political science in college to further learn about politics and legislation and follow a pre-law track. Widad has college plans and will major in biology with a career goal in dentistry. Both have demonstrated academic, athletic and volunteer service accomplishments during their years at Proctor.

Emma and Widad will be accompanied by another Proctor student, Angelica Vankeijstren. Angelica is a member of Best Buddies, which is a peer-to-peer, academic and social support volunteer program.



Emma Ferguson



Widad Ibrahim

Check out the latest District Newsletter and Rotary International News on the Rotary Club of Utica website:

[Rotary District & International News](#)

This Week's Program

Submitted by Travis Rabbers, Programs Chair

Karlene Cimo is the Community Relations Manager (CRM) for [LIFEPlan Care Coordination Organization \(CCO\) NY](#). Her region includes the southern tier, central New York and the Mohawk Valley. Ms. Cimo supports the mission of



LIFEPlan through outreach and relationship building with prospective members, their families and the greater community.

LifePlan is one of seven New York State CCOs initiated in 2018 formed with the goal of connecting people to the complete spectrum of services they need to live full, meaningful lives. The CCOs meet the needs of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities by collaborating with service providers through a health home model. CCOs are staffed by care managers with training and experience in the field of developmental disabilities

March Calendar of Events

- 3/12 Weekly Meeting | 12 p.m. via Zoom
- 3/15 Board Meeting | 1 p.m. via Zoom
- 3/18 Rotaract Committee | 10 a.m. via Zoom
- 3/19 Weekly Meeting | 12 p.m. via Zoom
- 3/26 Weekly Meeting | 12 p.m. via Zoom

Deadline for next newsletter (3/15) is Sunday, March 14, at noon; submit to news@uticarotaryclub.org

Meet New York Mills seniors Judy and Kristen

Judy Chen

Student Activities

I have participated in our school's Student Council since middle school as class vice president until this year as the class president. One of my proudest achievements was taking the steering wheel in organizing our junior year fundraiser, which made over \$6,000 in profit by selling donuts. In addition to being a part of the Student Council, I am the co-president of our Model UN and Multicultural club and also the secretary of the National Honor Society club. I was a member of the varsity field hockey team since freshman year but unfortunately due to Covid-19, I did not have the opportunity to participate this school year. When I am not partaking in extracurricular activities, I frequently spend time at my family restaurant by working as a hostess and cashier after school and on weekends. In my free time, I enjoy reading a wide variety of novels, journaling, learning about different cultures, and spending time in the kitchen to bake.

Future Plans

Two universities I have in mind and have applied to are the University of Rochester and Binghamton University. I hope to major in Business with a double major or minor in Chinese studies. Since business is so broad, it connects to many different careers and can open up diverse paths of opportunities for me. I hope that by taking Chinese courses in college, my Mandarin skills will improve so that I can build up a solid language foundation to make bilingual skills a possible asset for me in the future.

Counselor's Comments (Debra Ellis)

Judy has made her mark in our school as a leader, a scholar, and a "doer". Under Judy's leadership, our Student Council has been a robust and positive organization in our school community. Intelligent and focused, she is sure to make great contributions to our future.

Membership event generates tips to make Rotary appeal to young people

On February 22, the multi-district membership event, Young People Speak, reached almost 200 Rotarians from around the state. Eight young people shared their Rotary experiences, including one who is now a former member. If you missed it, [click here](#) to check out the full event recording on YouTube.

Kristen Despina

Student Activities

My family has been greatly involved in and out of the school my entire life. Currently, I am the vice president of the senior class, executive historian of student council, a member of the National Honor Society, in charge of a field hockey league, in the drama club, and working part time at CoreLife Eatery in New Hartford. In the past I have spent four years on the varsity field hockey team, two years on the variety track and field team, and one year on the varsity volleyball team. I have also been involved in many things outside of school including attending leadership conferences such as HOBY and NYSCLSA, in which I was on the student board to plan and run the state conference though my sophomore year and into my junior year. I have volunteered at animal shelters and around my community since I was very young, including running an annual golf tournament with my family, to raise money for Alzhiemers, in memory of my great grandma.

Future Plans

I have known ever since first grade that I wanted to pursue a career in the medical field, and each year I become more interested in this career path. I have been accepted to ten colleges so far and although I have not officially committed yet, everything is pointing towards attending Keuka College to major in biology with focus in biomedical and continue my career in field hockey. Post college graduation, I would like to continue on to medical school and pursue a career in either an orthopedic surgery or medical in the military.

Counselor's Comments (Debra Ellis)

Kristen is a leader and role model. She has been an integral part of many school activities and events and carries much on her proverbial platter. She is sure to be a positive light on her chosen college campus. We look forward to seeing all that Kristen accomplishes.

The evening concluded with a list of action items and resources that you can download [here](#).

If you have any thoughts on these ideas or new ideas, please consider joining or reaching out to our club's Membership Committee, chaired by PP [Joe Caruso](#) and PP [Ken Williams](#).