



Rotary This Week!

Utica, NY, USA

Dec. 23 2024

\$5,250 presented to Catholic Charities



Utica Rotarians visited the offices of Catholic Charities on Dec. 15 to present a check for \$5,250, representing the proceeds from the club's "Not So Silent Night" Auction.

MEMBER MINUTE: Explore Friendship Exchange

by Tina Pavlot

Do you like to travel? Experience different cultures and build international friendships through the Rotary Friendship Exchange!

The Friendship Exchange allows participants to take turns hosting one another in

their homes and clubs. Participants may travel as individuals, couples, families, or groups, and may be Rotary members or not.

Explore more on Friendship Exchange at: rotary.org/en/our-programs/friendship-exchange



Deadline for next newsletter (1/6) is Saturday, Jan. 4 at 3 p.m.; submit to news@uticarotaryclub.org.

Editor Robert Stronach

UTICA ROTARY WRAPS UP 2024

Catholic Charities is about transforming lives

By Joe Abraham

President Travis Rabbers welcomed fellow Rotarians to Thursday's meeting with a holiday greeting. Club members also enjoyed some holiday snacks, as it was their last meeting of 2024. The featured guest speaker was Catholic Charities' Director of Development Jennifer Hagen. Pathways Program Manager Raigan Verminski also spoke briefly. Both shared information about the programs and initiatives that positively impact our local community.

Overall, Catholic Charities is committed to providing a broad range of services designed to support individuals and families in need throughout the Oneida-Madison County region. This includes programs that focus on improving lives and promoting self-sufficiency. Services include emergency food assistance, support for the homeless, and resources for mental health and addiction recovery. They also provide vital services to seniors, veterans, and individuals with disabilities, ensuring that these groups have access to the care



Jennifer Hagen

and resources they need to live with dignity and independence.

Hagen also cleared up the misconception that one has to be Catholic to receive assistance. Catholic Charities helps everyone, regardless of religion.

The organization was the beneficiary of our recent *Not So Silent Night Gift Auction*, which raised \$5,250 for its Christmas Assistance Program. A check was presented on Wednesday at its Genesee Street office.

ROTARY BUSINESS

President Travis shared several announcements at the meeting, including the date, time and location of our **January social**, which is set for January 16 at 5 p.m. at *"It's a Utica Thing"*



Raigan Verminski

restaurant in North Utica.

Our annual ski trip will take place on Thursday, January 23.

The date of the Service Above Self Gala is Friday, June 6 at the Stanley Theatre, revealing to members who this year's beneficiary will be. The Gala Committee will share that news publicly next month.

Our upcoming volunteer projects involve assisting Feed Our Vets on Saturday, Jan. 18 and Saturday, Feb. 15. We need four volunteers for each day working from 8 to 11 a.m.

Finally, President Travis added that the club is looking for members to serve on the Rotaract Committee.



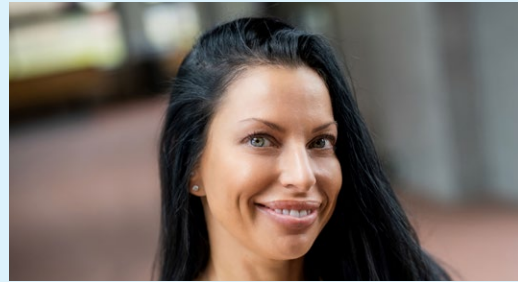
Photos by Tina Pavlot

New Members Proposed: Jennifer Hagen & Karima Wines

The board proposes Jennifer Hagen and Karima Wines for membership to Rotary Club of Utica. Per bylaws, club members have five days to submit a written objection to Secretary Jill Koch.

Jennifer Hagen, director of development for Catholic Charities Oneida/Madison County, describes herself as “a proud Utica native” and graduate of Mohawk Valley Community College. “I currently reside in Deerfield with my husband and our rescue dog, Raylee.” In fact she is “a passionate advocate for Anita’s Steven Swan Humane Society and a dedicated animal lover and rescuer.”

Jennifer joined the non-profit sector in 2018 with the Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways, followed by United Way of the Mohawk Valley, and then Catholic Charities in 2022. “Before my shift to the non-profit world,” she notes, “I spent 15 years in the finance industry, gaining experience in branch management and commercial lending.”



She adds: “As a graduate of Leadership Mohawk Valley in 2014, I gained a deeper understanding of the needs within our community, fueling my passion to give back.”

Regarding joining Rotary: “I am deeply committed to giving back to the Mohawk Valley and look forward to expanding my network to collaborate with others who share my dedication to making our commu-

Karima Wines is an executive assistant and Certified Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Professional at Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency (MVCAA). She graduated from Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC) in 2019 with an Associate of Science in Liberal Arts and Science: Psychology, and later earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from SUNY Polytechnic Institute in 2023. Karima is passionate about fostering inclusive environments, especially in supporting MVCAA’s mission and promoting positive organizational and community change.

Her why for joining Rotary: “I have always been passionate about giving back to the community, whether that be the one I came from or someone else’s. After all, if your lens is large enough, the entire world is your community. I currently work for MVCAA and our main goal is to eliminate poverty. I have



volunteered for Hope House, tee-ball, Rescue Missions, and MVCAA (before I started working here). I have a strong passion for equity and believe that some need extra support... I would love to meet like-minded individuals, expanding my network and allowing more communities and individuals to be positively impacted by our work. The Rotary movement has a long history of making positive changes in communities and worldwide. As a member, you become part of this proud tradition, contributing to the legacy of service...”

Reserve a spot now for a fun day at Gore Mountain

By Tina Pavlot

Join us Thursday, January 23, for our annual bus trip to Gore Mountain!

Rotarians, friends, family and colleagues are all welcome. Spend a day on the slopes skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, or just enjoying the bar and food in the lodge.

RSVP to our gracious Rotary-Winter-Fun-Day coordinator, Jim Friedel at jim@fwe fh.com. The sooner the better please, as we need a head count for bus transportation.



NO NEWSLETTER NEXT WEEK. WE'LL RETURN IN JANUARY. HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Calendar of Events

1/9	Meeting Erica Spado, Indium Corp. noon Mid-York Library	1/18	Board Greater Utica Chamber noon
1/15	Service 'Feed Our Vets' 8-11 a.m..	1/23	Social Rotary Ski Trip to Gore Mountain
1/16	Social 'It's a Utica Thing' Restaurant 5 p.m.	1/30	Meeting Lyndsay Labarge, Griffiss on AI & ChatGPT noon Mid-York Library