

Rotary Club Welcomes Exchange Student

Sarah Wetzel For the Plain Talk, Dec 1, 2023

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Roberta Sanchez de Souza Camargo shows off the flag of her home country, Brazil, during a recent meeting of the Vermillion Rotary Club. Roberta is participating in the Rotary Youth Exchange program, which is supported by Rotary clubs in more than 100 countries.

Courtesy Of Vermillion Rotary Club

The Vermillion Rotary club welcomed Roberta Sanchez de Souza Camargo in a recent meeting.

Roberta, a Brazilian student, is taking part in the Rotary Youth Exchange program. This program is currently supported by Rotary clubs in more than 100 countries, according to the Rotary website.

First, Roberta unfurled a Brazilian flag and described its design to the local Rotarians.

“The green represents our forests, specifically our rainforest that is the main forest of Brazil,” she said. “The blue represents our wonderful skies. The stars represent our 26 states and the one star that is right here represents the federal district that is the place where our government stays. The phrase right here is ‘order and progress.’”

Roberta is from a city called Lins in San Paolo, one of 26 states plus a federal district.

“We have 80,000 inhabitants and our economy is based on agriculture, especially sugar cane and production of cattle,” she said. “(There are) Industries that are also related to agriculture and tourism. A lot of people go here to this hotel with thermal water, so it’s really fancy and really cool.”

According to Roberta, Lins is also known as the City of Schools due to the many great high schools and colleges.

She also showed some pictures of typical Brazilian food and shared a treat called Brigadeir, a candy made of condensed milk, chocolate and butter.

Roberta shared how Brazil is the only country in South America in which Spanish isn’t widely spoken. Portuguese is the country’s official language.

“We are the largest country in South America and the country is divided by north, northeast, south, southeast and central west,” she said. “I live in southeast.”

Roberta shared pictures of her family, friends, school and Rotary members of her country, including the governor of her district.

She took part in the Interact program.

“For those of you who don’t know, Interact is like a Rotary for young people so it’s for 12-18 year-old people,” Roberta said. “I left because I don’t have age anymore and I’m here, but I was there since I was 12 and before this, I was already a member of Rotary kids which is a Rotary for kids, of course. I got in when I was 9 and left when I was 12.”

She said her school in Brazil didn’t have extra classes, so she was involved in other programs.

“I was in the speech class of my city and I was a member of the interact and I’m also a member of the International Order of the Rainbow that is supported for the Masons,” Roberta said. “These are the activities I’m involved in.”

She has been in Vermillion for two months and has visited Sioux Falls and Sioux City, Iowa, with her host family as well as Ames, Iowa with her friends.

“In June I’m going to do a trip that is provided for Rotary, too, where I’m going to Orlando and Washington, DC,” Sanchez said. “Pretty much fun.”

“Thank you, Roberta Sanches de Souza Camargo, for your wonderful presentation to the Vermillion Rotary Club,” the Vermillion Rotary website reads. “We were so happy to hear that you have enjoyed the first couple of months of your Rotary Youth Exchange to Vermillion, SD, USA, and we are so happy that we could sponsor your RYE.”

For more information on Vermillion Rotary activities and programs visit www.vermillionrotaryclub.org.