

JUNE/JULY 2025 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

As we end our Rotary year and reflect on the past year, the Board reviewed the Club's Strategic Plan to assess our achievements. While sometimes it feels as though we don't accomplish much, we were excited to see that the club has accomplished quite a bit in the last year so we thought it would be important to share it with all of you who have walked with us as we celebrate our 5th anniversary!



Karen Walkowski

SO- Here is a summary of the Rotary Club to End Human Trafficking Strategic Plan and the status of each objective as of June 30, 2025.

STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES UPDATES

- **Area of Focus-Economic Development:** We will develop, fund, implement and document an Economic Development Project
 - **STATUS:** COMPLETE and tested but not finalized to be able to be replicated. Unfortunately, we have not been able to find participants in Ghana willing to conduct the training on doing the training, so not progressing at this point.
- **Area of Focus-Education:** We will continue to support our endorsed groups by raising awareness of them via our communications tools (website, newsletter, social media and presentations).
 - **STATUS:** Complete and ongoing
- **Area of Focus-Awareness:** Members from our club will present to a minimum of 12 other Rotary Clubs by June 2025 to raise awareness and encourage action around ending Human Trafficking and our club's projects as well as issue an invitation to join or engage with our club.
 - **STATUS:** Toni Lucas – 3 presentations; Karen Walkowski – 5 Presentations; Michelle Seets – 3 Presentations; Erin - 2 Presentations (including one in French!) We also know Jerry and Cindee are making presentations!
- **Area of Focus- Organization - Rotary District/Advocacy:** We will Advocate for the Districts in our Zone to adopt our District level Rotary End Human Trafficking initiative.
 - **STATUS:** Determined to put this on hold for now.
- **Area of Focus- Organization - our Club:** We will consistently grow our membership by adding 8 new full and 12 new Associate members who are committed, engaged, and donating their time to our work beyond meeting attendance.
 - **STATUS:** Close. We had 9 full and 6 Associate members join us since July.

HIGHLIGHTS

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

CLUB NEWS & BOARD UPDATES

MAIN ARTICLE

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

CALENDAR

CONTINUATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

- **Area of Focus- Organization - our Club:** We will retain 80% of full and associate members annually.
 - **STATUS:** We retained 100% of our Associate Members and 73% of our full members. The club currently has 32 active members and 16 associate members.
- **Area of Focus- Organization- our Club:** We will build out our external website with statistics from 6 more areas; add 4 more project ideas; and update Resource documents.
 - **STATUS:** Need money to do anything - \$4,000 to do the updates we need / want so we need a site sponsor.
- **Area of Focus- Local Action-Branches** We will work with our branches to develop and document their club's organizational structure using our documented procedures.
 - **STATUS:** Complete. We have a thriving Branch in Accra, Ghana with 8 members.
- **Area of Focus Local Action-Branches** We will help our Branches implement 1 fundraiser within their first 2 years of acceptance in our club.
 - **STATUS:** No action here yet
- **Area of Focus- Local Action- Associate Members/other Rotary Clubs:** We will work through 2 Associate members or other Rotary Clubs to engage their home club in a combined initiative. This could be in support of any Rotary grant.
 - **STATUS:** RCEHT supported the Edina noon club with a Global grant. And several District 5950 clubs have pledged their support of RCEHT with our District Grant if it is accepted. In addition, RCEHT has worked with 2 different Rotary Clubs in Accra on projects related to Theodora Africa.
- **Area of Focus- Collaboration-Endorsements:** We will add 1-4 endorsees that are well established non-profits with results driven programs that are well documented and can be replicated in other areas.
 - **STATUS:** In Process In 2024-25, one new endorsee was recommended by the Programs and Projects Committee (United Abolitionists) and approved by the Board to be endorsed by RCEHT.
- **Area of Focus-Collaboration-Project Collaborators:** We will submit 1 District Grant with at least 1 other Rotary club.
 - **STATUS:** In Process. RCEHT donated \$500 in support of Edina Noon Club and is in the process of writing a District grant for 2025-2026.
- **Area of Focus-Collaboration-Project Collaborators:** Our Foundation will fund projects that have the greatest reach, impact the greatest number of people, can be replicated and offer collaboration opportunities. Our priority order for funding is: Economic development, advocacy, education, and then awareness initiatives.
 - **STATUS:** In process: It is exciting that the club is seeing an increasing number of requests for grants and projects, we are limited due to lack of funding.

PLEASE consider donating to the RCEHT Foundation through our [website](#). Any amount is welcome!

As you can see, for a small club, we have been busy and look forward to a great year to come. Let us know if you want to become involved.



PRESIDENT ELECT TRAINING SEMINAR (PETS)

In March 2025, I had the opportunity to attend the President Elect Training Seminar (PETS), a crucial leadership development event designed to equip incoming Rotary Club presidents with the tools, strategies, and connections needed for a successful year of service in Rotary District 5950. The training took place at Omni Viking Lakes in Eagan, Minnesota. I had two main objectives for this training. First, I wanted to gain deeper insights into Rotary's vision and strategies for enhancing our club's Action Plans to end human trafficking. Second, I sought to establish meaningful connections with fellow presidents-elect and Rotary leaders to foster collaboration on future projects.

I also aimed to enhance my leadership skills, understand Rotary's governance structure better, and explore innovative ways to engage our members more effectively. The training was an immersive experience, covering leadership development, membership engagement, fundraising strategies, and Rotary's global priorities. Sessions were led by seasoned Rotary leaders including Tom Gump and Brian King who shared best practices and real-world examples of impactful service projects. One key takeaway was the importance of leveraging Rotary's network to create sustainable, community-driven solutions. Emphasis was placed on the Rotary Action Plan, which prioritizes increasing our impact, expanding our reach, enhancing participant engagement, and adapting to a changing world.



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Submitted by Bassey Kooffreh

EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR CLUB IN CHANGING LIVES ACROSS THE GLOBE IN ENDING HUMAN TRAFFICKING



PROJECT PRIORITIES AND FUNDING REQUESTS FOR THE NEXT ROTARY YEAR

Karen Walkowski, Charter President

As we enter the **6th year of our club's journey**, the word that keeps emerging for me is **"Momentum"**. I have seen so much momentum during the last few years as our club has gained clarity around what our focus and priorities should be. We have seen many new members join us who have invaluable knowledge and commitment to assisting with our efforts.

We have people who are willing to step up. We have great leaders emerging. We have some incredible ideas for projects and programs AND we have other clubs and organizations coming to us asking to partner with us on some really exciting opportunities!

With these ideas, we are asking all of you who receive our newsletter to donate to our foundation so that we can respond to these exciting opportunities in the next Rotary year.

To celebrate our 6th year since our charter, our goal is to raise \$6,000.

The priorities for these funds will be:

1. To launch our Economic Development Initiative in cooperation with 2 organizations in Ghana. The club has already completed a first-phase pilot and has taken the learnings from that pilot and made significant changes to develop this round 2 pilot. We are excited to work with these two organizations that have significant footprints already in place.

Funding need= \$1,000

2. Support potential prevention education program in Argentina for professionals. The goal of the all-day training is to The main goals under this project is to train attendants (NGOs, universities and Rotarians of some Argentine provinces) on prevention on human trafficking, providing knowledge related to the crime and using methodological tools to raise awareness. **Funding needed= \$1,000**

3. Support our Branch (sub-club) members in our Ghana club. We have budgeted for 10 members in our Ghana branch. The costs are \$250/person to cover RI and District assessments. **Funding needs= \$2,500**

4. Provide Support to other Rotary Clubs with matches. Rotary has a powerful matching formula for grants that more than triples funding when Rotary clubs submit grants together.

Our club has already partnered with other clubs and a mere \$500 contribution from our club has empowered another club to obtain a grant from Rotary International for over **\$30,000**. **\$1,500** allows our club to assist 3 other clubs with their grants.

Funding need= \$1,500

Donating is easy! Just locate the donate button on our club website. It will take you to PayPal. OR go direct to PayPal!

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=525MMAAWSPK54

Let's keep the momentum going!!!

RCEHT BOARD SUMMARY: MAY/JUN 2025

Below are **topics** from the board meetings on May 1 and June 5.

Let a board member know if you have any questions or comments!

- **Working within District 5950:**
 - **Annual Meeting:** Attended by Karen Walkowski (in person)
 - **Excelsior Morning Club:** RCEHT Foundation donating \$500 to support a project in Costa Rica, empowering women by building a brick oven to start a bakery enterprise
 - **Theodora Project:** Being submitted as a Rotary District 5950 Grant with 4 other Rotary Clubs in the District assisting in the project
 - **Training and Leadership:** Attended by Karen Walkowski (in person) and Bassey Kooffreh (virtually)
- **Membership:** Voted to approve 3 new members:
 - Jonas Ayi (Associate)
 - David Cochran (Associate)
 - Laura Dryjanska (Full)
- **Programs & Projects:** Seema Balwani is a new committee member
- **Strategic Plans:** Reviewed whether goals had been met (such as Public Relations, Economic Development, Endorsement)
- **Treasurer's Report:** Membership dues being paid soon

Upcoming club meeting topics: reviewed and planned



NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Jonas A. Ayi

Jonas is a Chartered Accountant & Insolvency Practitioner licensed to practice in Ghana. He is also the managing partner of Anang, Ayi & Associates, (CPA firm).

Experience working in multicultural environments as an expat in 3 different African countries for two of the world's largest oil and gas companies, ExxonMobil and TotalEnergies rising to the position of Country Manager. And a family man with 5 grown up kids. His expertise is in the area of Counselling and motivational talks.

He is currently Joining RCEHT as an Associate member.

Laura is a professor of psychology at Asbury University in Wilmore, Kentucky, originally from Poland. She also teaches at Uniwersytet Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego in Warsaw, Poland.

Her involvement with Rotary started in Italy when she first joined a Rotaract Club, then a Rotary Club (Roma Centenario), and eventually the Rotary Club of Whittier in California.

"The focus on fighting human trafficking is what drew my attention to this club. During my Rotary Club presidency in 2021-2022, I emphasized human trafficking awareness, which is also related to my teaching and research interests. I like the fact that the club meets online at a time that is convenient for me."

Laura is joining RCEHT as a full member.



Laura Dryjanska



David S Cochran

David co-founded The Global Impact Group in 2019 as a Rotary focused organization with the vision of empowering Rotarians with innovative technology solutions to cut across barriers achieving the highest possible societal and humanitarian impact.

He is on a crusade to help a million children learn to read so that they can learn that they can be exploited.

David's expertise is in the area of Georgia Ambassador for the Rotary Action Group Against Slavery.

He is currently joining RCEHT as an Associate member.

ROTARY CLUBS PARTNER WITH THEODORA AFRICA TO HELP END HUMAN TRAFFICKING THROUGH SKILLS TRAINING AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

In a powerful move toward dismantling the chains of human trafficking and restoring dignity to survivors, the Rotary Club End Human Trafficking (RCEHT), in collaboration with Theodora Africa and supporting Rotary Clubs, is launching a life-changing initiative to train and empower Ghanaian women who are survivors of commercial sexual exploitation.

This partnership represents more than a charitable effort, it is a strategic investment in sustainable freedom. By equipping women with practical digital and administrative skills, this program paves the way for long-term economic empowerment and personal transformation. Theodora Africa has been at the forefront of this mission since 2019, offering trauma-informed workforce development for rescued sex workers in Ghana.

At the heart of Theodora Africa's model is a rigorous, year-long training program that blends trauma counseling with intensive skills development. The women enrolled receive foundational training in computer literacy, English communication, work ethics, and a suite of virtual administrative skills including data entry, calendar and email management, social media support, and email marketing.

Upon completing their training, these women become eligible to work with Theodora Ghana Virtual Assistants (TGVA), a sister organization that connects them with small businesses and entrepreneurs primarily in the U.S. Through TGVA, the graduates are not only earning a dignified income but also proving to the world that survivors of exploitation can become leaders, contributors, and change-makers when given the tools and support to thrive.

For the 2025 Rotary year, RCEHT, together with several supporting Rotary clubs, is submitting a dedicated grant to support the recruitment and training of four new women through Theodora Africa. This grant will fully fund essential resources that enable the women to engage in their training and eventual client work:

- **Laptops** to support their digital learning and remote client tasks
- **Desks** to create a professional, focused workspace at home
- **Noise-canceling headsets** to ensure high-quality client communication
- **Computer glasses** to protect their vision during long work hours
- **Stipends for 11 months** to ensure stability during their year-long training journey

In recognition of Rotary's commitment, each item provided through the grant will bear Rotary branding, through stickers and placards, signifying the Rotary family's unwavering support of human dignity and development.

This initiative underscores a simple but profound truth: freedom is not just about rescue, it's about restoration. And restoration requires opportunity. Through this partnership, Rotary and Theodora Africa are not just changing lives, they are rebuilding futures, one woman at a time.

As this year's cohort begins their journey, we invite all members and partners to follow their stories, support their progress, and witness the transformation that happens when compassion meets action.

To learn more about Theodora Africa and explore ways to support this initiative, please visit our [website](#).



ROTARY BEYOND OUR CLUB

STAY CONNECTED WITH THE CLUB RUNNER MOBILE APP

Did you know you can access club and district information on the go with the **ClubRunner Mobile App**? Whether you're looking up member contact info, checking the club calendar, or staying up to date with Rotary news, the app makes it simple and convenient.

How to Get the App:

1. Download:
 - For iPhone: Visit the App Store and search for "ClubRunner."
 - For Android devices: Visit Google Play and search for "ClubRunner."
2. Log in using the same login credentials you use for the ClubRunner website. If you're unsure of your username or password, you can request a reset from the app or website.

What You Can Do with the App:

- View the club directory and contact fellow members easily
- Access the club and district calendar
- Check out upcoming events and meeting details
- Keep your personal profile up to date

Whether you're at home or on the road, the ClubRunner app keeps Rotary at your fingertips!

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION

Please complete [this form](#) to submit relevant information or news you would like to share with the club in the next month's release. The more we collaborate and connect with each other, the stronger our club is in creating effective change to achieve our Rotary mission.

MEMBERSHIP TYPES

Each Rotary club can have Active as well as Honorary members, they may also add other designations. Ours are as follows:

1. **Active Members** are full voting members of the club who can hold any leadership position.
2. **Branch members** are full voting members of the club who can hold any leadership position. They are created when 8 or more members live geographically close and would like to organize local community efforts. They have their own organizational structure and leadership model.
3. **Organizational memberships** are all part of the same organization. We require that the organization name one primary representative who will be considered "the full paying member". Dues will be assigned to this member with the understanding that the organization will cover the costs. Subsequent members from that organization can join and pay a lesser dues amount, as determined by the board. All Organizational members will be full Rotary members, can hold office and vote. Organizations must be approved by the Board.
4. **Associate members** are members of another Rotary Club. All Associate members are considered full voting members, but they are not eligible to hold a board position.

Honorary members are not required to pay dues and have no voting rights. Honorary membership is used to recognize people who have distinguished themselves by meritorious service and embody Rotary ideals, or those considered friends of Rotary for their support of Rotary's causes.

VISIT RCEHT SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES.



CALENDAR & UPCOMING EVENTS

2025-26 LEADERSHIP TEAM

Our club is full of opportunities to serve. See below for a brief description of our many Board positions, committees and task forces.

Reach out to the RCEHT President via president@endhtrotaryclub.org with any questions or interest in helping! Good ideas don't get implemented without the hands to get the job done. Many thanks to those who are already stepping up to volunteer!

Welcome the 2025-2026 Board of Directors

President: Bassey Kooffreh

Immediate Past President: Lisa Podolny, Michelle Seets & Karen Walkowski

President Elect: OPEN

Secretary: Michelle Seets

Treasurer: Karen Walkowski

Membership: Toni Lucas

Programs and Projects: Erin Maloney

Foundation Chair: Lisa Podolny

Fundraising: Mary Fiadese

PR: Open Position

Director(s) at Large: Maria Julia Moreyra

STANDING MEETINGS

The General Meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month @ 7:00 AM CT (US / Canada). Visit our website for details.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

General meeting

Club Presidents

Jul 10, 2025 7:00 AM

Leadership Transition

Audrey Moore, CEO of Lift Up the Vulnerable

Jul 24, 2025 7:00 AM

Voices of Resilience: Confronting the Humanitarian and Trafficking Crisis in Sudan

Visit our [website](#) for details.

Current Committee make up for next term

- Economic Development: Michael Podolny
- Branch: OPEN
- Speaker: Maria Julia Moreyra
- Sunshine: Toni Lucas
- Social: Anne Delain Clark

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

21-25 June 2025
Calgary, Canada

Theme: Magic All Around

See <https://convention.rotary.org> for more information