

IS YOUR CLUB MILLENNIAL FRIENDLY?

With only 11 percent of Rotary members under age 40, the future of many clubs may depend on their success in recruiting Millennials.

Worldwide, there are about 2 billion Millennials – variously defined, but identified by the U.S. Census Bureau as people born between 1982 and 2000. And they have a great deal to offer Rotary. Having grown up in a time of rapid change, head-spinning technological advances, and expanding access to the world, Millennials are uniquely equipped to keep pace with global trends and to meet community needs.



They are also generous and willing to volunteer. According to a 2015 Millennial Impact Research Report from Achieve research agency, 84 percent of survey respondents had made a charitable donation the previous year, and 70 percent had spent time volunteering.

So how can you make your club more appealing to Millennials? The Millennials we asked cite three factors that are important to members of their generation.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

In the 2015 Millennial Impact Research Report, 77 percent of respondents said they would be more likely to volunteer if their talents and expertise could be used for the cause.

Emmanuel Rey, 31, who joined the Rotary Club of Villa Devoto, Argentina, reflects that attitude. He says that members of his



generation don't want to sit on the sidelines when they join a club. They want to "do Rotary more than be Rotary."

A year after becoming a Rotarian, Rey was appointed his district's Rotaract chair. As a past member of Rotaract, Rey says the position was a natural fit.

"Undoubtedly, the opportunity they gave me improved my position in Rotary and my club experience," he says. "Members my age join Rotary to do things for our community and for personal development. I think clubs that put young people in positions of responsibility early on in their membership open the door for us to contribute, but also make their club more well-rounded. It's a win-win."

AFFORDABILITY

Karthik Kittu joined the Rotary Club of Bangalore Southwest, in Karnataka, India, because the dues were reasonable. Kittu, 33, says that after almost 12 years of being a Rotaractor, he was excited at the prospect of becoming a Rotary member, but found that a lot of clubs in his area were simply too expensive.

"People my age are at the beginning of their careers and don't necessarily make a lot of money. We're starting families and buying homes. Disposable income isn't always there for us," Kittu says.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Every fourth meeting, Kittu's club hosts family night; spouses and children come for dinner, to play games, and to join in club activities. "Involving a member's family in the club makes Rotary more inclusive," Kittu says. "I think inclusiveness is important to Millennials. We want to share our experiences with others."

Ultimately, Kittu says, Millennials wants to change lives, see tangible results from their work, and create a wide network of friends and business connections. Rotary is a perfect platform to do that, but it's up to clubs to adapt in order to attract this generation.

➔ See more about Millennials in the May issue of *The Rotarian*.

