**Rotary Club of Rockford**

**STRIVE Program**

May 2022

The Rotary Club of Rockford started our STRIVE program in 2007. At the time, one of our Rotary members was the High School Assistant Principal and very adept at knowing which kids were struggling and would benefit from mentoring. I would suggest this is the best path for other clubs to follow.

Our goal is to have 10 students in the program. All are seniors and in jeopardy of not graduating. Many of the students do not have strong role models at home to complete their work, study, etc.

Both Rotarians and community members serve as mentors to STRIVE students. Background checks are done for all mentors. Mentors and students meet in person at public places such as a coffee or sandwich shop. These meeting provide an opportunity to discuss life and school challenges and ways to succeed. Many times, just a few interactions with a mentor will change the whole perspective of the student.

The Rockford Rotary Club collaborates with the high school to organize field trips to junior colleges and trade programs in our area. We host the students for two lunches. One lunch is usually in the middle of the year. This year, we had two speakers who talked about the opportunities for students in the trades.

Our second luncheon for STRIVE students is our Awards Luncheon. There are several trimester awards, and one scholarship at the end. After each trimester, we give out $50 awards to students based on the most improved GPA, most improved attendance, best overall attendance, and best overall GPA. A single $1,200 scholarship is awarded at the end of the year to the student that is the best in all categories.

All the students who have gone through the STRIVE program have graduated high school. Many have gone on to trade school, a junior college or a 4-year college.

For more information, contact STRIVE Co-chairs, Todd Olson (todd.olson@charter.net) or Greg Glover (Greg.Glover@merrell.com).