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Messages From District 7080 Interact Committee

Fellow Interactors and Rotary Interact Advisors,

- Congratulations to our Committee Chair, Uche Okugo, on recently becoming a new father!
- Congratulations to the organizers of the '[Milton Rotary Youth Summit](#)'; in this Newsletter are reports from 3 youth who participated in the Summit.
- The **deadline** for the **Grant Writing** initiative is Friday, **May 14, 2021**. Please email completed entries to Pari Gujar at pari2205@hotmail.com; see details on the last page. We will accept more than one application per Interact Club.
- We encourage Rotary Clubs to have at least 1 Rotarian attend the Interact workshop at the [District 7080 Virtual Rotary Conference](#) on Saturday, **May 29, 2021**. The District 7080 Interact Committee will host a Breakout Session in this year's District 7080 Conference.

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- Your District 7080 Interact Committee encourages Rotary Clubs to see if Interact Clubs in their area could be started in the Fall or resume meetings once the pandemic subsides.

District 7080 Interact Endeavors!

1) Central Peel Secondary **School** Interact Club, Brampton:

CPSS Interact hosts monthly service projects to shed light on social justice issues, and implement action items to make a difference in our community. Since the month of April represents Autism Acceptance and brings more awareness to issues within neurodiversity, CPSS Interact organized a “Let’s Talk Acceptance” speaker event on April 20th. They invited Wanda Deschamps to spotlight the neurodiversity and Autism Acceptance movement, and share ways to foster an inclusive environment within our workplaces and classrooms. This event garnered over 45 passionate participants eager to learn and discuss both topics!

But they did not stop there — they organized a social media campaign that touched upon topics not commonly discussed in our community, including respectful vocabulary and strategies to combat stereotypes. They were able to share our support to the neurodiverse community and hope to continue to learn more in the future!

Similarly, they strive to plan and execute service projects in the future to encourage more important discussions and create an impact. In May, CPSS Interact will be spotlighting invisible illnesses to raise awareness surrounding the stigma around them. Interact will be putting a specific focus on mental health throughout the month by hosting a ‘stress-less’ event. The purpose of this event is to take an hour to participate in activities beneficial to our mental health. Stay tuned for more details coming soon!

To learn more on what they did this month and their future plans, check out their handles below:

Instagram: @cpssinteract

Twitter: @cpss_interact

Website: bit.ly/cpssinteract





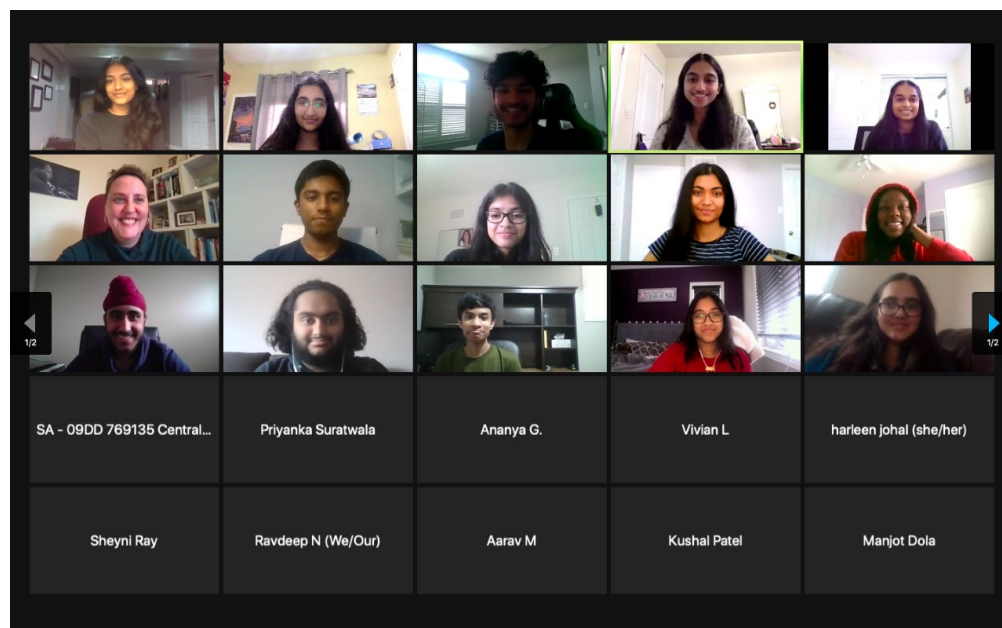
WANDA DESCHAMPS

Website: www.libertyco.ca
LinkedIn: Wanda K Deschamps
Email: wanda.deschamps@libertyco.ca

About Wanda

Wanda Deschamps is the founder and principal of Liberty Co, which seeks to increase neurodiverse employment with a special emphasis on autism due to her own diagnosis at midlife. Wanda is also the catalyst behind the #Women4Women collective dedicated to gender equality through supporting other women. Based with her family in Waterloo since 2015, she relishes exercising, reading and following the Pittsburgh Penguins.

The graphic features a red background with a circular portrait of Wanda Deschamps on the left. To the right, under the heading 'About Wanda', is a paragraph about her work with Liberty Co and the #Women4Women collective. Contact information is listed at the bottom left. A small circular logo is in the top right corner.



2) Fergus-Elora **Community** Interact Club:

The Club sent appreciation cards to our local Covid Unit staff. Then they created similar cards for each of our club members and our widows. They believe staying in touch is very difficult these days and many of their members are uncomfortable with Zoom, so the goal was to keep them connected and to know somebody cares.

The Club President is also now working on teaching their Interact club how to write a grant. Although they were all too busy to attend the training they're reading and learning. She will work with them to help them understand it better and then each member will present their charity of choice and try to 'sell' on why they should 'win'. They are using imaginary dollars at this time.

Where are they now!



Hello, my name is **Jananee Savuntharanathan** and I was part of the Interact Club at Gordon Graydon Memorial Secondary School in Mississauga from 2010-2014. Today, I am a Rotaractor and Rotarian. I graduated from the University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Business Administration in 2018 and will be going back to the University of Toronto to pursue a Master of Urban Innovation in September 2021.

I was our **Interact Club** Secretary in 10th grade, and Club President during 11th and 12th grade. This is when I first started to learn about my community, event-planning, fundraising, and leadership. A couple of my favourite events were: volunteering for the *Mississauga Marathon*, our *holiday toy drive* and our *school-wide bake sale*. I loved cheering people on during the Mississauga Marathon. I was amazed by how many students donated to our toy mountain. I was most fulfilled when I heard the money we raised during our bake sale went to a family in need that attended our school. This is when I started to believe that I could make an impact.

While at the University of Toronto - Mississauga campus for Business Management, one of the first things I did was check out the Rotaract Club, which is the university version of Interact! During a university study abroad experience, I was part of the Manchester Rotaract Club for four months and got the opportunity to attend a Rotary UN Day in Geneva, Switzerland. Through Rotary's youth programs, I am also an alumni of Camp Enterprise and Rotary Youth Leadership Awards. I even got the chance to be a Flag Bearer at the Opening Ceremonies for the Rotary International Convention in Toronto!

After I graduated university, I still wanted to be a part of Rotaract and luckily, in Mississauga, we had a community Rotaract club. Just like Interact, I love the enthusiasm we have when we come together as a team, and the drive we have to be a part of change in our communities.

Currently, I am the President of my Rotary Club and joined the Rotary Passport Club South in 2018. I am the youngest president in District 7080, which I think is great because one of my goals as a Rotarian in general is to encourage younger membership.

I also currently serve as the Assistant to the District Governor where I work on monthly newsletters, help maintain the District website and social media channels, and work with the District Team to Elevate Rotaract. I am also a member of the District Public Relations Committee, District Vocational Service Committee and served as the District Rotaract Representative in 2019-2020.

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Rotary has opened the door to many opportunities for myself and others around me. When I speak about Rotary to others, I always say, *"On a personal level, Rotary is an investment in myself. On a professional level, Rotary helps to give me a competitive edge. On a social level, through Rotary, I am able to serve our community."*

What is Rotaract?

Anyone from 18 to 30 years of age, ideally, can join a Rotaract Club. Type of Rotaract Clubs:
1) Community based, 2) University/College based

Earlier, Rotaract Clubs used to have a Rotary Club Sponsor; however, since 2020 Rotaract is an independent arm of Rotary. Clubs can fundraise and have their own projects.

The Rotaract Club of Brampton is currently active and has recently done several projects included food donations, park cleanups, Rotaract Educational and Development Speaker sessions.

Here are what some of our Brampton Rotaractors have to say:

Harj: Social Media Expert

Brampton Rotaractors are involved in new and exciting initiatives that support the community. In addition, we used to have our own fun social gatherings once a month, in place of a meeting. Being part of Rotaract has developed my skills in admin, organization and networking.

[Tweet to us @BramRotaract](#)

Join us on our [RotaractBrampton Facebook Group](#)

Follow us on our [RotaractBrampton Facebook Page](#) and on our [Instagram](#)

Shubham: President-Elect

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." These words by Mahatma Gandhi motivates me every day to do something for the society. As an ex-Interactor I wanted to continue this journey, and trust me, Rotaract Club is the way to go.

Sravanti: Past President

Rotaract has been a great opportunity for me to make a difference in the community and meet great like-minded individuals! I got involved after a year out of University when I felt there weren't many ways for me to get involved. Rotaract provided just that! It's been a great journey from being a member to co-President and getting to see the group evolve now. I feel great pride in being part of this wonderful international family!

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Gaurav: Professional Development Committee (Founder and Organizer of RED Talks)

Being a part of Rotaract helps increase your self-confidence, public-speaking skills, and have tremendous gratification while doing this.

Pari: Past President, currently International Services Committee

If you live in Brampton and are between the ages of 18 and 35, and would like to join a Community-based Rotaract Club, email us at bramptonrotaract@gmail.com

Interact “Tip of the Month”:

Invite a former RYE student to a meeting

Pia Casapia - Rotary Youth Exchange student, Ilo, Peru



4 years! In 2016-17, I had the pleasure of being a Rotary Exchange Student in Burlington. Recently, I got to go down ‘memory lane’ with the Nelson Interact Club when they invited me to be their guest speaker.

I shared information about my country of Peru, and my exchange experience as an “*honorary Canadian*”, as I believe myself to be. Some of the awesome Canadians who had made me feel welcome - including former host parents - also attended, along with Interact Club members.

I explained what it’s like living in Peru, what happened during my exchange year, and my life after I returned home. Currently, I am in medical school, also working with non-profits, and aiming to set free-diving records. I am also going to see if my home city would like to establish an Interact Club.

I’m very grateful for the opportunity to share my Rotary experience and perhaps motivate others to ‘take the leap’ when the RYE resumes. I believe sharing life (even through zoom) is the purest form of joy. I hope my talk was informative, and fun to listen to. It is important to teach others about the ‘Rotarian way’. By the way, I still remember the national anthem, lol!

I encourage other Interact Clubs to invite a former RYE student to one of their meetings.

Reflection: "Milton Rotary Youth Summit"

(1) By Sabrina Paez:



My experience in the Rotary Milton Youth Summit Program was lovely! I was the co-host of the event and everything worked better than we expected. A lot of people (especially teenagers around my age) decided to take the challenge of being part of the virtual summit on April 10th.

The main goal of the program was to connect with each other and to learn new ideas from our amazing speakers. For me, the highlight of the day was the participation of people from outside Canada! As a 'foreign' person, I consider it is important to listen to different perspectives and I cannot be happier for the way that everything turned out.

What excited me the most was to be available to see first hand that no matter how hard the situation can turn (in this case because of the pandemic), people will always try to stay connected with each other.

I'm very grateful for having the privilege of working with an amazing and supportive team. Once again, being a Rotarian is not just being a member of a club. Being part of Rotary International means being part of a big and international family.

As a result of the Youth Summit, I can say that I had an extra "push" from everyone who attended the program. Seeing more than 100 people connected and enjoying the day during the pandemic really inspired me to work to be better every day.

For sure, it is going to be an experience that I will never forget!

(2) By Zayn Brar:



To say that I simply enjoyed the Milton Rotary Youth Summit would be an understatement. To me, the event was an all-rounded experience in which I got to communicate with like-minded people as well as share my Interact experiences.

The goals of the Summit were to gain knowledge in environment/climate concerns, mental health, career development, and service learning. I believe that every attendee gathered insight from all sectors.

I attended the "*Fashion Crimes Against the Environment*" breakout room since I am interested in 'sustainable' fashion. I learned about the effects of 'fast fashion' on the environment as well as possible alternatives to that lifestyle. This discussion will certainly remain in my mind for the next time I go shopping!

Secondly, I was in the "*Critical Thinking Puts Things Into Perspective*" breakout room for the mental health sector of the event. This discussion revolved around the effects of idle thinking and how that contributes to anxiety. We were given tips on how to think more critically as a way to combat falsities and, instead, focus on hard facts to make decisions. This breakout room was especially beneficial to those struggling with anxiety as the speaker gave marvellous advice on how to use reality as a way to cope with anxious thoughts.

Thirdly, for career development, I attended the "*Health Sciences*" session, in which people who had practice in this profession talked about their experiences and advice they would give to attendees wanting to pursue Health Sciences. I am passionate about my future career and was excited to connect with people in Health Sciences. The main message from this discussion was to pursue a career that will make you happy, not just one that others expect of you or one that pays well. One of the speakers talked about her university experience and how she found out what exactly she wanted to pursue as a career.

Lastly, I was an Interact panelist in the '*service-learning sector*' and it was a wonderful opportunity! I not only got to speak about my involvement in Interact, but I also got to learn about what other Interact Clubs were doing! The panel was diverse as people of varying exposures in Interact were present. Truly, it was a learning experience for everyone!

To conclude, the Milton Rotary Youth Summit was a remarkable event in which I got to actively participate and learn. The knowledge that I gleaned will certainly remain in my mind as I continue to be

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an Interact member! In the future, I hope to see more events like this to support youth as they work to *"be tomorrow's leaders today"*.

(3) By Hanna Rolf-Yamamoto:



(I'm the one on the right)

I am a grade 10 student in the Nelson Interact Club. On April the 10th I attended the Milton Rotary Youth Summit which included topics on the environment, mental health, career paths, and what Rotary is. It was an extremely educational day and I'm sure many others would agree.

The keynote speaker, **Dr. Todd Bowtie**, started the day off in the perfect way by connecting directly to the theme, *"Be Tomorrow's Leaders Today"*. Dr. Bowtie discussed how every one of us can positively impact the world.

The structure of the first two breakout sessions, on the environment and mental health, was very similar. The problems themselves were discussed and the participants provided us with solutions to these problems. During the environment session, we learned more about the science behind climate change and then we were given the choice whether we wanted to know more about 'fast fashion' or your 'food consumption ecological footprint'. I joined the fast fashion breakout room and learned that the fashion industry emits 1.2 billion tonnes of CO2 emissions each year.

The mental health session included knowledge and facts about mental health and we were given the opportunity of choosing between critical thinking that puts things into perspective and a journey of self-discovery and mental wellness. I joined the latter where I learned about the Ikigai, a Japanese model for finding your life's purpose.

The next session was on careers. I went to the business breakout room where I learned about potential jobs in that field.

For the final session, we split into Interactors and Rotaractors. A panel of four Interactors was asked to answer specific questions. For those who are not in Interact, I believe it was valuable to understand what Interact does, our values, and how you can become involved in the club.

Overall I loved how we were given options of what topics we wanted to learn more about. For the breakout sessions we did not attend, we were given a summary of the content discussed. In my

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opinion, the day was well organized and gave me more insight into what I can do to make the world a better place. If there is another future Milton Youth Summit I would recommend taking part.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, May 29

[District 7080 Annual Rotary Conference](#) - Registrations are open!

While the District Conference is normally a great social and information-packed, face to face Rotary event, this year can take part from the comfort of your own home. You will learn lots more about Rotary and the incredible ways you can leverage and benefit from your Interact, Rotaract or Rotary membership now and into the future.

The District Interact Committee will be hosting a breakout session, so be sure to join!

Interactors - Let Us Help YOU!!

Opportunity for Interact Clubs:

Interactors: Think of an initiative or project idea that you would like your Interact Club to create or promote. Discuss the nature of your project/idea with others in your Interact Club and possibly sponsor Rotary Club. Your discussions should include potential costs that you think will be associated with your idea.

Then, provide Grant Applications to the District 7080 Interact Committee (DIC) for an opportunity to fund your initiative/project for **up to \$250!**

On April-12th the District 7080 Interact Committee hosted Lorraine Crow - a Grant Application writing expert who presented to District 7080 Interactors how to write a Grant Application. Here are links that will be helpful:



2021 TRC SAMPLE Interact Grant Writing Competition Application.pdf



2021 Final Interact Grant Writing Competition Application.pdf

Note the revised timelines:

Monday, April 12	Grant Application Writing Training by Lorraine Crow and CAMP Enterprise Organizer Jan Gerard
Friday, May 14	Deadline for District 7080 Interactors to submit Grant Applications to the DIC Secretary at pari2205@hotmail.com along with the necessary attachments - i.e. Financial Statements and List of Board of Directors
Monday, May 17	DIC and Lorraine Crow to review all Applications and adjudicate
Last week of May	DIC to send the funds to Interact Sponsor Rotary Club Advisors, for Interact Clubs to collect the funds from
June	Interact Clubs to execute their Projects!