



Message From District 7080 Interact Committee Chair For Rotary District 7080

Fellow Rotarians/Rotaractors/Interactors,

When I was appointed Chair of D7080 Interact Committee, in a new reality where there are more virtual activities and almost zero physical activities, and where most High Schools are shut to extracurricular activities, I wondered how a service organization will survive. I also wondered what will become of our Interact Clubs, but I knew that our Interactors had to be kept engaged.

First, I needed a team, and after a couple of emails and recommendations, a team emerged. I am pleased to introduce the following Rotarians and Rotaractors as members of District 7080 Interact Committee:

Pari Gujar (*Committee Secretary, Rotaract Club of Brampton & Rotary Passport Club South*)

Desmond Jordan (*Rotary Club of Oakville Trafalgar*)

Saskia Wijngaard (*Rotary Club of Mississauga*)

Jennifer Ngo (*Rotary Club of Mississauga West*)

Miles Ross (*Rotary Club of Burlington North*)

Hanna Kim (*Rotaract Club of Mississauga & Rotary Passport Club South*)

We have endured certain challenges as well as enjoyed certain successes. Despite the restrictions

1. we started a monthly Newsletter,
2. established the first community-based Interact Club and started/resuscitated one other,
3. met and communicated regularly,
4. adopted a cluster system for better management:
 - a. Brampton & Mississauga,
 - b. Oakville & Burlington
 - c. North Halton & Dufferin Erin Caledon
 - d. Guelph Wellington & Cambridge
 - e. Kitchener Waterloo & Woodstock Oxford and
5. had visibly active clubs, whose activities are mentioned here in this Newsletter.

With 36 Interact Clubs in the District (12 terminated, 24 active), only about 20% are currently having one form of activity or the other. While we understand the situation, we have to do better, as we have to get and keep our younger youth active and enthusiastic about Rotary. As a start, we need the help of Rotary Clubs to update their Youth/Interact Chair/Advisor contacts and contact information for Interact Club(s) in their community and share with us. Next, reach out to the club(s) you sponsor, find out how they are doing and support them to remain vibrant. Once the pandemic subsides or is over and extracurricular

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activities begin to return, we also need to be strategically positioned to hit the ground running in encouraging and supporting the return of Interact Clubs.

If you're a club or Rotarian in the North Halton & Dufferin Erin Caledon, Guelph Wellington & Cambridge and/or Kitchener Waterloo & Woodstock Oxford clusters, and interested in serving in the Interact Committee or as a Cluster Champion, kindly contact me via the email below.

We have quite a task ahead of us, but I cannot remember a time in history where something failed when a team put their heart into it. With support from the District through the Youth Services Director, Ed Fowler, and your cooperation, we will make Interact the choice club for High School students. Remember, Interact is Rotary's best membership investment, with the purpose of bringing self-governing and self-supporting young people together (ages 12 to 18) for an opportunity to participate in fun and meaningful service projects while encouraging the development of leadership skills. Rotary Clubs guide Interactors to take action, build international understanding, and make new friends around the world while discovering the power of Service Above Self as Rotary Opens Opportunities.

Uche Okugo (Rotary Club of Brampton)
Chair, District 7080 Interact Committee
uche.okugo@gmail.com

District 7080 Interact Endeavors!

1) **Central Peel Secondary School Interact Club, Brampton** is dedicating their online platforms and weekly discussions this month to celebrate and raise awareness about Black History Month.

Interactor Binalpreet Kalra:

We have been educating our members on topics such as the Civil Rights movement, slavery and segregation in Canada, current day racial disparities, micro-aggressions, stereotypes, and how to combat our unconscious biases.

On February 16th, CPSS Interact Club held a film screening of the documentary ***Everybody's Children*** directed by Monika Delmos with over 60 attendees.

Through the journeys of two teenage refugees who escape their native countries to make a new life in Ontario, Canada, we learned about the challenges they faced during the refugee process, their school life and back in their native countries. Along with watching the documentary, we engaged the audience on Slack to reflect on the key topics discussed during the screening.



Directed by Monika Delmos

Focuses on the story of two teenage refugees who escape their native countries to make a new life in Ontario, Canada.

Watch their struggles as they face the hardships of teenage life, along with the refugee application and status.



Hiya Shah (she/her)

Binal (she/her)

#learning ☆
Add a topic

124

- Hiya 5:41 PM

@channel Why does \$20 make a huge difference for Sallieu?

6 replies Last reply today at 5:43 PM
- Hiya 5:45 PM

@channel How does the transitional house benefit Sallieu? Is sharing space with more people a pro or con?

8 replies Last reply today at 5:51 PM
- Hiya 5:48 PM

@channel How does this moment make Joyce feel? Why may it be one of her defining moments?

1 reply Today at 5:49 PM
- Hiya 5:50 PM

@channel What do you think drives Sallieu's passion for firefighting?

4 replies Last reply today at 5:54 PM
- Hiya 5:54 PM

@channel Any final thoughts? How did the documentary make you feel? Could you connect to it in any way? What issues does the documentary highlight in terms of immigration and disparities the refugee community faces in Ontario?

1 reply Today at 5:58 PM

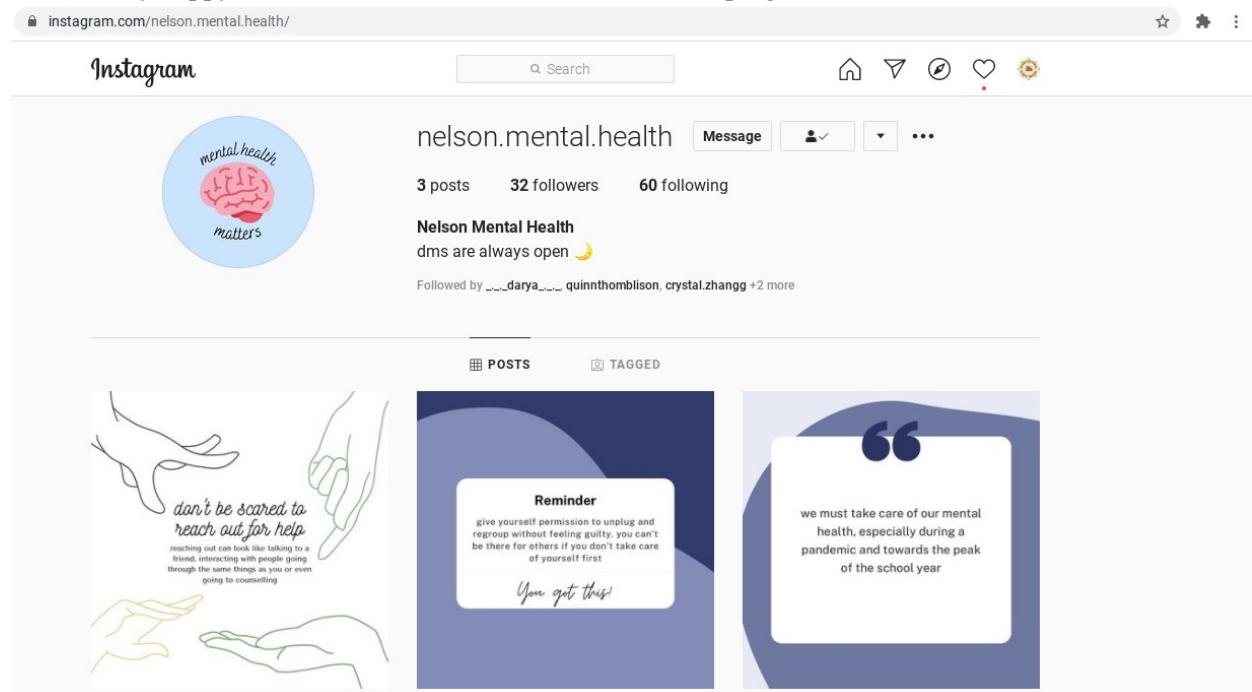
2) Nelson High School Interact Club, Burlington

Christiana Lammers:

Hello all! Despite all of the snow and wintry weather, Nelson Interact has been keeping busy and working on many initiatives to stay active in our school and neighbourhood communities. Our weekly meetings over Google Meet with a good group of team members have been productive and many ideas have been shared to help the community in any way that we can.

One of our biggest initiatives that we have been working on lately is creating **Mental Health sessions** for the Nelson High School student body. A few members who run an Instagram page promoted it through many posts and surveys, getting students involved and creating an interest in the session.

2) a) On February 9th, two Nelson Social Workers joined students on a Google Meet to discuss **mental health during the pandemic**. It was a very productive session that covered the benefits of sleep and exercise, also covering the topic of screen time and how to learn well in a virtual environment. The two social workers were able to dissect many habits that have grown throughout the pandemic and point out their flaws, directing students in the right direction to improve their mental health. Nelson H.S. Interact Club is very happy with how the session turned out and is hoping to do another one in the near future.

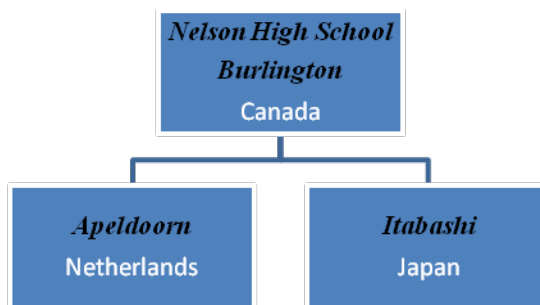


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2) b) Another initiative that Nelson H.S. Interact Club is looking into is creating a **Pen pal system** with another Interact Club from around the world. We'd love to get to know other students who are getting involved in their communities and how they are operating during the pandemic.



2) c) Another idea that we are considering is reaching out to secondary school students in **Burlington's twin cities**. We'd love to connect with other people our age from around the world and learn more about their lives during the global pandemic.



2) d) In the future, we are hoping to provide **study sessions** for Nelson students. The sessions will contain breakout groups with student tutors as well as teachers from different areas of courses. We are hoping to launch these sometime in the spring to aid students in their online learning.



3) A community based initiative of Glen Forest Secondary School, Mississauga

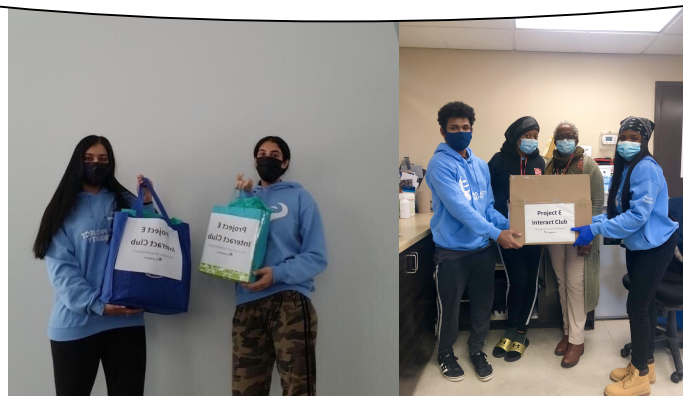
- Group name: Interact Youth for Global Action
- Interact Club: A community based initiative of Glen Forest Secondary School, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Mississauga Dixie
- Fundraiser Project: A new online game - VALORANT (very first tournament)
- Value: over \$200 so far
- Dates: March 13-14th
- Link to the previous tournaments game: <https://playvalorant.com/en-us/>
- Link to the new tournament game: <https://na.leagueoflegends.com/en-us/>
- Social media: <https://www.instagram.com/interactyfga/>
- Picture/poster of our current event: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CL2vCChhE8E/>



4) Central Peel Community Interact Club organized Project E and delivered personal items to 2 homeless shelters on New Year's Eve

Diane Oyedeji:

It was a very educating experience. We had the opportunity to talk to some of the workers and we are happy to learn that they have slowly adapted to this new reality.



Did you know?

Two of the newest Interact Clubs in the world are in our Rotary District 7080!

The St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Secondary School Interact Club in Oakville, was formed almost exactly a year ago, when they met and elected their inaugural Board of Directors, led by Co-Presidents Olivia and Elizabeth.

While Covid has limited gatherings this school term the Interact Board, which also includes Alicia, Angela, Dominique, Ethan, Sheil and Steven, have continued to meet virtually to learn more about Interact, Rotaract & Rotary and to begin to discuss some service projects and fundraising ideas, which they hope to announce in the next few weeks.

The Interact District Committee and The Rotary Club of Oakville Trafalgar, who are the Interact sponsors, are very excited about this new club and wish to give special thanks to the School Principal, Mr. Perusin and VP and Head of IB, Mrs. Montanari, for all their support in forming the club and in helping us to begin mentoring the students in the spirit of Rotary and 'Service Above Self'.

The Project E Community based Interact Club in Peel was officially formed in the midst of Covid, under the guidance of District interact Chair Uche and Saskia from the Rotary Club of Mississauga. Special credit needs to go to the energetic former Interactors who decided to establish a community Interact Club when there was no longer a club at their schools. This shows true leadership and commitment to Rotary.

Why I joined Interact!

My name is Zayn Brar and I am a Grade 10 student at Nelson High School, Burlington.

Given the current circumstances, I have been attending school from home and like everyone else taking virtual classes, the opportunities to participate in extracurriculars have been limited. Fortunately, I was able to find the Interact Club early in the year through some other friends who were planning to attend. This particular club sparked my interest because of the projects they were planning to implement this year and the work they had done for others in previous years. So far in the Interact Club, I have set up the Virtual Study Sessions, as well as the Mental Health Guest Speaker Sessions, and worked alongside Rotarians to organize the Milton Rotary Youth Summit. Of course, I couldn't have done any of this without the support of my fellow Interactors who were as devoted to these projects as I was. And through working alongside my peers, I've realized my favourite part of Interact: how everyone is always willing to aid in making our community better, be it through helping out at food banks or organizing an event for students. These acts truly show the compassion that everyone in Interact has for their community. I can only hope to see this compassion grow and, perhaps in the future, even grow farther than our province or country. An example of this would be an overseas program or even an international pen-pal event, both of which have intrigued me from the moment they were introduced as a possibility. Because of the pandemic, the first possibility is not feasible right now but I hope that one day, Nelson Interactors will be able to participate in it. All in all, Interact Club has been an amazing experience for me as I've had the

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chance to expand my skills in networking and organizing. Not to mention, the opportunities I've had to better the lives of many other people and the reward of having my projects come to fruition.



Where are they now!



Hello! My name is Hanna Kim and I am a recent member of the Rotaract Club of Mississauga and Rotary Passport Club South. It was during my time at T.L. Kennedy Secondary School where I first discovered what Interact is. Initially, I thought of volunteering as a means to finish my obligatory forty hours of volunteering that was mandatory to graduate. One day, a senior student in my school pulled my friend and I into a classroom and told us all about Interact. Hesitantly, we joined but little did I know it would be the thing that made my high school experience so meaningful. Through Interact, I gained a sense of community, and a shift in my worldview towards something much greater beyond myself. I learned that service bears its fruit in many ways: positive mental health, community-building, and hope that there is good in all of us. I eventually became president of the club, which not only allowed me to raise awareness for the causes that I was passionate about, but also taught me leadership, organization, and communication skills.

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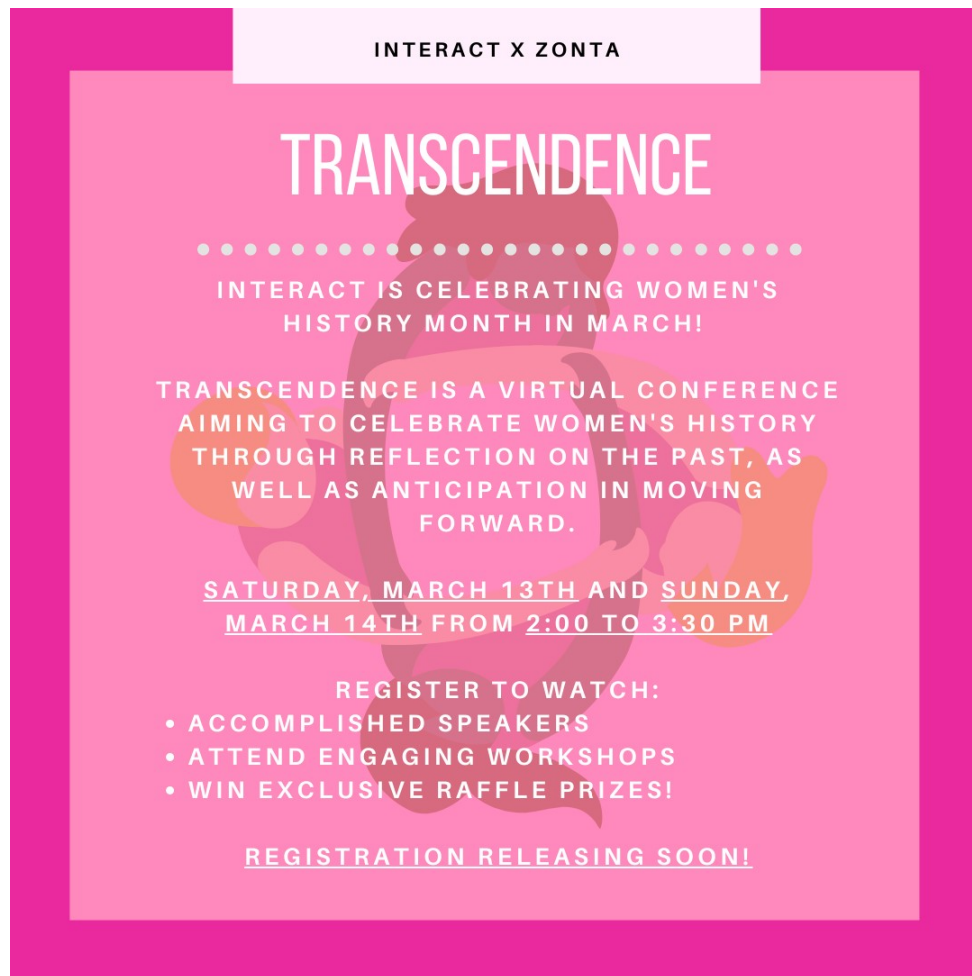
After graduating high school, I decided to pursue a degree in Archaeology. I attended a field school where I was able to go on archaeological digs and learn about Indigenous issues in Canada. Shortly after entering University of Toronto, I was hit with the infinite directions I could go with my future. After working in various roles during the four years at UofT, I discovered my love for mathematics, philosophy, and cultural studies. Eventually, I graduated with a double major in Anthropology and Statistical Sciences. I also ended up going to graduate school to study Statistics at McMaster University because I loved it so much.

Currently I am working as a data analyst in Marketing Intelligence. I am hoping to have a future in a career where I can eventually combine my interests in Cultural Anthropology and data analytics. After graduating from McMaster University and entering the work force, I started to miss the feeling of being involved in something greater than myself or the immediate people around me. Interact taught me the lesson of “Service Above Self” and I knew that it was time to return to community involvement. Being a part of Rotary/Rotaract/Interact Committee allows me to meet and interact with amazing people in the GTA. It is through their passion for service that inspires me to do more. Through Rotary, I am now working as a volunteer for an organization called Help Heal Humanity where I help coordinate other volunteers. The best part is that there is never a dull moment, with the endless number of causes that people are working towards.

Upcoming events!

Saturday, March 13 and Sunday, March 14

Central Peel Secondary School Interact Club and Zonta are hosting a mini virtual two-day conference filled with engaging and informative workshops, two phenomenal guest speakers, raffles and a fun coffee house to end off the weekend with. The event will be on Saturday, March 13 from 2pm to 3:30pm and Sunday, March 14 from 2:00pm to 4:00pm. We'll be learning about gender barriers/stereotypes as well as the importance of allyship, taking the time to appreciate the women in our lives and having some time to connect with other high school students in the process. To register, please visit [THIS link](#). An important note is that anyone who registers, must sign up with their school email (ex. 123456@pdsb.net).



Saturday, April 10

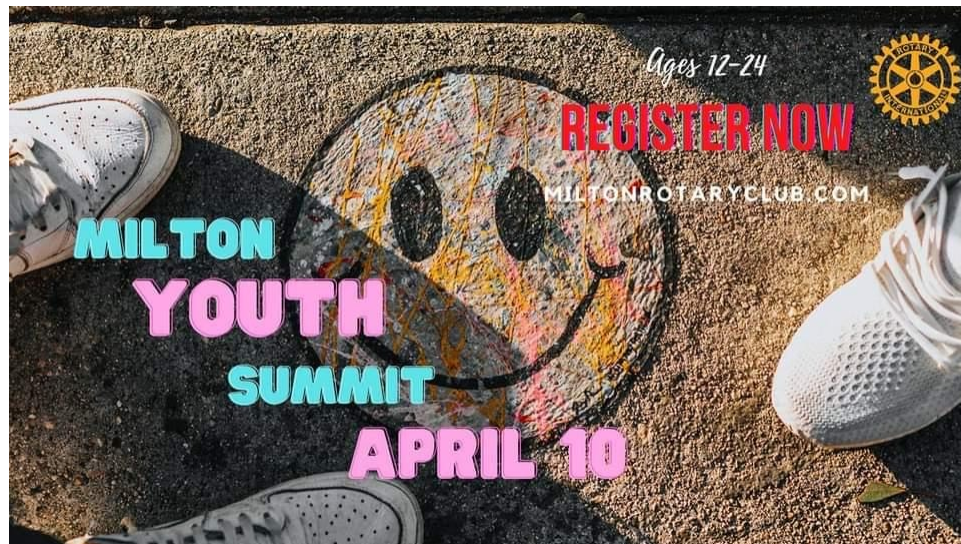
Milton Rotary Youth Summit - [Registration is Free](#)

Halton Interactors, Rotaractors and Rotarians are excited invite you to a virtual leadership event on April 10. The event will focus on 4 main themes Environment, Mental Health and Service Learning and Careers.

These topics will be covered by entertaining keynote speakers, presenters, panels and workshops.

You won't want to miss this so save the date and sign up today. Spaces are limited so tell your friends.

Early registrants will be eligible for attendance gifts and prizes.



Want to earn one of our VIP Passes? Contact the organizers at miltonrotary7080@gmail.com and give them your suggestions for what you believe would be an ideal topic for your demographic. This could be the name of an inspirational speaker, a subject for debate or an idea for a virtual workshop. If the organizers select your idea then you will get two VIP Passes and a mention at the event. FREE event invitations will be selectively made available to Halton youth aged 12-24 years over the next two months. Keep in touch through social media to ensure you don't miss out. **SAVE THE DATE: Saturday April 10, 2021**

Saturday, May 29

[District 7080 Annual Rotary Conference](#) - Registration will open in March

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.

Rotary News!

[Why not apply for a Rotary Education Scholarship?](#)

Oakville:

"The three Oakville Rotary Clubs are excited to have access to the new Community Education Awards Hub for our Oakville Rotary Education Awards program," said Les Ross, Chair of the

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2020 Oakville Rotary Education Awards Committee. *“Through the leadership of the Oakville Community Foundation, access to post-secondary financial support for students has been improved and simplified, which will help us put significant financial support in the hands of those who need it most.”*

To learn more about the Rotary bursaries, as well as award opportunities from 7 other organizations, go to www.awardshub.ca or education@theocf.org

Burlington:

“The Rotary Club of Burlington Lakeshore Charitable Foundation offers 12 Scholarships worth \$2,500 each”, said Russ Taylor, Chair of the Foundation. “These awards may be used for enrolment fees, program supplies or training costs”. Currently the Charitable Foundation offers Academic Scholarships, Leap Forward Awards (for individuals facing financial or other barriers), Vocational Studies Award, and Specialty Scholarships/Awards to individuals demonstrating leadership and a commitment to community. The Club also offers an Athletic Scholarship for students pursuing high level Athletic training at the Post-Secondary Level.

To learn more about these student awards, go to <https://rotaryburlingtonlakeshore.ca/scholarships/>

Milton:

“This year Milton Rotary is offering three scholarships worth \$1,500 each,” said Rod McLachlan, Director of Public Relations and Community Service. “Applicants can put forward their name no matter what high school grade they are in – Grade 9 to 12 students are all eligible to apply for a 2021 Milton Rotary Youth Volunteer Scholarship.” Awards are to be used towards tuition for post-secondary education or training programs and funds will be sent directly to the post-secondary institution. The application deadline is April 17th. Milton Rotary also offers \$250 bursaries for five local students, whose names are put forward to Rotary by the schools themselves.

For more information on the scholarship requirements and to learn about how to apply, please visit www.MiltonRotaryClub.com or e-mail vkhimasia@bell.net

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, look in our next District 7080 Newsletter for additional information about how your District 7080 Interact Committee will provide an opportunity to fund your initiative/project for **up to \$250!**