

# Interactions

## Magazine

### Winter 2019

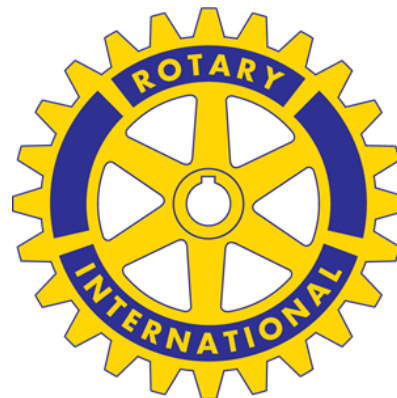
#### Gateway High School

Community service does not have to be boring. Gateway High School Interact members annually participate in various local community events, such as seasonal Halloween and Christmas parties, offering set-up, food service, hosting, and clean up assistance. We also partake in multiple school sponsored activities including bonfires, paper recycling, and each fall we host our Multicultural Festival, a night of talent, showcasing the talents of our diverse student body.

Seattle may be recognized for being America's coffee king, but for one night each December, it's Monroeville, Pennsylvania. Let's face it, even service organizations need some funding so that we may continue our endeavors. Annually, we host Coffee for a Change. The event is the largest one hosted by the club, and generally the most profitable and fun. Coffee, baked goods, talented performers, and good friends all in one place--what more could you ask for?

Coffee for a Change is held at North American Martyrs Church. For one night every December, we have free cups of coffee and hot chocolate for those who come and support us, Fair Trade coffee for sale, and a bake sale. New this year, we provided space for a Monroeville local to sell Fair Trade items from five different vendors from all over the world. As over 200 guests relaxed with their cups and cookies, 27 talented students performed on stage for their entertainment with songs and musical accompaniments.

Our coffee comes from two Fair Trade organizations called Building New Hope and Equal Exchange, who we have been working with for 15 years for this specific event. Fair Trade is when an



organization, like Equal Exchange, goes into areas of poverty and buys coffee from poor farmers above market value. They sell the coffee to groups, such as Interact, then incorporate the money they make back into the communities where the coffee comes from.

By hosting these types of events, we can raise the funding we need so that we may continue to reinvest that money into efforts to help our and other communities prosper. ~

#### In this issue:

**Pg. 1: Gateway H.S.**

**Pg. 2: Thomas Jefferson H.S.**

**Pg. 3: North Allegheny H. S. &  
Pittsburgh Science & Technology  
Academy**

**Pg. 4: South Park H.S. & Chartiers  
Valley H.S.**



# Thomas Jefferson High School

Throughout the year of 2018, we have had more members than ever (90+) supporting our community and global causes! We are currently in our third year as Shelterbox Heroes raising \$1,000 each year. We are steadily climbing toward our goal: Faculty and staff at the high school donate to our Shelterbox fund to dress down on Fridays; new Interact members pledge to fill water bottles with dimes (resulting in \$100/bottle). Shelterbox ambassadors, Tom and Marie Grant, have supported our efforts in providing shelter, food, and necessities for those around the world affected by disaster.

In 2018, we have participated in many activities with our local elementary schools and libraries, also donating toys to kids in need. With over 90+ kids in our club, they each contribute a part of their lives to helping the people who need it most. As we continue our journey with the Foster Love Project, we help kids all over Pennsylvania in foster care receive placement bags filled with new items. Our Giving Tree resulted in a donation of 20 placement bags. Most foster children have to put their things in garbage bags when moving from shelter to shelter, often leaving behind necessary or treasured items. We attend Rotary lunches on Tuesdays of each month (September--Remy Zandier and Julia Fiedor; October--Grace Nwabuogu and Faith Williams; November--Maddy Trainer and Abby Solomon; December--Maddie and Molly Sneddon; January-- Emma Winters and Joshua Niedermeyer. These commendable students have gone above and beyond to log significant hours. They attend the lunch to get to know other Rotary members and other Interact students from South Park and Brentwood.

We are currently starting a Book Drive for Children's Hospital, initiated by Interact member Maddie Sneddon. Future projects include making

paracord bracelets for Operation Gratitude and a shoe drive for Nicaragua.

Our Interact club has accomplished so much, and the year is not even halfway over! We are grateful for these opportunities and thank our fellow Rotary members and troops! ~



## North Allegheny High School

This school year, as a relatively small club, the North Allegheny Interact club has been fortunate to increase membership; we hope our involvement continues to grow in years to come! In addition to finding opportunities to serve outside of school hours, club members meet after school every month to recap and get involved in a service project.

We decorated wooden pumpkins in October as a reminder for senior citizens at Vincentian Home to be thankful during the holiday season. We regularly visit the home to spend time playing bingo with the residents, and we were able to bring them the pumpkins to kick off the start of autumn. It was truly gratifying to see their overjoyed reactions and appreciation for remembering them throughout the month! In November, we sorted toys, books, and art supplies into curated bags to give to children at HEARTH, a transitional housing unit for victims of

domestic violence/trauma who are experiencing homelessness. The bags are meant to brighten the kids' days in the case of bad weather, especially in this time of year when it may be more difficult to engage in outdoor activities.

At our December meeting, we

wrote cards and wrapped dictionaries for the students we mentor at Grandview Elementary School; we also wrote letters to Santa for Macy's partnership with the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

In January, we made Valentine's Day cards to send to veterans in the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System. Throughout the months of January and February, the North Allegheny Interact Club will also hold a shoe drive for underprivileged children in Nicaragua. With the shoes, the children will be able to walk to school and receive an education, preparing them for the rest of their lives. Our student representatives learned about this opportunity among others at the Annual District Interact Conference back in October.

As the year continues, we are planning many other projects such as our annual coin drive and the Students Rebuild 2019 Ocean Challenge, which raises money to help ocean conservation and restoration efforts in coastal communities. We are grateful for all the support we've received from the Rotary Club to facilitate these experiences and more! ~



## Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy

The Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy's Interact Club began the school year by volunteering for Produce to People. In October, they assisted in hosting a Harvest Party at Light of Life Ministries. To celebrate the holidays, they wrapped presents for the Best of the Batch Foundation and they visited Canterbury Place to make gingerbread house with the residents. They also held a toy drive in which the club collected over 50 presents for local children. Furthermore, they have an upcoming visit to Canterbury Place to make Mardi Gras masks with the residents. ~





## South Park High School

For over twenty years, South Park High School's Interact Club has held an event that helps out Calvary United Methodist Church on the North Side. This event is a very popular one among the club, but very limited, and many times it fills up before the event officially opens. This year on November 29th, about 20 students boarded a school bus with 217 gifts the club had raised, and made their way for the Church. Once at the church, the students get a small tour of the building and a few lessons about the interesting history of the place. After this, the club is put to work. The students are separated into groups to perform different tasks for the church. Some are in a group that create care packages for the homeless during the holiday season. The church is active in the surrounding community, and students help this effort by filling boxes with gloves, socks, gum, chapstick and other amenities. Other students are sent to organize the gifts that the club has brought. From the church, the gifts were given to the needy children in Manchester School and Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary. Another group of students worked on decorating the church for the Christmas season. Holiday garlands are hung from doorways and banisters, and there is a large

Christmas tree that is in need of decorating as well. Since the building is large and has so many jobs to complete, every student working tends to get into the holiday spirit. After about 3 hours of holiday work when all of the jobs were completed, the group headed down to the basement of the church and have pizza to finish off a festive night. It is always a favorite event of the club each year and this year was no exception. ~



## Chartiers Valley High School

At Chartiers Valley High School, our Interact Club is small, but mighty! We ended last year with a glasses drive for children in Uganda with the help of Susan O'Rourke from Clean Water for Matala. This opportunity was a great experience and we plan to collaborate again with this cause for future international projects. Our 2018/2019 school year began with volunteering for our annual homecoming carnival and chili cook off. In October, we helped support the Bryson and Ackerman Family through the selling of Bryson's Brigade/#AckStrong bracelets in association with NHS and DECA. During the holiday season, we made cards for Country Meadows, made blankets

for Project Linus, and collected canned food as admission for our high school's annual volleyball tournament. Coming up, we will be participating in Night to Shine, a special needs prom, which is a favorite among our club members each year. ~



