RESOLUTION 25R-18

To request the RI Board to consider recognizing the Rotary Student Program as an official program of RI

Proposer(s): District 6360, USA

1   WHEREAS, globally, there are 1.2 billion young people aged 15-24 (16 percent of
2   the world's population) that are transitioning into higher education and the
3   workforce - a demographic projected to grow to 1.3 billion by 2050, and
4
5   WHEREAS, on a global scale, 67 percent of people ages 18 to 21 have reported
6   wanting a mentor at the critical time during their youth when they were
7   approaching college and career (2025), and
8
9   WHEREAS, for 18 years, the Rotary Student Program has connected youth and
10 young adults aged 15-18 with professionals in dream careers by pairing
11 participants with career mentors, thereby helping countless young people to
12 confirm or redirect their dreams before leaving high school, and
13
14 WHEREAS, adult participants are not limited to the family of Rotary but also
15 include those in professional fields ranging from chief executives of global
16 corporations to small business owners to tradespeople, military personnel, and
17 startup entrepreneurs, and
18
19 WHEREAS, a career mentorship program is not only beneficial to young people
20 but also provides Rotary with a means of introducing both participants and
21 families to Rotary, demonstrating Rotary's value to potential Interactors,
22 Rotaractors, and future Rotarians, and
23
24 WHEREAS, the Rotary Student Program is now at a stage of development and
25 scalability where recognition as an official program by RI would allow the
26 program to be expanded rapidly to additional Rotary clubs across the world
27
28 IT IS RESOLVED by Rotary International that the Board of Directors of Rotary
29 International consider recognizing the Rotary Student Program as an official
30 program of RI.

(End of Text)

PURPOSE AND EFFECT

31 In 2007, the first Rotary Student Program was chartered by the Rotary Club of St.
32 Joseph and Benton Harbor (Michigan, USA) with three objectives:

1   (1) Providing valuable service to communities
2   (2) Building awareness of Rotary
3   (3) Growing membership in the family of Rotary
4
5 It has been wildly successful. For example, Rotary Student Program participants
6 were the catalyst for a five-school, 60-member community-based Interact Club in
7 southwest Michigan which launched over a two-week period in 2012, expanding
8 into seven different Interact clubs by 2016. The Rotary Student Program has
9 grown organically over the course of its 18 years of existence. It has been featured
10 at various district conferences and presidents-elect learning seminars as a
11 valuable, proven tool for providing service to youth while also connecting with
12 families and growing membership in Interact, Rotaract, and Rotary. The Rotary
13 Student Program was presented to the RI Vocational Services Committee in 2012
14 and has been featured in convention breakout sessions in Lisbon, Portugal (2013)
15 and São Paulo, Brazil (2015). It has also received coverage in the *Rotary*
16 magazine (April 2017) and is currently included on rotary.org under the
17 education area of focus. And with its website having received over 26,000 visitors
18 from more than 157 countries and outreach from Rotarians around the world,
19 including across Africa, Brazil, and Europe, there is a demonstrated global
20 interest in expanding the Rotary Student Program.
21
22 While not everyone will choose to participate in the Rotary Student Program,
23 official recognition as a program of RI will make information about it more
24 widely available for clubs and districts and help to scale up this successful
25 program to the benefit of youth participants and the family of Rotary. Without
26 such recognition, the program will undoubtedly continue to grow, but at a far
27 slower pace than it would as an official-program of RI.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

28 If implemented, this resolution would result in an increase in expenses for RI. If
29 the Rotary Student Program is administered as a structured program, expenses
30 are estimated to be at US$330,000 per year for two staff members, production of
31 materials, and postage. In addition, there is an initial cost of US$20,000 for
32 global trademark research and registration.
33
34 RI Code of Polies section 40.030., New Rotary Programs and Global Networking
35 Groups, outlines the general guidelines for adopting a new program or global
36 networking group.
37
38 RI recognizes Rotarian interest in supporting mentorship for youth ages 16-24.
39 However, maintaining structured activities for youth under 18 requires a youth
40 safeguarding and youth protection approach to ensure the health, safety, and
41 wellbeing of youth participants.