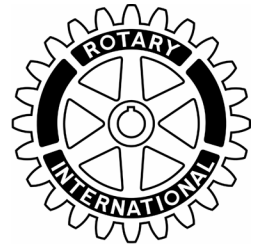




Learn About Rotaract



Are you looking for something to do? Do you want to meet new people, make a difference in your community, network with community, business, and civic leaders all while developing your leadership skills? Do you want to be a part of an international network that is changing our world? **Then Rotaract is for you!**

What is Rotaract?

Rotaract is an international organization of young professionals and students ages 18 to 30 that are committed to service, leadership, and professional development in their communities and abroad. Established in 1968 by Rotary International, Rotaract is a global network of young people who are changing the world with more than 7,000 clubs in over 160 countries.

What is Rotary International?

Rotary is a worldwide organization of business and professional leaders that provides humanitarian service, encourages high ethical standards in all vocations, and helps build goodwill and peace in the world. Approximately 1.2 million Rotarians belong to more than 32,000 clubs in more than 200 countries and geographical areas.

Goals of Rotaract

- To develop professional and leadership skills;
- To emphasize respect for the rights of others, and to promote ethical standards and the dignity of all useful occupations;
- To provide opportunities for young people to address the needs and concerns of the community and our world;
- To provide opportunities for working in cooperation with sponsoring Rotary clubs; and
- To motivate young people for eventual membership in Rotary.

What Does Rotaract Do?

Rotaractors participate in a variety of community and international service projects, as well as leadership and professional development. Typical **community service** projects might include tutoring area students, working with Habitat for Humanity, serving meals to the homeless, recycling, participating in community or campus-wide projects, and working with local community organizations. Rotaract Clubs also work with their sponsoring Rotary Club(s) on their various community projects.

Rotaract also performs **international service**. This might include working on joint project with Rotaract Clubs in other parts of the world, fundraising for an international organization such as UNICEF, or even visiting another country to address a need.

By working with area Rotary Clubs, Rotaractors have **professional development** opportunities through meeting and networking with local Rotarians, the business and civic leaders of the community.

Take advantage of **leadership development** opportunities by running for an office or volunteering for committees. Various committees might include fundraising, public relations, community service, social activities, and much more. There are also leadership opportunities at the district and international levels.

Why Join Rotaract?

- Meet new people
- Enhance your leadership skills
- Interact with Rotarians- the business, civic, and community leaders of your community
- Get involved in the local community
- Get involved in the global community
- Make a difference
- Attend international conventions
- Develop friendships with Rotaractors around the world
- Learn about yourself

Rotaract Websites

Official Rotaract Website- www.rotaract.org
Official Rotary Website- www.rotary.org
District 6710- www.rotarydistrict6710.org/go/rotaract

Worldwide Rotaract Listserv-
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/rotaractnet/>

Conferences

Rotaract offers the opportunity to attend international conferences to network and meet other Rotaractors from all parts of the world. Each year Rotary International holds an annual convention somewhere in the world. A Rotaract Pre-convention Meeting precedes this annual meeting. Rotaractors come together at this annual Rotaract Pre-Convention meeting to share ideas and participate in workshops.

Each summer there is also an opportunity to attend the Rotaract Conference for the United States, Canada, and Caribbean (USCC). The USA, Canada, and Caribbean make up a network of Rotaract Clubs called a Multi-District Information Organization, or MDIO.

At the more local level there are also district and regional conferences. Each Rotary district (geographical area) holds an annual conference for the Rotarians of that district. Rotaractors are encouraged to attend district conferences and to take part by volunteering and presenting workshops or addresses on Rotaract. Rotaractors also organize their own district conferences which may be held in conjunction with the Rotary district conference or may be a separate event.

History of Rotaract

Rotaract, Rotary International's service club program for young adults, was officially inaugurated during January 1968 under RI President Luther Hodges. On March 13, 1968, the Rotaract Club of the University of North Carolina, sponsored by the Rotary Club of North Charlotte, North Carolina, USA, was the first Rotaract club to receive its official charter. Although this club is recognized as the first Rotaract club, Rotarians have been sponsoring similar organizations for young adults since the early 1920s.

Perhaps the greatest impetus for the creation of the Rotaract program came from Rotary's youth service club for secondary school students, Interact clubs. Established in 1962, the Interact program enjoyed immediate success. However, since membership was only open to students in secondary schools, graduated Interactors and Rotarians were soon looking for ways to extend their relationship. Several proposals were brought before the RI Board of Directors to allow membership in Interact clubs to extend for a few years after graduation. Instead of extending the age requirements for Interact, the Board decided to study the feasibility of creating a new service club program for young adults at the university and young professional level.

The decision to adopt the Rotaract program came at a time when student protests worldwide were of growing concern to Rotarians. The Rotaract program was adopted not only as means of keeping former Interactors within the Rotary family, but as a means of channeling the energies of young adults into positive activities that could benefit their communities.

A special committee was convened to design the new service club program for young adults during 1966. After polling students at the University of Houston, Texas, USA, the committee decided that "Rotaract" would be the best name for the program — a combination of the words "Rotary" and "action." The committee also decided that young women should be allowed to join on equal standing with male members.

Several developments in the early 1990s helped strengthen the Rotaract movement. In February 1991, the first Rotaract club in Eastern Europe was chartered in Budapest, Hungary, with the help of Austrian Rotaractors. Ties with Eastern Europe were further strengthened when the same Austrian Rotaractors helped charter the Rotaract Club of Prague in what was then Czechoslovakia later in 1991. In March 1992, the RI Board established World Rotaract Week, which is celebrated annually during the week of 13 March to commemorate the chartering of the first Rotaract club.

Information obtained from www.rotary.org

*Compiled by Mary Kathryn DeLodder
District 6710 Rotaract Representative*