

ROTI UNIT



CARRY DAY

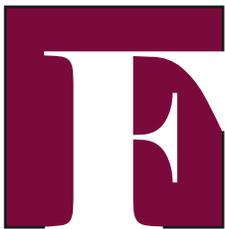
UNITED NATIONS

By Régis Allard





Nearly 1000 Rotary leaders, members and guests from around the world met in Nairobi, Kenya, last November to honour six Rotaract and Rotary members aged 35 or under as “Rotary People of Action: Young Innovators”.



For the second time in a row, the United Nations Rotary Day was shifted from its traditional venue

in New York, US, to another continent. After being hosted in Geneva, Switzerland, in 2017, in 2018 Rotary leaders and members from around the world headed to the African UN headquarters in Nairobi to honour the long-standing relationship between the United Nations and Rotary.

The theme of the day was “Youth-led Innovation: Developing Solutions to Meet Emerging Challenges”. Fittingly, almost half of the nearly 1000 guests were young people under 35 years of age.

The attendees were welcomed by director-general of the United Nations in Nairobi Hanna Tetteh, who also heads the UN Environment Department, while special guests included RI president Barry Rassin, RI president nominee Sushil Kumar Gupta and deputy

secretary-general Michèle Berg.

Among the guest speakers was Erik Solheim, former Minister of Environment and Development in Norway and current Executive Director of UN Environment. During his tenure as minister, Norway’s official development assistance reached one per cent of GNI, the highest in the world. Solheim is also an experienced peace negotiator and has played a leading mediator role in the peace process in Sri Lanka.

General sessions and workshops addressed the United Nations

Sustainable Development Goals, as well as means of harnessing the technological revolution and driving youth engagement and youth centred projects within Rotary.

A special session devoted to the environment focused on the importance of sustainable development and proposed concrete actions able to be carried forwards by younger generations to ensure a healthy world.

The United Nations has mobilised its 2030 Youth Plan to consider specific issues related to youth, such as the harsh economic and



ROTARY PEOPLE OF ACTION: YOUNG INNOVATORS

environmental realities faced by young people worldwide.

Workshops were divided into three main themes: the impact of technology on decision-making; intergenerational mentoring; and the involvement of young leaders in the choices of the future.

New paths must be found and imagined. According to one of the speakers, "We must stop saying that young people dream too much; they do not dream enough!"

For the first time, the event included an innovation exhibition in which clubs, companies and other organisations presented humanitarian projects and cutting-edge technologies aimed to meet the challenges we face. Many Rotaract and Interact clubs could be noted on the stands, presenting their ideas and looking for partners for new projects.

Six Rotaractors and Rotarians under the age of 35 were recognised on the day as "Rotary Action People: Young Innovators" for their commitment to solving problems with measurable and lasting results, connecting local issues with global concerns. All are trailblazers finding ways in innovative, sustainable development, in the truest sense of the term. Economic growth and environmental constraints, and their repercussions on society, are key drivers of their projects all around the world.

The winners presented their projects to the global audience; their passion to make a positive impact on the planet shining through.

LUDOVIC GROSJEAN

Rotaract Club of Melbourne, Australia

Project: The Ocean CleanX

Ludovic Grosjean, a 29-year-old engineer with 12 years of experience in oceanography and mechatronics engineering, launched The Ocean CleanX to develop automated pollution monitoring and removal tools using artificial intelligence and drones to remove plastics and other pollution from waterways, as well as detect their source. Every year, 8.8 million tons of plastic waste makes its way into the oceans, potentially putting 700 marine species at risk of extinction. Ludovic has pulled in support from numerous Rotary clubs to support the effort through financial contributions and hands-on volunteering in river clean-up events.



The six young Rotaractors and Rotarians recognised at the United Nations Rotary Day as "Rotary Action People: Young Innovators".

ALBERT KAFKA

Rotaract Club of Vienna-Stadtpark and Rotary Club of Wien-Oper, Austria

Project: Intarconnect Mentoring and Generation Projects

Albert Kafka has worked with Rotary clubs in Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina to launch a mentoring program matching Rotary or Rotaract members with Interactors. The program includes leadership training, scholarships, social activities, and hands-on service projects. For one ongoing project, the different Rotary generations work side-by-side to build houses for families left homeless by the Bosnian War.

CHARLIE RUTH CASTRO

Rotary e-Club of Sogamoso Global, Colombia

Project: Innovative New Beginnings

Using her extensive experience in digital communications, lawyer Charlie Ruth Castro runs training for 170 incarcerated Colombian women in the textile skills and production of personal wellness kits. Products are developed from herbal plants grown on their own organic farm and sold online. The women also attend empowerment workshops, reducing their sentences. Charlie is also co-founder of Digitally Connected, uniting 430 Latin American experts studying online challenges

facing children and young people, and has led large-scale events in Colombia and Mexico promoting women and children's rights.

CHRISTINA HASSAN

Rotary Club of Calgary Fish Creek, Canada

Project: FullSoul

Christina Hassan, a graduate of a master's degree in public health, has been working to remedy the lack of facilities for safe and contamination-free deliveries to Ugandan women. Her project delivers maternal medical kits, including non-disposable delivery tools (arterial forceps, scissors, needle holders) able to be sterilised and reused, with training supplied to ensure proper use. They are assembled by a local supplier to reduce costs and contribute to the local economy. They are engraved with the health centre's name to ensure they remain in the correct facilities. Outcomes include safer births and decreased transmission of HIV.

PAUL MUSHAHO

Rotaract Club of Nakivale, Uganda

Project: Rotaract Club of Nakivale Refugee Resettlement

In 2016, the war led Paul Mushaho, from the Republic of Congo, to the Nakivale refugee centre in Uganda. In response to a competition sponsored by the American Refugee Committee

and the Ugandan government, Paul entered a winning proposal for a beekeeping business, earning the right to present his idea to a wider audience in Kampala, where it was seen by Rotary members. Recognising his leadership and charisma, the refugee committee worked with him to charter a Rotaract club in the settlement. So far, the Rotaract club has taught farming skills, provided sewing machines for women's groups, volunteered in maternity wards, organised tree planting and poultry projects, and provided mentoring for young people in the camp.

SHADRACK NYAWA

Rotary Club of Kilifi, Kenya

Project: Rotary Club of Kilifi Water and Sanitation

Long queues for the use of inadequate toilets cuts into the learning time of children in more than 76 primary schools in Ganze District. Nyawa travels on poorly-maintained dirt roads to assess facilities to help his Rotary club select the best schools to receive new toilets, with funding from district and global grants. He then liaises with local contractors to ensure work is completed and properly documented. Prior to that, Nyawa founded Gedi Community Development Initiative mentoring kids to stay in school and not take part in the beach boy/girl trade prevalent in their resort area. •