

BUILD A VIBRANT MEMBERSHIP EXPERIENCE AND THEY WILL COME

August is Membership and New Club Development Month, a time to focus on Rotary's continuing need for growth, to seek new members and form new clubs. PDG Adrian Roach draws on his experience with a "schoolies" trip to Papua New Guinea to engage and connect young school leavers with Rotary.

In his column this month (see page 5), RI president Mark Daniel Maloney explained his vision for building a stronger Rotary, calling on leaders to expand connections to their communities and to embrace innovative membership models.

"We must grow our service, we must grow the impact of our projects, but, most importantly, we must grow our membership so that we can achieve more," Mark said.

Forty per cent of club leaders say that attracting new members is the biggest challenge their clubs face. But is recruitment the issue? Or is it learning how to create healthy clubs that offer a vibrant membership experience; one that is irresistible to both members and potential members?

If we want to increase the wonderful work we do as Rotarians, we need to find new members to share the experience and keep our



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current members truly engaged. While your club's membership committee is vitally important in this, it is also the responsibility of all Rotarians to identify and engage potential new Rotarians.

In November 2018, I led a team of young school leavers to a Rotary Australia World Community Service (RAWCS) project in the

highlands of PNG. This trip offered an opportunity for a different "schoolies" experience. We called it "Real Schoolies". Six real schoolies, three young Rotarians (in their 20s) and four "seasoned" Rotarians became a team for the 10-day trip to work on a club project installing a new dental clinic.

All participated in painting, cleaning and preparing the clinic for the grand opening. The young members were enthusiastic about what Rotary was doing in PNG and excited to be a

part of this work first-hand. One of the young Rotarians is a Chartered Accountant and used his skills to assist the local Rotary club treasurer set up simple financial recording systems.

Apart from the schoolies having an amazing time learning about the local culture and making a difference in this part of the world, they learnt a lot about themselves and what is important to them. Four of the six students learnt so much about Rotary and what Rotary does that they made a commitment to continue their work. Three have joined the Rotary Club of Greenhills-Maitland, NSW, and a fourth has joined their local club in Scone, NSW.

They may be time poor, but they are finding time and energy for their new passion – Rotary. They have raised funds and collected donated school and health items, which have been sent by container to a particularly remote PNG community – a community that unconditionally

For additional club and membership development inspiration, see page 50.

welcomed us and where we saw for ourselves the lack of simple education and health facilities.

Invite others to experience Rotary, show them what a group of committed people can achieve, and they too will want to be involved.

What are you doing to ensure we are moving our organisation forward and ensuring its lasting future?

We are fortunate to have many great resources to help your club grow. Here is a link to some great tools: my.rotary.org/en/learning-reference/learn-topic/membership •



ABOVE: Following their return from PNG, a number of members of the "Real Schoolies 2018" expedition continued their commitment to Rotary by raising funds and collecting donated school and health items, which were sent by container to a particularly remote PNG community.

RIGHT: In November, 2018, PDG Adrian Roach led a team of young school leavers to the highlands of PNG for a different "schoolies" experience.

