

Rotary Club of New Jersey
February 13, 2025

Present: Michael Van Stine, President

David Still, Vice-President

Manuel Nunez, Treasurer

Brianna Tiernan, Secretary

Dan Tangi

Yaroslav Bortnyk

Clarence Cummings

David Winter

Rahmena Wilson

Shibin Yan

Anthony Beaman, guest

Judy Alessi, guest

Michael opened the meeting at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Michael distributed the minutes from the last meeting. Michael motioned for approval, Brianna seconded, none opposed, minutes approved.

Michael introduced Anthony Beaman Tony is Director of the food pantry program at the Laurelwood Seventh Day Adventist Church in Deptford. He's been doing this volunteer work for approximately twelve years. He welcomed the prospect of service collaboration, and said he was excited to learn about our Foundation and Rotary and all its collaborative service opportunities. He is considering joining our club, becoming the chair of a new committee of food insecurity and he and Michael are looking to build a small extension partnership pantry for area veterans and seniors in our building in the coming months after Unit B renovations are completed.

Michael then introduced Judy Alessi. She has a nonprofit called Christians Crew, founded in memory of her son who passed to fentanyl poisoning. He was in recovery and relapsed, unfortunately laced with fentanyl. Christians Crew supports those in recovery and their families. She specializes in fentanyl awareness. Michael said he is hoping she will also join the club, become a chair of a new committee on drug abuse awareness and that he was hopeful of developing cooperative programming with her.

Rahmena Wilson was also a guest. She is a Regional Director for Community Options. They work with housing and supportive employment for the DDD population. Michael discussed some of the therapeutic programs SCF offers including current and in the future. With respect to housing for homelessness, he was also hopeful that Rahmena would join the club and become the chair of a new committee on homelessness and housing. Michael said he would like to see if we could acquire a house to provide an extension opportunity for the Ukrainian home for wounded veterans in the Philadelphia suburbs.

Michael introduced Shibin and Yaroslav to the group and they both provided some insights on their background. Shibin is a former Rotaract Student. He finished his PhD at Rutgers and is heading back to China soon. He is currently volunteering with SCF while he is still here. He enjoys serving others within the Foundation. Michael added that Shibin's dissertation was on the metrics of homecare in China. He's been working on curriculum to discuss these topics and how aging in place is more dignified, more comfortable, and more economical for seniors. Yaroslav is a student from Ukraine at Rutgers Camden and is an active member of Rotaract. He has family in Rotary in Ukraine. He believes that bringing part of Rotaract will help him be part of something bigger.

Michael explained to the guests about Dave Winters involvement with youth leadership past with RYLA and now with Torch, and his own involvement with Rotaract. Michael gave some history on Rotary. He specifically spoke about the origins of Rotary International and its signature work with the eradication of Polio around the world.

Michael then opened the floor for discussion. Dave Winter wanted to welcome all the guests to the meeting. He shared that he felt both Michael and Kathleen were two of the most amazing and modest people he knows, and he commends them for all they do. He said our club might be the only that has a cooperative agreement with another non-profit foundation linked to a club like SCF and was the only club doing statewide work.

Michael then spoke about the district specifically about how they raised a lot of money for two service dogs. In contrast, our club has been working with Paws Healing Heroes and for the same amount of money the district raised, they can train twenty dogs as opposed to just two.

David spoke briefly about the Torch Academy and spoke so very highly about it. He referred to their website at torchleadershipacademy.org.

Dan welcomed new members and guests. He said he appreciated their stories. He spoke about how he became involved and a member of the club. Dan helps administratively since he doesn't live in NJ. He works for Univest who has been a big supporter of SCF.

Brianna then spoke about meeting Michael and Kathleen. She lives in Ocean County, so she helps from afar.

Manuel introduced himself as our Treasurer. He also works closely with Michael and Kathleen. Manuel helps with membership and administration for Rotary. He is the CFO for SCF, does telecommunications, and drives the bus.

Clarence then shared his love for all the programs offered and the camaraderie with other veterans. He is very appreciative of SCF and Rotary.

Dave S welcomed everyone. Dave is the current VP of the club and a Director for SCF. He has a personal connection with his dad being an AF veteran from Lindenwold. He looks forward to

the networking and involvement of the new guests and members. Manuel shared his condolences for the recent loss of Dave's beloved dog.

Michael concluded with sharing about the acquisition of the building and how this is not a family foundation -- the foundation belongs to all of us!!! Michael shared that the core of what we do is outside the meetings. Feel free to browse the rotary and the foundation websites to see all that the Foundation and club does every day.

Michael finally shared that Kathleen is very sick currently and it has been hard as he was also still recovering from the injuries from his major fall.

Michael motioned to adjourn; Brianna seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.