

Quinebaug Valley Regional Rotaract Club hosts Celebration Dinner



Makayla Van Dam of Putnam High School pauses for a photo after receiving her scholarship from the QVR Rotaract Club.



Killingly High School student Owen Guillot accepts his scholarship from club members Andrew Morrison and Mallory Murray at the Quinebaug Valley Regional Rotaract Club's Second Annual Celebration Dinner.



Photos courtesy Emily Morrison

Members of the QVR Rotaract Club pose for a group photo during the celebration; as of June 2015, the club has grown to include 19 members.



Scholarship recipient Lynsay Dashnaw smiles as Rotaract members Andrew Morrison and Mallory Murray present her with her scholarship. A Putnam High School senior, Dashnaw and all of the recipients had an impressive list of community service activities.



Ron Coderre, Fundraising Campaign Counsel for the Regional Community YMCA accepts a check for almost \$6,000 from incoming club treasurer, Maria Thomas, and outgoing treasurer Jade Flynn. The Regional Community YMCA was the winning team at the Rotaract Celebrity Bartender Night held on April 30th.



Hanover Insurance Partnership Scholarship recipient and Killingly High School student, Alexander Stringer, accepts his \$1,000 scholarship from Rotaract Fundraising Committee Co-Chairs Andrew Morrison and Mallory Murray.



Haylee Olsen of Tourtellotte Memorial High School is one of two students who received a \$1,000 Hanover Insurance Partnership Scholarship at the Celebration. She is pictured with club members Andrew Morrison and Mallory Murray.

PUTNAM — The Quinebaug Valley Regional Rotaract Club held its Second Annual Celebration Dinner on Tuesday, June 9, at Connecticut National Golf Club in Putnam. More than 65 people attended to honor Rotaract scholarship recipients and community partners and present donations to local organizations.

"We are so proud of all the Rotaract Club has accomplished this year," said Rotaract President Emily Morrison. "We logged more than 220 volunteer hours and donated more than \$16,600 to charity this year. We look forward to making an even bigger impact next year."

The Rotaract Club is a community service and professional networking organization for young professionals (ages 18 to 35) co-sponsored by the Putnam and Danielson Rotary Clubs and committed to the Rotary model of "Service Above Self." The club has grown from 12 to 19 members this year.

The Rotaract Club raised \$5,000 for its scholarship fund at its Second Annual Rotaract Trivia Night on Nov. 7, 2014. After an application process, the club selected eight local students in recognition of their community involvement, academic achievements and extracurricular activities. The club awarded two Hanover Insurance Partnership \$1,000 scholarships and six \$500 scholarships.

The Hanover Insurance Partnership Scholarship recipients are: Tourtellotte Memorial High School student Haylee Olsen, who will attend Central Connecticut State University this fall; and Killingly High School student Alexander Stringer, who will attend Seton Hall this fall.

Additional scholarship recipients are: Putnam High School students Lynsay Dashnaw, who will attend Ball State University this fall, Garrett Roberts, who will attend Champlain College this fall, and Makayla Van Dam, who will attend Hofstra University this fall; Killingly High School students Owen Guillot, who will attend Roger Williams University this fall,



Proud smiles - QVR Rotaract Fundraising Committee Co-Chairs Andrew Morrison and Mallory Murray present Putnam High School student Garrett Roberts with his scholarship.

and Rebecca Teczar, who will attend Quinebaug Valley Community College this fall; and Woodstock Academy student Angelina Smith, who will attend Hollins University this fall.

The Rotaract Club raised more than \$9,000 at its Celebrity Bartender Night April 30 and donated those funds Tuesday to four local organizations: the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments Animal Services Program; Paddle for a Cure, which raises funds for Day Kimball Hospital's Oncology Department; the Regional Community YMCA Family Center in Putnam; and Northeast Opportunities for Wellness (NOW).

"We were thrilled when the Rotaract Club invited us to participate in its Celebrity Bartender event. The more than \$5,000 raised for us that night



The eight scholarships awarded during the celebration were given to students from the Killingly, Putnam, Thompson, and Woodstock districts. Pictured here, Woodstock Academy student Angelina Smith receives her scholarship from club members Andrew Morrison and Mallory Murray.

has brought us closer to our fundraising goal of \$14.6 million to construct a Regional Community YMCA in the town of Putnam," said Ronald Coderre, fundraising campaign counsel for the Regional Community YMCA.

The Club also gave additional charitable donations to The Arc Quinebaug Valley, NOW, Daily Bread Food Pantry, Living Faith Community Café, Thompson Ecumenical Empowerment Group Food Security Program and the Friends of Assisi Food Pantry.

Rotaract Club incoming officers are: President Sarah Mortensen, Vice President Rachel Dykeman, Treasurer Maria Thomas, Secretary Mallory Murray, and Past President Emily Morrison. Members are Benjamin



Killingly High School student, Rebecca Teczar received one of six \$500 scholarships given by the QVR Rotaract Club for 2015. Teczar is pictured with Rotaract members Andrew Morrison and Mallory Murray.

Alden, Dan Brennan, Meghan Buisson, Lance Collins, Stephanie Collins, William Couture, Jake Dykeman, Alex Fleischer, Jade Flynn, John Hansson, Andy Morrison, Jessica Rawson, Crystal Simonson and Jaclyn Thurlow.

New members interested in community service and professional networking are encouraged to join. The club's next meeting will be at 6 p.m. July 21 at The Gold Eagle Restaurant. For more information, visit www.facebook.com/putnamrotaractclub or contact putnamrotaract@gmail.com

The club's next focus will be on donating time to community service projects this summer. The club also plans to hold its 3rd Annual Trivia Night this fall.

Flexer welcomes Senate passage of student financial literacy bill

HARTFORD — State Sen. Mae Flexer (D-Killingly) last week joined a unanimous and bipartisan vote in the state Senate for legislation that will bring a financial literacy curriculum into Connecticut's classrooms.

Senate Bill 319, "An Act Concerning Financial Literacy Education," will allow educators around the state to access a financial literacy curriculum designed by the State Board of

Education, including banking, investing, savings, handling of personal finance matters and the impact of using credit and debit cards.

The bill aims to ensure that all students who graduate from Connecticut schools are comfortable managing a household budget, saving and investing their income, and avoiding the pitfalls of credit card debt.

"My generation is saddled with an unprecedented level

of personal debt, largely due to personal loans. That leaves little wiggle room for errors in others aspects of our financial lives," said Flexer. "Every high school student can benefit from classes in financial literacy."

National studies have found young Americans are heavily in debt and have a minimal understanding of the financial system and the nature of credit. Over 30% of young adults are delinquent on their student

loan payments, and over two-thirds of renters between the ages of 18 and 24 say they spend more each month than they earn.

In 2013, Champlain College's Center for Financial Literacy gave Connecticut an "F" in its assessment of financial literacy for high school students. This grade was given to Connecticut because it is one of only five states in the country with no requirement for financial lit-

eracy. The legislation passed today will help improve that ranking and ensure that Connecticut's students have a strong background in the essential principles of personal finance.

The bill now heads to the House of Representatives for further consideration.