

NEWGEN PEACEBUILDERS CELEBRATE

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On December 15th, the NewGen Peacebuilders held a celebration event in honor of the hard-working success of the high school students.

This program was put on through a collaborative grant through the district and with participation from all seven Rotary District 7570 Area 8 clubs: Blue Ridge New Generations, Glenvar, Roanoke, Roanoke-Downtown, Roanoke Valley, Rocky Mount, and Salem.

What was most impactful was the power of one voice. A student, who attends Glenvar High School, heard the presentation of the NewGen Peacebuilders college program at last year's RYLA convention. She was inspired by the program and thought it would be great to have it at the high school level. She contacted the then-president Will Powers of the Glenvar Club and, in short time, all club members in Area 8 sprang to action to make this event happen.

After the last session, the students had eight weeks to plan their projects. They grouped up and decided to do three projects. It would have been easy for them to group up by their respective high schools; however, for these projects, they chose to form groups according to their passion. Many worked on projects that would benefit people beyond of their immediate area.

There is a lot we can learn from these high schoolers on inter-club cooperation. The three projects focused on childhood poverty, refugees in schools, and implicit bias.

The celebration was attended by District Governor George Karnes, local leaders, and many Rotarians who heard presentations from the students on their projects. They all then participated in an interactive peace project exhibit.

