

# Rotary



The Rotary Club of Wilmington  
Post Office Box 1194  
Wilmington, NC 28402

## **Rotary Club endorses diversity, conflict resolution and economic development**

For immediate release  
December 1, 2020

The Rotary Club of Wilmington, Southeastern North Carolina's oldest and largest civic club, has restated its commitment to a diverse, equitable and inclusive culture, and its intention to encourage people from under-represented groups to become members.

At its Nov. 16, 2020 meeting, the Rotary Club's Board of Directors endorsed Rotary International's statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, which reads:

*As a global network that strives to build a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change, Rotary values diversity and celebrates the contributions of people of all backgrounds, regardless of their age, ethnicity, race, color, abilities, religion, socioeconomic status, culture, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity.*

*Rotary will cultivate a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture in which people from underrepresented groups have greater opportunities to participate as members and leaders.*

This is a priority of the world-wide Rotary movement, as well as of Rotary's District 7730, which includes 50 clubs across Southeastern North Carolina. In an October message to Rotarians, District Governor Dawn Rochelle said, "Attention to diversity, equity and inclusion make us a healthy, relevant and vibrant organization as it broadens conversations in a space that welcomes differing views to achieve peace and conflict resolution."

Peace and conflict resolution is one of Rotary's Six Areas of Focus.

In light of some of the domestic conflicts affecting the United States and our own communities, the Wilmington Rotary Club's board has also adopted a statement that links conflict resolution to economic development, another of Rotary's Areas of Focus.

### ***Rotary's position on conflict resolution and economic development***

*In this challenging time, the Wilmington Rotary Club restates its commitment to racial and economic justice, and calls the public's attention to two of the Six Areas of Rotary Focus.*

***Promoting peace and preventing and resolving conflict.***

*America is facing up to the reality that sharp divisions and misunderstandings exist between many White and Black citizens, and between law enforcement agencies and some of the communities they serve. Through its “Service Above Self” awards, this club has provided important moral support for local police; we also urge every police agency and police officer to treat all people according to Rotary’s Four-Way Test: with concern for truth, fairness, goodwill and friendship, and mutual benefit.*

*In that context, our club emphasizes these statements from Rotary International concerning this important area of focus:*

- *“Rotary encourages conversations to foster understanding within and across cultures.”*
- *“We refuse to accept conflict as a way of life.”*
- *“Our members take action to address the underlying causes of conflict, including poverty, discrimination, ethnic tension, lack of access to education, and unequal distribution of resources.”*
- *“Rotary creates environments where peace can happen.”*

*The current conflicts in America stem, in large part, from underlying economic causes. That requires an equal commitment to a second Area of Rotary Focus:*

***Economic and community development.***

*Given the problems of poverty and economic injustice that aggravate conflict in our communities, we also emphasize these statements from Rotary International about the importance of growing local economies:*

- *“We carry out service projects that enhance economic and community development and create opportunities for decent and productive work for young and old.”*
- *“We also strengthen local entrepreneurs and community leaders, particularly women, in impoverished communities.”*

For further information, please contact:

Robby Collins, president, Wilmington Rotary Club, 910-799-0699

Dale Smith, chair, Four-Way Test Committee, 910-617-0277

John Meyer, Public Relations Committee, 910-392-5228