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Barnstable High School Launches Interact Club in Partnership with Rotary Club of Hyannis



Students who belong to the newly formed Rotary Interact Club at Barnstable High School participated in the Home and Garden show at the Hyannis Youth & Community Center on Saturday, April 5. (Photo Courtesy Barnstable Public Schools)

BARNSTABLE — Superintendent Sara Ahern and Principal Jason Conetta are pleased to share that Barnstable High School recently launched a Rotary Interact Club in partnership with the Rotary Club of Hyannis as a way to engage in service projects and leadership activities, providing an opportunity for students to make a positive impact both locally and globally.

"The Interact Club is all about service, leadership, and making a positive impact both locally and globally," said Jennifer Knight, a Multilingual Learner English teacher at Barnstable High School, who started the Rotary Interact Club at the request of her students. "It's a great opportunity to get involved, meet new people, and work together on projects that matter. It's also a way to make connections for future jobs and looks good on your resume."

Rotary Interact Club meetings, which started on April 14, are taking place each Monday from 2 to 3 p.m. in Room 1204. The club is open to students in grades 8 through 12. Any student who is interested in joining can show up for a meeting or email Knight at knight_jennifer1@mybps.us.

The establishment of the Rotary Interact Club at Barnstable High School was supported by Rene King, current president of the Rotary Club of Hyannis.

"Interact is a high school version of Rotary International, a global network of more than 1.2 million neighbors, friends, and leaders who volunteer their skills and resources to solve issues and address community needs," King said. "We are people of action that put service above self, and young adults play an important role in our global network."

The push to start the Rotary Interact Club came from a student, Barbara Auguste, who attended a Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) camp while previously living in Florida. Barbara asked about the possibility of establishing the Interact Club after seeing a flyer for a job fair on Knight's classroom door, stating that the Rotary Club of Hyannis would be in attendance.

"Within a couple weeks, the Barnstable High School Interact Club was established, thanks to the support of the Hyannis Rotary," said Knight, who is serving as faculty advisor for the student group. "This is a wonderful opportunity for these students to

meet other Interact kids from all different clubs and work on leadership and cooperation activities. And it's a great opportunity for my students to practice their English and be actively involved in their wider community."

Barbara, now president of the Interact Club, said she wanted to get involved with the Interact Club because she's passionate about helping others and expanding her knowledge.

"Volunteering is something I truly enjoy, and I wanted to find more opportunities to give back to my community," Barbara said. "Interact offers me a chance to not only give back but also to meet and connect with people from diverse backgrounds, hear their unique stories, and build meaningful relationships."

King, the president of the Rotary Club of Hyannis, said the formation of the Interact Club at Barnstable High School was a longtime goal of her organization.

"Our club had tried for several years post-COVID to jumpstart the Interact Club at Barnstable High School. The late Rotary member, Mr. John Reed, championed this cause for many years," King said. "We were delighted when Jen Knight reached out to us with interest in Rotary's Interact program, and we were impressed with how quickly Jen and the Barnstable High School students got the program off the ground and running this year."

Students in the Rotary Interact Club have already participated in several events, including the Home and Garden show on Saturday, April 5, at the Hyannis Youth & Community Center, where the group gave away seed packets to guests.

Members of the Interact Club also engaged in a meeting on Thursday, May 1, with the nonprofit Family Table Collaborative, which distributes prepared meals directly to individuals and families. They also plan to take part in ColorfulKidz workshops,

helping an interior designer redecorate bedrooms of kids who experienced trauma, and Environmental Service Day at the Landing in Hyannis, to raise awareness about recycling electronics.

Barbara said one of the activities she's excited to participate in is RYLA. Barbara and another member are attending the RYLA leadership conference sponsored by Rotary from May 16-18.

"This year, I have the opportunity to attend, and I'm looking forward to meeting students from different schools and backgrounds," Barbara said. "It's a chance to connect with new people, learn from their experiences, and share ideas. I also hope to participate in more environmental activities. Being a part of a meaningful organization like Interact Club is a valuable opportunity that not only helps me give back to my community but also equips me with the skills and experiences I'll carry into my future, such as leadership skills, building lifelong friendships and so on."

King, the president of the Rotary Club of Hyannis, said the Hyannis and Osterville/Mashpee Rotary Clubs are proud to sponsor the two Barnstable High School students to attend the 2 1/2-day leadership conference, which is taking place this year in Boxford, Massachusetts.

"RYLA is an intensive leadership experience organized by Rotary clubs and districts where young people can develop leadership skills while having fun and making connections," King said. "Interact clubs bring together young people ages 12 to 18 to develop leadership skills while discovering the power of service above self. Students find out how serious leadership can be, and how seriously fun it can be. Barnstable High School students will have an opportunity to take action to make a difference in their school and in the community. They will discover new cultures, promote international understanding, become leaders in their school and community, and most importantly, have fun and make new friends worldwide."

King said she's also looking forward to another event on May 31, when Interact students from across New England will join her and other Rotary members in Southbridge for a day of service.

While Knight serves as main advisor for the Interact Club, Multilingual Learner English teacher Basak McDougal is an assistant advisor for the club.

Currently, there are seven students who have signed up for the Interact Club.

"We would love to have more," Knight said. "We are hoping next fall, when Barnstable High School holds its Club Fair, to spread the word and get more students involved. We offer the possibility for fun volunteer work, which is crucial for college applications."

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Students that are part of the newly formed Rotary Interact Club at Barnstable High School gave away seed packets to guests at the Home and Garden show held at the Hyannis Youth & Community Center. (Photo Courtesy Barnstable Public Schools)



Members of the Rotary Interact Club at Barnstable High School met with the nonprofit Family Table Collaborative, which distributes prepared meals directly to

individuals and families, on Thursday, May 1. (Photo Courtesy Barnstable Public Schools)



Jennifer Knight (center), a Multilingual Learner English teacher at Barnstable High School, started the Rotary Interact Club at the request of her students. (Photo Courtesy Barnstable Public Schools)



Barnstable High School started a Rotary Interact Club in partnership with the Rotary Club of Hyannis as a way to engage in service projects and leadership activities.

(Photo Courtesy Barnstable Public Schools)

Rotary INTERACT CLUB MEETING



DATE
MARCH 24, 2025



TIME
2:00 – 3:00 PM



SERVICE PROJECTS, COMMUNITY, AND LEADERSHIP!!

Meeting Held Room 1204

A message from Barnstable Public Schools

John Guilfoil Public Relations, 1 Elm Park, Groveland, MA 01834, United States, (617) 993-0003

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