

A Night of Youth Empowerment: Interact Celebration a Great Success at Rotary Club of Strathfield

The Interact themed meeting held last Wednesday, 2nd April 2025, at the Rotary Club of Strathfield was a resounding success. The evening brought together the leadership teams from Meriden and Homebush Boys High School Interact Clubs for a collaborative and inspiring gathering.

President Alexey officially opened the meeting, warmly welcoming everyone including eight students—four from each school—as well as their Interact coordinators: Georgia Anton from Homebush Boys High and Emily Ormes from Meriden.

We were especially honoured to host **Kerrie Guillaume**, President of the Rotary Club of Fairy Meadow, who also serves as the **District Interact Chair and District Rotaract Chair**. Kerrie made the journey from Fairy Meadow to be with us and delivered an insightful and engaging presentation on the broader impact of Interact and Rotary. Her words were both informative and motivating, sparking enthusiasm in the students as they continue to grow their clubs and plan future initiatives.

The leadership teams from both schools had the opportunity to network, share ideas, and update the Rotary Club on their recent activities. **Meriden Interact Club** shared details about their annual school dance, this year in support of the children's charity Little Wings. **Homebush Boys High Interact Club** presented their ongoing projects and community service efforts. They highlighted their upcoming World's Greatest Shave initiative at the school, in support of the Leukaemia Foundation, and their support for Australian Rotary Health's metal health programs.

Another highlight of the evening was the attendance of **Mechel Pikoulas OAM**, Principal of Strathfield Girls High School, who expressed a keen interest in establishing an Interact Club at her school. The potential launch of a third Interact Club in Strathfield would be a remarkable achievement for our district and a testament to our growing commitment to youth engagement.

Kerrie Guillaume shared, 'I would like to congratulate Rotary Club of Strathfield for organising a Celebration of Interact and I was honoured to be invited. The enthusiasm of the Interactors and mentors was exceptional. Homebush Boys High Interact (Chartered 24th June, 2013) and Meriden Interact Club (Chartered 23rd September 1987) gave excellent informative reports on their very active club projects. The prospect of a third Interact Club at Strathfield Girls High School is a record for this District! Well done RC Strathfield'.

Our club also recently celebrated the success of our Annual **Citizenship Awards**, which saw participation from 17 local schools, with outstanding students receiving recognition for their contributions to their communities. We also look forward to our upcoming **Youth Awards Night** on May 21st, another key annual initiative in our dedication to fostering leadership in young people.

As always, Strathfield Rotary is strongly dedicated to supporting youth initiatives. Our long-standing involvement with programs like RYPEN, RYLA, and MUNA reflects this commitment, and we're excited to see the growing momentum around Interact in our community.

The night was truly filled with energy, inspiration, and connection, a unique opportunity to uplift the next generation of community leaders.