



2019 - 2020 Board Members

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JAMAL TATE AND INTERACT SERVICE AWARD



In a commencement message to the five Interact Award recipients in attendance, Charlotte Rotary speaker Jamal Tate challenged them to go on to college and build a better future.

“There has never been a better time to be a young person,” the 27-year-old former jail inmate told them. “With our access to technology and how we understand it, we can literally go out and create our own path.”

Now an executive with Charlotte’s Inspirational Insights Consulting Group, Tate included the youth scholarship

winners and Rotarians alike in his larger charge centered on trust, service and community.

“I find that the more I connect with people I trust the least,” he said, “the more I find trust. I find myself connecting with people who don’t have the same ideological mindset as me but they challenge me to be greater.”

Service and community are interconnected, he said. Mentors have been essential to his development, he added, and he encouraged Rotarians to take youths under their wings and impart knowledge to help them achieve. That can make Charlotte a better place.

By way of introduction, Rotarian Chad Lloyd related how he met Tate at a DC meeting of Charlotte youth leaders and was impressed with his passion for helping young people. Tate soon became a co-adviser with Lloyd for Interact clubs at Harding University High and West Mecklenburg High.

Tate earned a degree in Organizational Communications in 2015 from Queens University of Charlotte. At Inspirational Insights, he helps the company with its focus on training and development, youth coaching and workshop facilitation.

Though he’s been featured in publications such as the Wall Street Journal, life was much different for Tate in his teens. A transplant from San Jose, CA, he found difficulties fitting into the International Baccalaureate Program at Myers Park High. He ran up a criminal record of four felonies and two misdemeanors, but found inspiration when Communities In Schools of Charlotte-Mecklenburg reached him in jail.

After graduating high school with a 1.67 GPA, he forsook street life for learning,

enrolling in Central Piedmont Community College and then Queens.

Through Rotaract in college, he found and listened to mentors who made a profound difference in his development, he said. They helped him find comfort in who he is.

“The more I embraced myself, the more I was trusted,” he said, adding he was better able to build friendships. “I was able to connect with community.”

Charlotte’s fate hinges on trust, Tate said. To address Charlotte’s split between haves and have-nots, he added, some attention to finances should divert to social issues. Rotarians mentoring young people can be powerful in forging societal change, he said.

“Rotary literally changed my life,” Tate said. “I find myself still going because of support from the community and Rotarians like yourselves.”

Answering a question from Lloyd, Tate said his firm, Inspirational Insights, builds trust by allowing people “to speak their truth without being judged. We’re not trying to change the past. We focus on the future. We take away shame and guilt and allow people to hear something different that they might not have heard or learned growing up.”

Lloyd wanted to make sure this account includes the internet address for Inspirational Insights. It is www.theiicg.com.

By Elly Clary

INTERACT SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

BEN KOCH – East Mecklenburg High School

Ben has been a member of Interact since his sophomore year and currently serves as vice president. He established a street adoption program on Sardis Road North and organized the club to clean the road. This is a sustainable project that can be adopted year after year. High School activities include Drum Major, member of the Marching Band, saxophone player in Jazz & Symphonic Band, vice president of Quizbowl Team, co-president Science Olympiad, tutor at Kumon Math & Reading Center, and member of the Rugby team. Honors and Awards include AP Scholar with Honor Award, IB Diploma Candidate, Member of Science National Honors Society, VP of Tri-M Music Honors Society, and Junior Marshall. Ben has spent over 200 hours volunteering as a lab assistant in Dr. Schmedake’s chemistry lab at UNC Charlotte researching silicon complexes. He plans to seek a chemistry degree at Duke University with the ambition to become a scientific researcher.

EMMA KNOX – Providence High School

Emma has exceeded the service requirement for each year within the Interact club, serving as Service Chair for two years. She organized and participated in service opportunities for Walk for Wisdom (challenged students to walk 4 or 5 laps around the track, which is how far kids walk to school in Sudan), Bright Blessings, Trees for Charlotte, Operation Christmas Child, Jingle Bell Run of the Arthritis Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, and local food banks. She has been a member of the Pride of Providence Marching Band throughout high school and served as Drum Major for the past two years. She has been active in the Spanish Club for four years, serving as both Secretary and President. And, is a member of the Tri-M Music Honor Society and National Honor Society. Emma received the Presidential Volunteer Service Award every year of high school and placed as a medalist for the National Spanish Exam each year. Emma also won spots in the All-District Honors Band, the All-State Honors Band, and the NC Honors Orchestra by audition. Outside of school, she served with Camp Intervention (elementary school students learning about the inventing process by working on different problems and tasks in themed blocks), Carmel Baptist Church, and the parent-teacher organizations at Providence High. Emma plans to attend N.C. State University.

DAIKWON REDFERN – Harding University High School

Daikwon said his experience with Interact has been phenomenal. He worked on the Habitat for Humanity project, was President of the club and helped set up the meetings, donated food to the homeless in Atlanta,

participated in trash pick-ups, and donated 200 meals through Urban Ministries. Daikwon understands community service is more important than people think because it builds character, responsibility, leadership skills, and positive outcomes and better prospects for the future. He works closely with one of his mentors, Jimmy McQuilkin, who started Urban Promise of Charlotte that is now in three locations around Charlotte. One location is on Freedom Drive, often labeled a 'broken community' and Daikwon tutors students from Ashley Park (Title I school) to help turn them into better readers and leaders of tomorrow. Daikwon is captain of the Men's Tennis Team, serves on the Senior Advisory Board, GSA, Communities in Schools, Trio, Member of MeckEd, the schools Morning News Anchor, 2020 Homecoming King, Candidate for Class President, Member at Large for Senior Advisory Board, and named CMS Senior of the Week. Daikwon heads off to NC Central University in the fall.

FOSTER HARRIS – Washington and Lee University

Foster's Interact experience includes tree planting at Shuffletown Park, the annual Holiday Homeless Luncheon, and annual Special Olympics volunteer. He is also editor-in-chief of the school's newspaper (The Hook), President and Founder of Scoring for Students (partnered with Project 658 Street Soccer, a program that aimed to use street soccer to build unity, create a community of trust, and promote literacy among immigrants and refugees through tutoring), Vice-President of Model United Nations Club, indoor/outdoor track runner, and soccer player (2-year captain of the JV team). Charlotte International Rotary Club made Foster a Paul Harris Fellow. When Interact Advisor Paty Prieto entered the Spanish classroom with tears in her eyes, she told the class she just arrived back on campus from her naturalization ceremony; she had just become a U.S. citizen. She explained the challenges of the naturalization process and had almost given up. Inspired by Ms. Prieto's story, Foster sought out possible solutions to help alleviate some of the process's unnecessary challenges. His brainstorming concluded with an idea to develop a multilingual website titled Naturalize Charlotte. He took the idea to City Hall and pitched the website to a committee led by the City of Charlotte's Immigrant Integration Specialist. This committee, which was titled the Charlotte Naturalization Group, supported the idea and would eventually become the Naturalize Charlotte Group. His twin brother, William, came on board as co-founder. At the end of the two-and-a-half year process to create the Naturalize Charlotte website, it is currently being transitioned over to the City of Charlotte so it can continue to grow and benefit the community for years to come. In February 2020, it was announced that the Mayor of Charlotte had selected Foster and William for the City's Annual Richard Vinroot International Achievement Award, making them the first recipients under the age of 40 in the 23-year history of the award.

WILLIAM FOSTER – Haverford College

William is co-founder of the Naturalize Charlotte Group (see above) and is involved with the Rotary tree planting, annual Special Olympics volunteer, and Holiday Homeless Luncheon. He is chair of the Honor Council, two-year captain of the varsity Cross Country team, Student Senate and former at-large Senator, former president of the Model United Nations Club, former chair of the Euro Challenge team, and indoor/outdoor track runner. William is a Paul Harris Fellow, recipient of the 2020 Richard Vinroot International Achievement Award, selected by Charlotte Mayor Vi Lyles, and is the Primary North Carolina Delegate for the United States Senate Youth Program. During this year's Annual Holiday Homeless Luncheon at Charlotte Country Day School, which is hosted by the Country Day Interact Club, he met Stacey Hepp, president-elect of Charlotte North Rotary. She mentioned an in-need track athlete and asked for William's help to identify a nonprofit that might align with his needs. After years of volunteering with Running Works, he offered the referral that turned out to be a perfect match. While it appeared the transition of the Naturalize Charlotte website to the city would bring happy closure to William and Foster's direct involvement, a conversation with David Lynn, Director of International Studies at Charlotte Country Day on the morning of March 16, 2020 would add yet another chapter. With COVID-19 creating increasing anxiety and uncertainty, William and Foster rapidly went to work on creating a branch of their website devoted to multilingual community resources specifically focused on recent immigrants. Their two years of establishing contacts throughout the city's nonprofit community allowed them to quickly gather a wide range of material and links for their site. By the end of the week, the City of Charlotte was referencing their website in broadly distributed emails. The media picked up on their efforts and they made the evening news on two separate stations.

CLUB NEWS

STAYING IN TOUCH with our Rotary members is important. Please take a minute to check on your friends, report funny stories and updates back to me to share with everyone so we can see who is doing what. The Reporter can be used to share what your company is doing to get through the pandemic, what your family is doing, send me your How I Got Where I'm At....anything to keep our members in the know.

ROTARY SCHOLARSHIP GOLF CLASSIC: Plans are moving forward to hold the 18th Annual Rotary Scholarship Golf Classic on September 28, 2020 at Pine Island Country Club. You can find the registration form on the website: www.charlotterotary.org. Click on the Events tab on the top row and follow the link.

Jerry Coughter has volunteered with members of the Dilworth South End Rotary club to help out at MedAssist. Volunteers are needed every Tuesday morning through June and you do remember – **Lori Giang** of Charlotte Rotary is CEO of this organization. Contact Jerry or Lori (lgiang@medassist.org) for additional details.

MEMBERSHIP

07/01/2019 276 *New Members:* Bob Spence
05/26/2020 268
Net Increase -8 *Resignations:* Marilyn Bowler

CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS (06/03/2020 – 06/09/2020)

June 05 – George Rohe
June 06 – David Zimmerman
June 09 – Henry Bostic

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES (06/03/2020 – 06/09/2020)

06/03 – Lori & Randall Mountcastle; Fran & Rob Thomas
06/05 – Beverly & John Lassiter
06/06 – Sarah & Tony Lathrop
06/07 – Jean & Al Allison
06/08 – Julie & John Armistead; Eileen Keeley & Pat Millen
06/09 – Suzette & Glenn Bouley; Linda & John Shell

ROTARY ANNIVERSARIES (06/03/2020 – 06/09/2020)

01 year – Patrick Baker (15 years in another club)
07 years – Mark Markanda (43 years in another club)
07 years – Mason Alexander
11 years – Fernando Ycaza
57 years – Bill Barnhardt

UPCOMING PROGRAMS (utilizing Zoom)

06/02 - HIGWIA (Reggie Johnson and Kevin Poet)
06/09 – Bill Tobin, ShelterBox