

District 7710

New Generations Committee

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Economics of Rotary Membership

By Sung Paik

One large hurdle to attracting younger individuals into Rotary is the high cost of membership. Males aged 25 – 34 have a gross median income of only \$34,000 a year, and women in the same age group have a median income just over \$26,000 a year. That is their gross income before taxes. As you may imagine, spending \$800 to \$1,000 or more a year for Rotary is a very large commitment and a significant % of disposable income.

Consider how these approaches may work for your club to handle the economic obstacle:

- **Meals:** As a significant % of annual costs, consider subsidizing meal costs for younger members or perhaps eliminating meals as the Rotary club of Raleigh Midtown has done from the club founding in June 2013. The Midtown club has grown membership in 2014-2015 year by 45% with 11 net new members.
- **Different membership levels:** Consider different tiers of membership. The Rotary Club of Raleigh Triangle Park (RTP) has recently implemented a “Junior” member level for folks 32 years of age and younger where the dues are 40% less expensive.
- **Sponsored members:** The Downtown Durham Club started a special program, where every six months, they take on three young individuals that are up and coming leaders in the community and give them a scholarship to be in Rotary for 18 months. The RTP Club created a College Level Membership that allows up to six bright and up and coming leaders from the local colleges to be active in the Rotary Club. The membership costs are being sponsored by other members in the club in the beginning with the goal of these sponsored members to become full paying members.

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