

January 31, 2009

Dear Rotary Club of Richmond Sunrise,

I am writing to you to express my gratitude for all the opportunities that your club has provided me throughout the years. Due to conflicts of schedule, I have not yet been able to thank you personally with a presentation of my recent involvements at RYLA North and International RYLA 2008. However, I have already prepared my presentation and I hope to be able to come in as soon as I can to show you what I have learned at RYLA this past summer.

Just as an introduction of myself, my involvements with Rotary began in 2006 when your club selected me as the representative to attend the Rotary's Adventure in Citizenship Program in Ottawa. Georgina Patko was one of three Rotarians who interviewed me, and along with the acceptance to the Adventure's in Citizenship Program, she also offered me the opportunity to attend RYLA South that year. While the unique trip to Ottawa was a once-in-a-lifetime experience that I will always remember, it was my opportunity with RYLA South that shaped me into the person that I am today. I was in grade 11 when I was first exposed to RYLA. It was a difficult time in my life because my father had also passed away that year. The people that I met, the inspiration that I gained, and the opportunities that arose out of RYLA and Rotary have all made me feel rich and blessed. In short, RYLA gave me hope.

Since attending my first RYLA, I have stayed involved with the program. I first volunteered as a facilitator in 2007. Then I remained on the general committee to help with behind-the-scenes work. This year, Danica Meursing, who is a Rotarian of the West Vancouver Rotary Club, has kindly taken me as her understudy to learn the role of Program Director and to succeed her in the future years of RYLA South.

After facilitating at RYLA South, the former late Chairperson of RYLA South Sue Smith notified me of an opportunity to further my leadership skills at International RYLA. Your club kindly sponsored me to International RYLA in Los Angeles this past summer, as well as to RYLA North. These two spectacular experiences, which I will elaborate on during my presentation, had made my summer fulfilling and valuable. I am now transferring the skills that I learned at these RYLAs to our district's RYLA South. This coming March, I will be leading a trust-building workshop at RYLA South, an activity that I learned during my time in Los Angeles. I will be using the workshop to teach our RYLA South participants the Rotary Four-Way Test. I am excited and absolutely thrilled to lead my first workshop ever, and to be able to give back what Rotary has provided me with. Furthermore, the amount of friendships that I have made in these past few years is incredible! From each of the Rotary programs that I have participated in, I have made at least a few lifelong friends that I still keep in touch with to this day. Some of them I even met up with during my vacation in Hong Kong this past July.

With all the opportunities that Rotary has given me, I decided to join the Rotaract Club of Richmond when I entered university last year. I took on the role of Fundraising Co-Director and organized an event that raised over \$750 in proceeds for the 2008 Zenith Conference. With the Zenith Conference, I was also the Vice-Chairperson for the Volunteerism Fair and I worked with an amazing team of youth to bring this event to

reality. This year I have taken some time off from Rotaract to focus on school, RYLA, and my part-time jobs as I continue to pursue a career in Medicine. At the moment, I am looking to rejoin a club more suitable to my schedule, possibly the UBC Rotaract Club.

International RYLA 2008 was not only an amazing and fun experience, but it was also the seed of a new Rotary project: RYLA North America 2009. I am currently collaborating with Rotaractors and International RYLA participants from across the continent to make this event happen in Washington DC this coming July. I am very excited for this event, as it is my first international project with Rotary.

In summary, I really want to thank the Richmond Sunrise Rotary Club for all that you have given me in the last several years. I can't express my gratitude enough. As I continue my endeavors with Rotary, I will always remember you for your kindness and generosity.

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,

Jacqueline Wong