

# Rotary



 **GRSP**  
GEORGIA ROTARY  
STUDENT PROGRAM

NEWSLETTER  
OCTOBER 2019

# We made it!

After hours of application work, weeks of preparation and months of waiting and excitement, WE ARE HERE.

From taking our very first steps, being on our way to a new adventure, we have now moved into our dorms, made friends and started to create our new lives "over here". We are all different people, with different backgrounds that bring us here, and even though we all are on the same GRSP program, we have the power to make this experience unique for us. Our stories will be written in different ways, starting now.

Right now most of our pages are blank, ready to be filled with memories, experiences, and friendships that we build and make during this year, and this newsletter is our chance to share it with you. We want ya'll to be a part of this. We want you to get to know us, as much as we want to get to know you. We want to engage everyone. This is not only students' year, but this is also your year. We are here because of you, and for that, we will be forever thankful. Let us give back a little bit by sharing this letter with you. Enjoy.



# GRSP

*connects the world*

This program is one-of-a-kind. We have been bringing nations together since 1946. The program began with only 4 scholars, and now we are proud to say that we have more than 3,600 alumni from all over the world. The program's purpose is to broaden the understanding of world peace through people and that is exactly what we've done.

Since 1946, Rotarians in Georgia, USA, have promoted world peace through understanding by offering ambassadorial scholarships to international students for one year cultural immersion and of study in Georgia colleges and universities.

Each year, students from all over the world make friends in the United States and other nations and learn about differing cultures and lifestyles. Georgia Rotarians believe "Peace is Possible" and through GRSP promote international goodwill through friendship and understanding.



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# LET'S HEAR

## FROM SOME OF OUR STUDENTS



Uku Urb, Estonia



My time in the states has so far been amazing. Not only is Southern Kindness an actual thing but during this time a lot of my stereotypical perceptions about Americans have been proven wrong ( not everyone here wears a Hawaiian shirt, khaki shorts along with socks and sandals. ) Besides my perceptions, my eating habits have also changed: grits and Chick-fil-A have now become foods that I can no longer imagine living without. I hope my year as a GRSP Student continues with the same joy as it has so far. The Rotary Clubs of Georgia have created a program that is truly exceptional!



Ola Derecka, Poland



The last two months I've been here were amazing! I met great people from different countries that I would never meet without GRSP and I'm sure most of them will be my close friends. I also experienced so many things I would never think that I could do (like water rafting during one of the Rotary Student Weekends)! Rotary gave me the opportunity to live an American life and I love it so far. I am taking courses at the university I could never take in Poland (like dance history). I'm looking forward to making a few of my dreams come true this year and I'm sure it would not be possible without Rotary.

My time in the United States has been amazing so far. It's been greater than I ever could have expected. I'm truly grateful for being able to experience this, and feeling right at home, even though I'm thousands of miles away from my family and friends. It's weird to have known the people here for less than two months, but it already feels like I've known everyone for many years. The hospitality here is amazing, and so far I've been able to go to two of the Braves baseball games, a Kennesaw football game and see different cities in Georgia. I really enjoy studying at Kennesaw State. The facilities and professors provide a professional learning environment and help me get closer to the degree I want to achieve. My favorite food so far is probably pickles, I even got to try them fried, which I didn't know was possible.

I look forward to getting to know American culture in all aspects, getting to know Rotary better and celebrating thanksgiving.

Sincerely,  
Sophie Barner, Sweden



Rotarians  
Georgia, United States



Conclave 2019



Anna Damsholt, Denmark



When I applied for the GRSP scholarship, it was with the hope to come home with my suitcase full of as many new friendships, adventures and stories as my brother did four years ago. Even to this day, a new anecdote from his time in Georgia will show up in casual conversation, and I was always astounded by just how much he managed to experience in such a short amount of time. In the nearly two months I've been here I have already made relationships that I am certain will last years into the future, possibly even a lifetime, both with my two amazing host families and within the GRSP group. It is such a gift to meet people from all over the world as well as to get an inside look into American culture on a hands-on, day-to-day basis; to learn things you never knew, as well as to learn that what you thought you knew might not be the case. Every day your horizon expands just one more inch, and I am sure that I will return home with an education I could not have read myself to in any textbook - and I will surely have had more fun acquiring it!



*Peachtree City  
9/28/2019*



*Columbus  
9/7/2019*

I've only been living in Atlanta a month and a half and I've already experienced so much of the American way of life. In my first week, I was lucky enough to go to a falcons pre-season game and experience the excitement Americans get over Football. I was told it's even more animated at the games during the season, which I'm really looking forward to attending! I've been surprised at how quickly I've been able to make American friends, the people here seem so friendly and eager to learn about my culture. One of the things I've done with my friends was to attend the climate strike, it was a special feeling to be part of something so important. As my year here progresses I'm looking forward to seeing more places around the country, experiencing holidays like Halloween, thanksgiving and Christmas the American way, and going to a big football game. The year has so many opportunities waiting and I feel so lucky to be here.



Rotarians  
Georgia, United States

All the best,  
Isla Evans, New Zealand



Conclave 2019



Vinicius Simm, Brazil



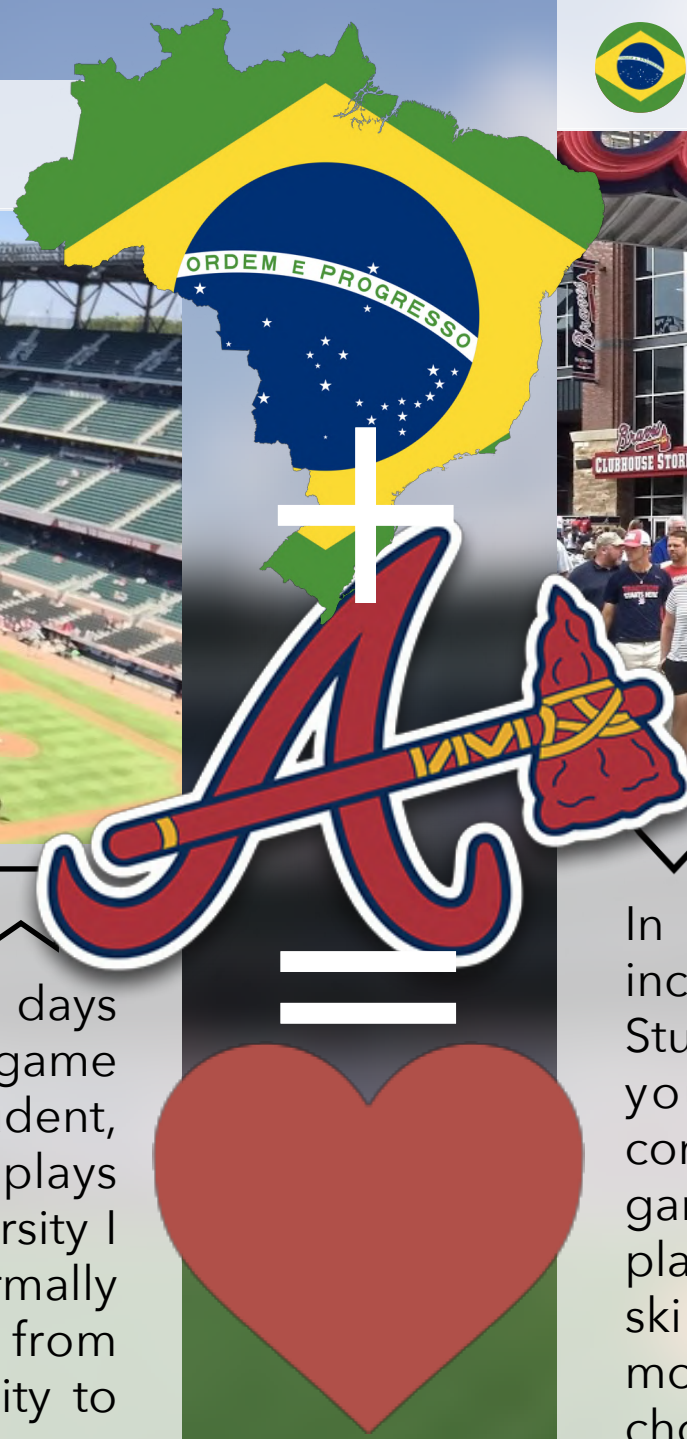
I've been on American ground for 44 days so far. In this time I went to a Braves' game with my host father and an ex GSRP student, I also met some Americans who plays volleyball frequently with me. At university I was able to attend classes that I normally wouldn't do, and I made friends from several countries! I had the opportunity to meet the GRSP students and have a great time with them in all the program weekends. The Rotary meetings also were really interesting, with several speakers that always had a great topic to discuss. I feel so lucky to be part of this and have the opportunity to try all these American experiences.



Mayara Hilgert Pacheco, Brazil



In the last two months, I had the most incredible experiences of my life! Be a GRSP Student feels that you have a home even if your home is in another country or continent. Since I'm here I attend a Braves game, UGA Game, I have been in different places in the state of Georgia, I drove a jet ski and a golf car and I have many funny moments. I also have the opportunity to choose any class for any major, which is amazing. In Brazil, I am a Physics major, so here I am taking Astronomy/Astrophysics class, which is something that I have a great interest and I really want to work in this field in the future. I am just having this opportunity because of Rotary. I did so many things since I am here and I still have eight-month. I am really excited about what I will live here!





So far, my time in the Georgia has been amazing. I've met a lot of really nice people and experienced a lot. Since coming here I've been to both Tennessee, North Carolina, and Alabama. I never thought I'd be able to see and do that much during my time here. I've been able to try boiled peanuts, grits, fried chicken and homemade peach jam for my first time, and I must say that grits are actually quite good! The GRSP students are amazing people, which are now my best friends and family over here. We all share the fact that we're away from our friends and family, and we really bonded over that. I feel so blessed that I was able to come here and experience Georgia and the people. I am really looking forward to the next months and what they might bring!

Best regards  
Hannah Espelin-Rolfson



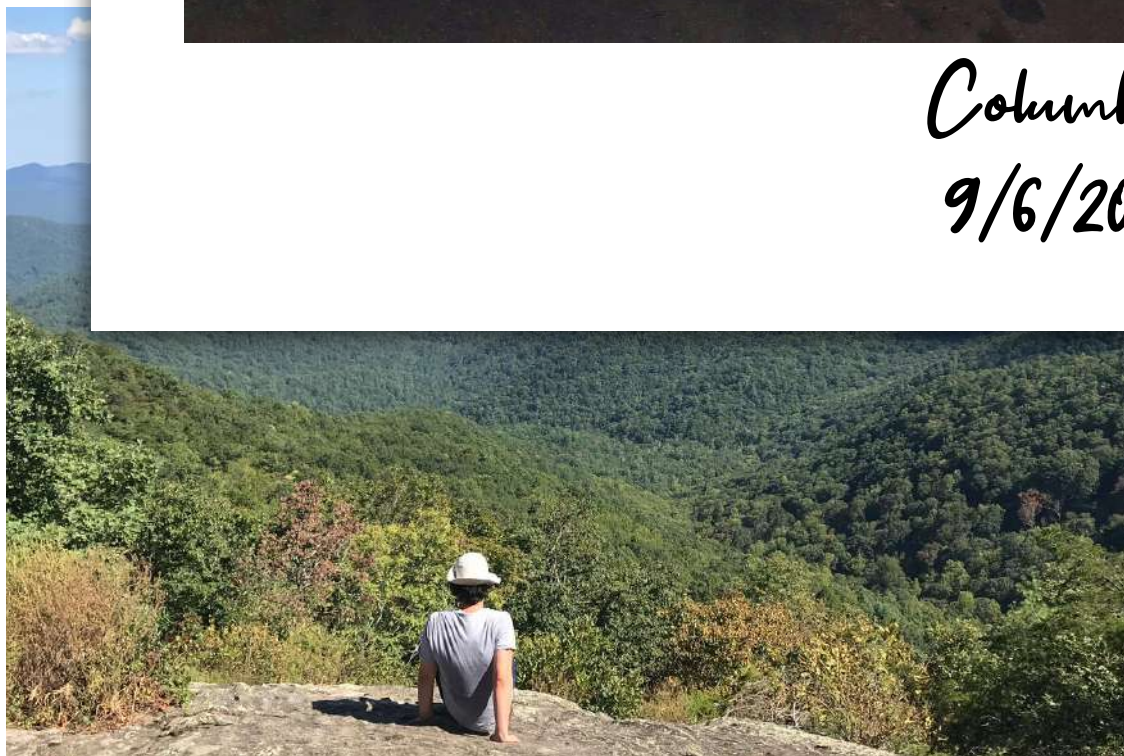
Rotarians  
Georgia, United States



Rotary presentation



Columbus  
9/6/2019



Hiking



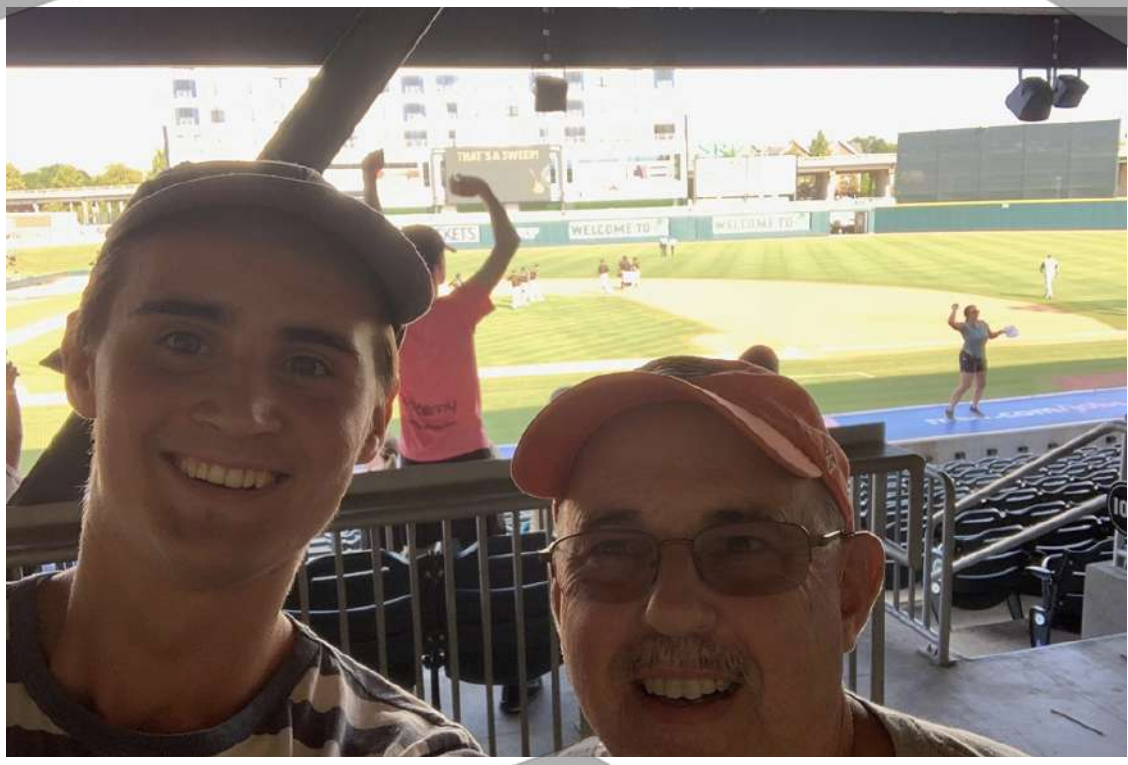
Maria Bremberg, Sweden



My life right now is so exciting, I never know what's happening next. I'm doing so many things right now that I never would've thought about before I came here. Like white-river rafting, pralines, hiking on the Appalachian Trail, having "lake days", sleeping in houses of people I never met before. What I've enjoyed the most so far is meeting the other GRSP-students. GRSP has created a mini-world in Georgia for us! Meeting all these young people from all over the world has not only given me amazing new friends but also the realization that we're all so alike despite our different backgrounds. Thank you for that Rotary!

I've been eating grits at 4AM at Wafflehouse (the only place which were open). I've been corrected for saying you all instead of y'all, and for saying football instead of soccer. I've seen more fastfood chains than I even thought existed and I'm still surprised every time I order a medium soda and for some reason recieve an XXXL. But beside of all the American culture I've already expected, I've meet the most fantastic people through GRSP - both young people and adults. I'm only two months into this program but I know for sure, that I'm going to be a part of a Rotary Club in my home country, and I know that for the rest of my life I would be able to travel around the World, and meet up with people from my new Rotary family.

Best regards,  
William Juelsgaard Bærenholdt  
Denmark



Conclave 2019



Renato J. Rael, Brazil



I loved that North Georgia has lots of places to go hiking, I had never been so connected to nature as I am right now. I am also enjoying my classes and clubs at the university, it has been really good so far to enjoy every activity on my agenda, being able to do French, and fencing, and sculpting and learn cybersecurity is amazing! Thank y'all for this opportunity!



Charlotte De Lestré, Belgium



GRSP is a one in a kind opportunity for foreigners to come to Georgia and experience the true South. I've only been here for a few weeks but my view on the US has changed a lot! This is good opportunity for me to learn things about the US, but it also a great opportunity for American students to meet people from all around the world. Since my arrival here I made a lot of friends and I teached them about my culture. The friends and connections I am making here will last my whole life I can already tell that. All the memories i made will have a place in my heart.



*Horseback riding*



Charlotte De Lestré, Belgium



Rotary is a unique experience, it's the best thing that has happened in my life, the experience doesn't only fill you with incredible, life learning experiences, but you can learn from all the different cultures around the world, and as an added bonus you make friends that'll last a lifetime. I love the US, it's like my second home and honestly, I want to stay here and finish my education, it'd be a dream come true and hopefully with the help of the rotary club, that dream can come a reality.



*Columbus*



*Columbus*

# Rotary



# GRSP

GEORGIA ROTARY  
STUDENT PROGRAM

THANK YOU FOR  
MAKING THIS  
PROGRAM POSSIBLE

Edited by Caroline Gränsbo