

November 1st,2014.

Good morning everyone!

My name is Daniela Corredor, from Colombia South America, my host rotary club is CHICO NOON, I am living there as well. My school is Pleasant Valley High School.

First of all I would like to thank District Governor Pam Gray for allowing me to speak on behalf of the exchange students or better to say on behalf of my brothers and sisters in Youth Exchange.

The end of my exchange year is around the corner, giving me wonderful memories, experiences that I will always keep in my heart and many stories to tell. However Exchange IS DEFINITELY NOT EASY, the adaptation to the new culture and learning many things at a time, but even in hardest times, we have positive results. We learn and grow as a person (and growing as a person I mean also literally, we eat all the time, because we love it hahaha WE ARE EXCHANGE STUDENTS). Once we see our year close to the end, we finally realize that we can handle way more than we could even imagine.

The best part about being an exchange student is not about the parties or places we get to go. Not the independence and being mature, "but the FRIENDSHIPS". I am not talking about the friends we made from school , what I mean is every person we are able to meet every day of our exchange, from our host families ,the Rotarians and the town community as well.

For most of us the relationship with our Host family is one of the keys to have a successful year, this factor involves communication, I don't mean just words or even the language (something what takes

time to learn) I mean feelings because before we know this people we are already opening our heart to them.

The hardest part of facing the end of my exchange year is to accept the fact that it's going to take a while until I have the chance to see again my host families or all the wonderful people I met during my exchange. we are never sure if we will see them again so that's why we enjoy every moment, we smile every second and

live for every situation because we may not see them for "God-knows-how-many-years"...but remember True friendships are forever. that's why right now I want to say how grateful I am to the exchange students, my host families , my counselor, every Rotarian who has been involve in our year and in particular YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM .

So here it is 'THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU! You are all wonderful and special for each exchange student in DISTRICT 5160; we have been made better people just by being in here. Every friendship has made our year unforgettable , in particular my year, because it has not been THE best year of my life but the beginning of the **BEST YEARS** of my life , THANK YOU ROTARY , THANK YOU TO EVERY PERSON WHO MADE MY YEAR AMAZING .

It doesn't matter how many miles keep us apart. But half of my heart is in here, in California, in Chico, in every place I have been and I call it HOME. The end of my exchange year doesn't mean the end of friendships. AS I SAID BEFORE, TRUE FRIENDSHIPS ARE FOREVER!

Daniela Corredor
Exchange student 2014

