

# NEIGHBORHOOD

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EXTRA

## South Rotary supports student's dream with donation

**SUBMITTED BY NICKI KLEIN,**  
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The Rotary International theme for the 2021-22 Rotary Year is "Serve to Change Lives." That is what Lincoln South Rotary Club President DeEtta Vrana set out to do after reading the Lincoln Journal Star article about Lincoln High School senior Zaineab Aljumayaat, who competed in a national competition to create a prom dress out of duct tape.

"I was so impressed with the creativity and determination of this 18-year-old," Vrana said.

The design was based on the Shikh Zayed mosque in Abu Dhabi and honors her Middle Eastern culture. She received 34 rolls of duct tape in seven colors and invested 152 hours of hard work, creativity, frustration and tears. Encouraged by her sister, Shahad, she completed the spectacular duct tape dress, purse, shoes and headpiece.

Vrana learned that it was Zaineab's dream to attend the Rhode Island School of Design, but funding was a concern. The wheels were set in motion. Vrana was able to get support for a \$1,000 award from Roper & Sons Funeral Home Vice President Dean Schneider, and she had the support of the Lincoln South Rotary Club Board to put the club name on the project. With the help of fellow Rotarian and retired Lincoln High Principal Mike Wortman, and Nicole Barnes, counselor in Lincoln High's International Baccalaureate Program, she connected with Zaineab.

Zaineab said, "As difficult as this contest was, it gave me the opportunity to meet wonderful people such as the members of the Lincoln South Rotary Club,



COURTESY PHOTO

Bill Roper of sponsor Roper & Sons Funeral Home and Lincoln South Rotary President DeEtta Vrana (at right) present a \$1,000 check to help Zaineab Aljumayaat (center) attend the Rhode Island School of Design.

who chose to help me and listen to my story."

Lincoln South Rotary Club members, besides Vrana, met with Zaineab and were equally impressed with more than her project. The board members noted the integrity and character of Zaineab and felt that she was insightful in her views of our environment and cultures, believing in oneself and pursuing a dream.

"Zaineab has an important message for the next generations – using our planet's resources wisely, and taking lessons from many indigenous cultures of how they live a happy life through sharing and not through possessions," said Lincoln South Rotary board member Suni Kasibhatla. "She wants to make sure the next generations and society think about the 'give and get culture,' not only learning how to preserve our planet's limited resources but how to be happy with what

we have."

Board member Mary Gilbride said she was impressed with Zaineab's maturity, and also felt privileged to meet her sister, Shahad, whose loving support for and admiration of Zaineab inspired and delighted all of the board members.

"We read about young people today not maturing until they are well into their 20s, but when I had the pleasure of interviewing Zaineab, I met someone more mature than her age," said Chan Tyrrell, South Rotary board member and past president. "The journey she is on will take her far in life and should be an inspiration to each of us."

As Zaineab was presented with the \$1,000 check at a recent Rotary Club meeting, she said, "I am so grateful for this money. For me, this gift is life changing and will allow me to attend college comfortably. Thank you, Lincoln South Rotary Club."

Lincoln South Rotary Club "Serves to Change Lives."

Rotary International includes 1.2 million members in over 35,000 clubs around the world. Together, Rotary members see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves. To learn about Lincoln South Rotary Club, visit [www.lincolnsouthrotary.org](http://www.lincolnsouthrotary.org).