MEDFORD ROGUE ROTARY AND KIDS UNLIMITED CELEBRATE A 15 YEAR PASS TO PLAY BASKETBALL PARTNERSHIP
PRESS RELEASE

Medford, OR, October 1, 2019—Fifteen years ago Rotarians from the Medford Rogue Rotary questioned if they were doing enough in the community, and specifically for kids. They sought a partnership with local schools and then two members threw an idea at them—a basketball league.

Championed by two Rotarians, Kids Unlimited CEO Tom Cole and Roger Stokes, the Rotary Pass to Play program was developed. “The idea was to get members directly connected to the community. We saw a need in our local schools and kids who needed some extra support,” said Roger. “We were a little overwhelmed that first year with the kids’ response but thought it was really cool. It wasn’t about basketball as much as giving these kids the opportunity to feel like part of a team and for them to know that someone really cares.”

The program that originally served three of the title 1 schools in Medford will be offered to all nine this fall, at no cost to the families. Title 1 schools are federally identified as having a large concentration of low-income families. Fall Pass to Play is a seven-week developmental league that culminates in three weekend games. In partnership with Kids Unlimited, the Rogue Rotary provides participants with transportation, coaching, a league shirt and the end of season highlight, a basketball.

“The program is so much more than a game. It is about giving every student, regardless of their families financial ability, the opportunity to play,” said Tom Cole. “The Rotary is dedicated to making this program happen along with so many other community supporters and volunteers. Together we can help build their confidence, connect with their parents, and partner with the school district to lift-up these kids, many who live in poverty.”

The fifteenth season of Rotary Pass to Play basketball will kick-off on October 8th. Community members interested in sponsoring or donating to the program or volunteering can contact Kids Unlimited Development Director Chava Florendo at 541-774-3900 or email cflorendo@kuoregon.org.
Kids Unlimited is a non-profit youth development organization dedicated to the mission of empowering youth through opportunities. Established in 1998 and designed to remove financial and cultural barriers that often prohibit kids from accessing opportunities, Kids Unlimited provides over 2,000 kids a week with programs in education, cultural arts, culinary arts, leadership, athletics and community service. If you would like more information about Kids Unlimited, please contact Chava Florendo at 541-774-3900 or email at cflorendo@kuoregon.org.