

# Rotary — a global network of volunteers

## Rotary at a Glance

**Established:** February 23, 1905, in Chicago, Ill., USA

**Founder:** Chicago lawyer Paul P. Harris

**Clubs:** 32,000 clubs in more than 200 countries and geographical regions

**Membership:** 1.2 million men and women

**Global aid:** Rotary has given \$1.5 billion to humanitarian programs that promote literacy, alleviate hunger, provide safe water, and advance world peace.

**Education:** Every year, Rotary offers 1,000 international college-level scholarships and sponsors 8,000 international exchanges for high school students.

## Experience Rotary

Rotary membership gives men and women a rewarding opportunity to help communities locally and internationally.

Rotary clubs are autonomous and meet weekly for fellowship and to determine their own service projects based on community needs and the talents and interests of their members. Clubs often team up with clubs in other countries to carry out international service projects, enhancing members' personal and professional development and advancing world peace.

Rotary clubs are non-religious, nonpolitical, and open to men and women of every race, culture, and creed. To learn more about the Rotary experience, visit [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org) or contact a Rotary club in your community.

EVANSTON, Ill., USA — When Paul Harris, a young lawyer in Chicago, formed a club with three friends in 1905, he hoped to recapture the atmosphere of camaraderie and friendship he had experienced growing up in small-town America.

Because they rotated meetings between their offices, they called themselves the Rotary Club. Members met weekly to socialize and to plan projects to help the community.

More than a century later, Rotary has turned into a global movement, growing from a single club into a diverse, international network of 1.2 million, business and professional leaders united by the same desire to participate in fellowship and community service. Rotary has no political or religious agenda and is open to men and women of all backgrounds.

Rotary today is dedicated to fostering world peace and understanding through an array of humanitarian and educational programs aimed at the underlying

causes of conflict, such as poverty, illiteracy, hunger, drought and disease.

With its network of more than 32,000 local clubs in more than 200 countries and geographical regions, Rotary works at the grassroots level to deliver practical assistance to communities in need. For more than 20 years, Rotary's top goal has been the eradication of the crippling disease polio, a job 99 percent achieved. Each year, hundreds of Rotary volunteers — working with partners from the World Health Organization, UNICEF and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — travel the world to administer oral polio drops to children in the remotest regions where polio remains a threat. By the time polio is eradicated, Rotary will have contributed nearly \$650 million and countless volunteer hours to the victory.

Rotary's 1.2 million club members also carry out projects that provide water

wells, install sanitation systems, and teach children and adults to read. Rotary is the world's largest privately funded source of international scholarships, each year allowing about 1,000 college students to begin study abroad as unofficial goodwill ambassadors.

Rotary's grassroots network of clubs gives it the flexibility to respond efficiently and effectively.

When Hurricane Katrina devastated communities along the U.S. Gulf Coast, Rotary clubs worldwide raised millions of dollars to support hundreds of recovery projects in Mississippi and Louisiana in the months that followed. At the local level, the Rotary Club of New Orleans raised more than \$100,000 and provided nearly 2,000 volunteer hours to prepare heavily damaged Warren Easton High School for its reopening one year after the disaster. Major assistance came from Rotary clubs as far away as Berkeley, Calif., Brookline, Mass., Rochester, N.Y., and



Today, almost half of the world's countries have severe water problems. Rotary clubs sponsor projects that provide safe drinking water to thousands of families in developing countries. These children in Bangladesh enjoy clean water from a pump provided by Rotarians.

Warrington, Penn.

Rotary clubs often partner with clubs in other countries to carry out international projects. For example, the Rotary Club of Westmalle-Kempenland, Belgium, teamed up with the Rotary Club of Sucre, Bolivia, to improve access to health care services for thousands of families in remote Bolivian communities.

In southern Africa,

members of the Rotary Club of Otjiwarongo, Namibia, assisted by clubs in Switzerland and Germany, have set up a multifaceted program to improve the lives of the impoverished San people, the region's oldest indigenous group. The Rotary clubs have collected clothing and food and raised money for a new kindergarten, an orphanage, and a tuberculosis clinic.

## Rotary's top goal: a polio-free world

The war against polio has been waged on many fronts for decades and never has victory been so close. It is a battle fought with two tiny drops of vaccine, sophisticated technology, and an army of dedicated volunteers.

Rotary has been working with national governments and other public and private entities to eradicate polio since 1985, when Rotary launched its landmark PolioPlus program. In 1988, Rotary became a spearheading partner in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, along with the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Since then, Rotary members worldwide have donated their time and resources to help immunize more than two billion children in 122 countries. By the time polio is finally eradicated, Rotary will have contributed nearly \$650 million to the cause.

Of even greater significance, Rotary members offer their com-



A Rotary volunteer administers the lifesaving "drops" during a polio National Immunization Day.

passion, time, and expertise. During National Immunization Days (NIDs), members volunteer to help at immunization posts, deliver vaccine, transport health workers, recruit fellow volunteers, and squeeze countless drops of the oral polio vaccine

into the mouths of children.

The mass mobilization for NIDs, referred to as "social mobilization," involves election-style campaigning and innovative strategies to get the message to people who are cut off from the mainstream by conflict, geogra-

phy, or poverty. Rotary volunteers prepare and distribute different types of mass communication tools including posters, TV spots, radio promotions, billboards, folk songs, and promotional messages that are placed on floats, trucks, rickshaws, and in local newspaper announcements.

The lengths to which they will go to get vaccine to children are heroic, traveling hundreds of kilometers on camel, by boat, by helicopter, on horseback, or on foot for days to reach every child.

The goal is almost at hand, and today polio persists in only a handful of countries. The number of polio cases worldwide has been reduced by 99 percent, preventing five million cases of paralysis and averting 250,000 pediatric deaths.

The world stands firmly on the threshold of victory thanks to the achievements of the last 20 years. A polio-free world will be Rotary's ultimate gift to children everywhere.

## Rotary Centers — a direct approach to peacemaking

While all of Rotary's humanitarian and educational programs advance the cause of international understanding by addressing the roots causes of conflict, one program takes the direct route by giving future leaders the tools they will need to "wage peace" on the world stage.

Launched in 2002, the six Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution offer two-year, master's degree-level curricula aimed at helping the next generation of government officials, diplomats, and humanitarian leaders develop the skills needed to reduce the threat of war and violence. Up to 60 Rotary World Peace Fellows are accepted each year through a globally competitive selection process based on their professional and academic achievements.

Typically, each year's incoming class of Rotary World Peace Fellows represents 20 to 30 nationalities and a diverse array of professions, including economics, education,



Margaret Soo, of Malaysia, a Rotary World Peace Fellow in 2002-04, volunteers at a school for indigenous children in the Malaysian peninsula.

journalism, public health, public administration, international relations, and law.

"This fellowship provides a structure for a group of people who will do everything in their power to create tolerance, foster international understanding, and manage conflicts to promote peace," says Carmen Strigel, an alumna of the inaugural Rotary Centers class. A native of Germany, Strigel studied at the Rotary Center operated jointly by Duke University and the University of North Caro-

lina at Chapel Hill. Upon graduation, she was hired as an education research analyst at the nonprofit Research Triangle Institute (RTI) in North Carolina. "My work at RTI is a direct continuation of my studies at the Rotary Center."

The other Rotary Centers are located at International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan; Universidad del Salvador, Buenos Aires, Argentina; University of Bradford, West Yorkshire, England; University of California, Berkeley, Calif.; and University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia.

## Rotary and Polio

### Global Polio Eradication Initiative

- Unique international public health initiative, spearheaded in 1988 by Rotary International, World Health Organization, UNICEF, and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

### Rotary

- Launched PolioPlus program in 1985
- Has contributed more than \$600 million to fight polio worldwide
- Provides armies of volunteers to assist in immunizations, vaccine delivery, and social mobilization
- Has played a major role in decisions by donor governments to contribute more than \$2.6 billion to polio eradication

### Results

- 2 billion children immunized in 122 countries
- Polio cases slashed by 99 percent
- Five million cases of paralysis prevented; 250,000 pediatric deaths averted
- Polio-endemic countries now down to four

## ROTARY WORLD PEACE FELLOWSHIPS

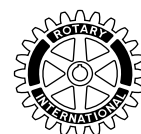
Earn an advanced degree in peace studies and conflict resolution at one of six Rotary Centers for International Studies:

- ◆ International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan
- ◆ University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
- ◆ Universidad del Salvador, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- ◆ University of Bradford, West Yorkshire, England
- ◆ University of California, Berkeley, California, USA
- ◆ Duke University and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA

Apply through your local Rotary club.

For more information: Visit [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org) or contact The Rotary Foundation

847-866-3332



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[www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org)