

What is Rotary?

Section 1 - Introduction

- Rotary is an organization of 1.2 million business and professional leaders. There are more than 31,000 clubs in over 167 countries, providing humanitarian service, building goodwill and peace in the world.

Section 2 - Projects

- Rotary clubs participate in a broad range of humanitarian, intercultural and educational activities designed to improve the human condition
- Rotary's humanitarian grants support club projects that provide health care and medical supplies, clean water, food, job training, youth development, and education to millions of people in need – particularly in the developing world.
- In addition, Rotary provides more than 200 grants each year to fund the work of Rotary volunteers, who travel to parts of the world where their technical expertise and knowledge are most needed to alleviate hardship and solve problems.

Section 3 - Peace

- Rotary builds understanding through international scholarships, exchange programs, and humanitarian grants. In 2002, Rotary launched the Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution, an innovative program designed to educate tomorrow's peacemakers.
- Hosted at seven leading universities around the globe, the program funds 70 World Peace Scholars each year for graduate studies in international relations, conflict studies, and negotiation – providing promising leaders the tools to further the cause of peace.
- Some 35,000 students from 110 countries have also studied abroad since 1947 as Rotary Ambassadorial Scholars. Rotary's Group Study Exchange has helped more than 45,000 young professionals explore their career fields in other countries. And, each year some 8,000 secondary-school students experience life in another country through Rotary's Youth Exchange program.

Section 4 – Polio Eradication

- In 1985, Rotary launched PolioPlus, an ambitious program to immunize the world's children against polio. Rotary's grassroots leadership, volunteer support, and initial funding for vaccine provided the catalyst for the World Health Assembly's resolution in 1988 to eradicate polio worldwide. Spearheading partners of the Global Polio Eradication initiative are the World Health Organization, Rotary International, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and UNICEF.
- As a result of this partnership's efforts, polio cases have dropped by 99 plus percent since 1988, and the world stands on the threshold of eradicating the disease. Rotary members have given more than half-a-billion dollars and countless hands-on volunteer hours to this critical effort.
- The savings to be realized from polio eradication are potentially as high as US\$1,5 billion a year – funds that can be used to address other public health priorities. The savings in human suffering will be immeasurable.

Section 5 – Progress

- Paul P. Harris formed the world's first service club, the Rotary Club of Chicago, on 23 February 1905. The Rotary motto is Service Above Self and,

as it celebrated its centennial in 2005, Rotary continues to concern itself with truth, fairness, improved relations between peoples, and world peace.

- During World War II, Rotary members increasingly became involved in promoting international understanding. A Rotary conference held in London in 1942 planted the seeds for the development of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and some 50 Rotary members served as delegates and consultants at the founding of the United Nations.
- Today, Rotary holds the highest consultative status with the United Nations that a nongovernmental organization can obtain. In this capacity, Rotary has a voice within the UN system allowing access to its people and resources worldwide.

Section 6 – People

- Belonging to a Rotary club gives men and women an enjoyable and organized way to make a contribution to their community. Rotary members meet weekly to plan club, community, and international service activities. By using their skills and expertise globally, members also enhance their professional network, career development, and cross-cultural understanding.
- Rotary clubs are nonreligious, nongovernmental, and open to every race, culture, and creed. Members represent a cross section of local business and professional leaders.

Section 7 – Contact

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