

2020-2021
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Co-Chair, Champions Ride Charities
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Arjun Verma

Arjun Verma is a rising senior in high school at Lake Highland Preparatory School.

He is a co-founder of TeleHealth Access for Seniors, a 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to providing devices to elderly and low-income patients for telemedicine.

He leads a local endeavor with the MORE Foundation, volunteers with PepTalk, and writes for Redefy. Arjun is captain of his school's Lincoln-Douglas debate team, conducts research at UCF, and plays squash.

He enjoys discussing modern philosophical applications on his blog and Youtube channel and hopes to major in philosophy in college.

Is it fun?

Building peace at every level

Rotary peace fellow applies lessons to life in Bogotá
As a child in Bogotá, Colombia, Lucas Peña was shocked to learn that violence between government forces and insurgent groups prevented his family from visiting relatives elsewhere in the country.
Years later in college, he studied the conflict from what he calls an “academic, analytical point of view.”
Only after graduating and joining the effort to demobilize ex-combatants did he really begin to understand the issues behind the violence that has plagued the nation for decades. (In February, members of the country’s largest insurgent group began surrendering their weapons as part of a peace deal with the government.)
Thanks to the Rotary Peace Fellowship, Peña earned his master’s degree in conflict, security, and development at the University of Bradford in Bradford, England, in 2015.
He now works for the World Wildlife Fund as a specialist in land governance. A member of the Bogotá Capital Rotary Club, Peña encourages other Colombians to become peace fellows. And it’s working: Five peace fellows were selected from Colombia for 2017.
Q: After college, you began working with the Organization of American States Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia, helping monitor the demobilization process of right-wing groups. What did that process entail, and what was your role in it?

A: At that time, the paramilitaries were laying down their guns, demobilizing their combatants, and participating in judicial processes. This was in exchange for spending only five to eight years in jail. As part of the demobilization process, the government had to issue identification to the ex-combatants, because without identification, they couldn’t re-integrate into society. The government provided them with health insurance and education, too.

continued

Potential Members

Candidate	Sponsor
Christina Hollerbach	Pardeep Vedi
Andy Griffin	Rahil Noor
Malek Evans	Jomar Bonano

Do you have input for the newsletter? Send email to elvis@signtekgraphics.com

Building peace...

What I did was report on their security conditions and the re-integration process of the ex-combatants. I did that by talking to people – local government officials, military, police officers, victims.
Q: How does your current work at the World Wildlife Fund pertain to peace?
A: We are working toward a policy for the provision of land to peasants who live in natural parks in Colombia. The peasants’ lack of land is what made them go to the national parks and live there illegally. There’s plenty of land in Colombia, but the good stuff is already owned; less than 1 percent of the population owns more than half of Colombia’s best land.
We expect the public-policy response will include the provision of land, but it also has to ensure that the peasants will be given productive land, as well as the means of making that land productive. Solving this problem is part of the peace accord that the Colombian government has reached with FARC [the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia], the biggest guerrilla group.
Q: What did you learn from your time as a Rotary Peace Fellow?
A: Peacebuilding is not only a matter of local communities, not only a matter of national government, and not only a matter of the international community; it’s a mix of all those levels. Another thing I learned is that the world itself is getting safer, in that the number of people killed in conflicts has decreased proportionate to the population. It’s a very long and slow process, but the world is becoming more secure.
–Anne Ford

Member Dates

District Events

Club Events



08/05	Brian Bacon
08/07	Jen Ferguson
08/07	Robert Ferguson

Wedding Anniversaries

Wade Eshelman / Jenny - 44 years

Member Anniversaries

08/09	Megan Almas - 3 years
08/09	Frank Anzaldi - 3 years