

# Rotary

MAGAZINE

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A Rotary-sponsored  
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## A virtuous cycle

I am enthused and encouraged by your embrace of mental health initiatives throughout the Rotary world. More than 1,000 of you have responded so far to an ongoing survey by the Rotary Action Group on Mental Health Initiatives, offering your feedback on what Rotary can do to improve the personal well-being of members.

The top suggestions are illuminating. Rotary members are asking for more fellowship, camaraderie, conversation, cohesiveness, and connection. They also want more recognition, validation, and integration. They are seeking more service opportunities, and they want more wellness activities, including mental health speakers, awareness efforts, and education.

Our members not only appreciate the greater focus on mental health, but they also believe that making more of the Rotary experience will materially improve their lives. I find it interesting that members are not asking anything dramatically new of their club — rather they want more of what we do best. For example, connection can be improved during meetings simply by assigning seating once each month to encourage people to speak with someone new.

Here are some great ways that we can help achieve these results and make Rotary more appealing to those considering membership. First, we need to acknowledge the importance of increasing belonging in our clubs and to encourage Rotary members to make the most of every opportunity for new and stronger connections. Public health experts worldwide are concerned about increasing levels of loneliness — the

U.S. surgeon general has even declared it an epidemic. Mental health experts agree that finding groups and clubs around common hobbies and interests is a strong way to create greater connectedness. This is what Rotary is all about. We need to make sure all of our members are fully engaged and that our communities are better aware of this inherent strength.

Second, if your club has found new ways to build connection, please share your stories with us at [mindhealth@rotary.org](mailto:mindhealth@rotary.org) so we can make them more broadly known within the Rotary world. Your good ideas might inspire others. Post your service project stories on Rotary Showcase.

And finally, I encourage you to share feedback from surveys like this with your club and bring forward your own ideas to improve your club experience and meet your peers' expectations. The journey we have begun is about more than mental health. It is about taking advantage of the full strength of our wonderful organization and helping all members feel that they are part of a community that cares deeply about their personal well-being.

Everything you do to strengthen connections in Rotary, with each other and the people we serve, also helps improve mental health. And everything we do to improve mental health helps strengthen those connections. Let's continue this virtuous cycle.

**R. GORDON R. MCINALLY**

*President, Rotary International*









**YOU ARE HERE:** Naples, Italy

**GREETING:** Ciao or salve

**THE OPERA HOUSE:** As the birthplace of opera, Italy has its share of famous opera houses. But the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, which opened in 1737, is the oldest active opera house in the world. Renowned for its grandiose neoclassical facade and opulent interior — with rich red upholstery and gold decorations — the opera house was built as part of the Royal Palace of Naples. Many of the greatest artists have performed on the San Carlo stage, and Italian composer Gioachino Rossini served as house composer and artistic director from 1815 to 1822.

**MADAME BUTTERFLY:** Soon after an extensive renovation to the Teatro di San Carlo was completed early last year, Rotary members in Naples invited RI President Gordon McNally and his wife, Heather, to see the classic Giacomo Puccini opera during their visit there in September. Heather, a former professional opera singer, called the experience a “pinch me” moment.

**THE CLUB:** Chartered in 1925, the Rotary Club of Napoli has more than 90 members.

# Rotary

MAGAZINE

February 2024

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A Rotary Peace Center intends to strengthen peacebuilding in the Middle East and North Africa

By Jason Keyser

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### Second chances

A classic car repair program is reviving a lost art, and a lot more

By Katya Cengel

Photography by Ian Tuttle

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Q&A: President-elect Stephanie Urchick sees Rotary's Action Plan as key to a vibrant future

By Diana Schoberg

Photography by Lucy Hewett

**On the cover:** Natalia Montiel says her classic and antique auto repair course, created by Rotarians, pushes her to set high expectations for her life after her alternative vocational school. **Photo by Ian Tuttle**



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## STAFF CORNER

### Seoha Lee

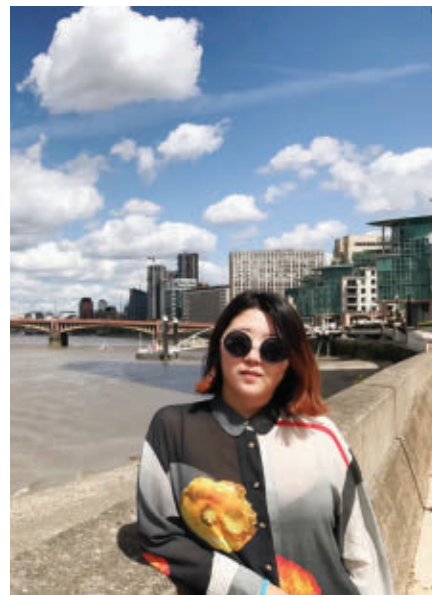
*Senior communications strategist  
Seoul, Korea*

**My name, Seoha, means “wise like water” in Korean.** It comes from a Confucian saying: “The wise love water; the good love mountains. The wise are active; the good are tranquil. The wise are joyful; the good enjoy long life.” I grew up near nature in southern Korea, but my family moved frequently from place to place due to my father’s job. Before college, I attended 10 different schools.

**My mother, an author of about 20 novels, had so many books at home, and reading became my favorite pastime.** I studied communications and media at Sookmyung Women’s University in Seoul. In my first year, I traveled to the Philippines as a volunteer. I really liked the country and the children there. I wanted to do well and make friends, but I couldn’t because I didn’t speak English well. Upon my return, I added a major in English language and literature.

**I felt a new world opened up to me** since so much news and entertainment is created in English. I now enjoy reading English-language books and watching American and UK TV shows. After graduation, I worked at the Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival and the Busan International Film Festival, managing the translators and helping produce a bilingual program book. I also took a job with an independent movie theater to do event marketing and manage social media. In 2012, I moved from films to books. For four years, I worked as a book editor for two publishing houses, handling the rights of foreign literary works, coordinating book clubs, and taking care of social media and public relations.

**In 2016, a cousin suggested we apply for a working holiday program in the United Kingdom.** I thought it would be fun to experience life there with her. So, I prepared for the application studiously



and was admitted. Disappointingly, my relative just talked about it and didn’t even apply. I told her that she “betrayed” me and left for the UK alone. I stayed in Mile End in London’s East End and came to like Indian, Turkish, and Vietnamese food there and enjoyed making a nice hot milk tea. I was hired by a luxury fashion e-commerce company, which has its office inside the Shard skyscraper. I helped launch the Korean version of the company’s website. Six months later, the company relocated me to Hong Kong, where I fell in love with the food — I visited more than 100 dim sum restaurants during my 2½ years there.

**The initial excitement wore off** as I realized that selling what I would call expensive and sometimes unnecessary items to consumers was not for me. I wanted more meaningful work. I joined Rotary in 2019 and my job is to localize Rotary articles and other information for members in Korea and generate stories about Rotary projects, manage social media, and engage in Rotary’s PR efforts in the East Asian region. I speak Japanese and recently started studying Chinese.

**During the COVID-19 pandemic, I started a book club,** and I launched a weekly book podcast last July. Two book club members and I discuss books we have read. As of November, the episodes have about 8,000 total listens.

— AS TOLD TO WEN HUANG



## Letters to the editor

### THE PUSH TO END POLIO

The October issue was outstanding for its comprehensive update on polio eradication. An interesting profile of Carol Pandak [“Staff corner”] made the in-house part of PolioPlus more real. The story of the life of Ina Pinkney [“Hello, Ina. It’s me, Ina.”] is inspiring. The article “The value of vigilance” enhances our understanding of surveillance, prompts us to continue our support for polio eradication, and illuminates the endgame. With the recent case of polio in New York state, we learned not only could it happen here, but it did happen here. It reminds us that even after eradication there will be a need for surveillance and vigilance.

We are so close to winning this struggle, and even after we win, we need to stay in the fight. We need to think strategically. The game won’t be over until it’s completely over.

**Philip Wilson**, Leonia, New Jersey

I enjoyed reading about eradicating polio as my club planned for World Polio Day. In 1966, when I was a Boy Scout in Flint, Michigan, my troop dispensed the sugar cube vaccine to our community. My job was to place a sugar cube on the patient’s tongue. I often wonder how many people we saved from the horrible polio disease.

**Scott B. Ward**, Linden, Michigan

### HEALTH IN OUR OLDER YEARS

Regarding the issue of suicide [“Hope in grief,” November], I feel medically assisted suicide can be a blessing among older adults with an incurable disease that robs them of hope and quality of life. I believe passionately that the quality of life is more important than the quantity in such cases. We should not try to intervene when people facing certain death want to end their suffering. I know that if I were in that situation, I would want to save myself the indignities and pain.

**Ian Jacobsen**, Solvang, California

### CLIMATE REACTIONS

I was pleased to read the article “A season of heat, fire, and floods” [October].



Rotary takes so many wonderful actions around the world to make it a better place. My primary concern is that all of those actions may come to naught if the world does not take swift action now to minimize the effects of climate change. It was great to see the magazine highlight the effects of our changing environment on many countries around the world. We as Rotarians need to seek out those projects that are beneficial to the health of the only world we have.

**Larry Kramer**, San Juan Capistrano, California

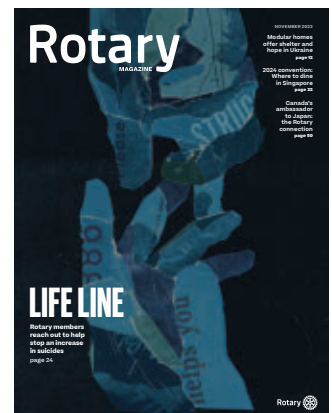
We can’t solve climate change any more than we can “solve” gravity. Earth is continuously changing and has been for millions of years — long before humans and long after we’ll be gone. We can look at landmasses formed by volcanic eruptions to understand how humans evolve, adapt, and migrate to best fit our circumstances.

When picking a global problem, we should pick a problem we can solve. Problems like [inadequate] drinking water and human waste disposal have clearly identifiable solutions and action plans. This is why the polio eradication effort has been successful. Maybe someone we help today with clean water will help contribute to humanity’s future adaptation to climate change.

**Robert Chatfield**, Cape Elizabeth, Maine

### NEGATIVE IMAGE

The picture [of a person passing a mural in Singapore’s Chinatown] on page 7 of



### OVERHEARD ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For World Polio Day in October, Rotary’s social media channels featured a video series about the role played by Black doctors and scientists in the development of the polio vaccine. A related article was published in the June 2023 issue.

As a firm believer in leveraging partnerships for a greater cause, I’m inspired by Rotary District 6880’s collaboration with Tuskegee University to honor the unsung heroes in polio history.  
**Yatish K.**  
► [via LinkedIn](#)

Timely. Topical. Relevant. An amazing historical and encouraging story about polio.  
**Ellie Tava**  
► [via LinkedIn](#)



On the magazine's podcast, experts Aidan O'Leary of the World Health Organization, Omotayo Bolu of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Melissa Corkum of UNICEF shared information about the recent progress made in the fight to end polio. Listen to the episode "Polio update: Closing in on zero" at [on.rotary.org/podcast](https://on.rotary.org/podcast).

the November issue [depicts a man in the mural] being gluttonous, putting dirty feet up near food. What a terrible picture to put in your magazine. It gives an impression that East/Southeast Asians are fat, lazy people. It is stereotyping on the verge of promoting racism.

Many Rotarians may not even notice it. But first impressions do count. With negative images seeping in via mass media, non-Asians may continue to see China and other East Asian countries in a poor light.

The artist can paint what he or she desires. But you need not print it. You can instead print positive pictures of other countries, which would help Rotary International's cause of promoting peace.

**Vincent Quan**, Fort Erie, Ontario

## THE VALUE OF HUMILITY

I commend Rotarian Haresh Ramchandani for his insights on leadership ["The University of Rotary," September]. I would like to add and emphasize one more metric of good leadership: humility. You will rarely notice this in most world leaders. However, there is an abundance in Rotary's leaders, including Past RI Presidents Bhichai Rattakul, Jonathan Majiyagbe, Wilfrid Wilkinson, Kalyan Banerjee, and Sakuji Tanaka, and Past Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair Paul Netzel.

I have had the opportunity to work with and learn from each of these Rotarian leaders. They have led by example and left a major impact on Rotarians and others worldwide. Those who make humility a core value will have something special to pass down to future generations.

**Bill Ferreira**, Long Grove, Illinois

## FOCUS LOCALLY

When I joined Rotary in 2006, we had approximately 1.2 million Rotarians worldwide. According to the latest official presentation on The State of Membership [available at [rotary.org/membership](https://rotary.org/membership)], we have about the same number in 2023, but in every region, except for Asia, membership is decreasing.

I know membership in many civic organizations is down, but perhaps one thing that Rotary could do to start growing again is to focus on local community projects. This is not to demean the great work that Rotary is doing around the world. End Polio Now and Rotary's myriad international humanitarian projects have improved the lives of millions of people. I think that promoting local projects, however, where potential members can more clearly see the results of their efforts, is a better way to recruit members. People are more likely to join an organization when they can see how it directly impacts their lives and their communities.

*Rotary* magazine can help by covering more local projects. Pieces about successful local projects will encourage other clubs to attempt these kinds of projects themselves. Rather than running yet another article on the upcoming Rotary International Convention, the magazine should run practical articles on how to assess community needs and organize projects to meet those needs.

**Dan Romanchik**, Ann Arbor, Michigan

**Correction:** The Where are they now? article in November misstated the educational background of Ian G. McKay, Canada's ambassador to Japan. Although McKay studied at the University of British Columbia, he did not receive a degree there.

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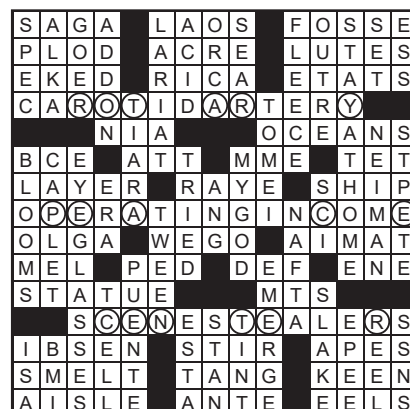
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## THE SPECIALIST

# Cracking the code

*A video game producer aims to do more than entertain*

**I**t was a college course on video games that made me realize how fun computer science and computer programming could be. After college, I spent a decade developing software for games before moving to project management and game production. I specialized in coding, using computer language to create a character's behaviors. In one game, I coded spells for wizards. In another, I enabled players to connect and play together around the world.

**The world of games is enormous and expanding every day.** You can go way beyond shooting and role-playing. If you like organizing and following a story, there's *Unpacking*, a puzzle video game that lets you decide where to put things in a house. It's relaxing and fun. Games provide an outlet for people's imaginations. They don't just entertain — they can relieve

stress. Some games can help you in your daily life or with solving problems in the real world. For example, you can tackle your fear of flying using virtual reality. If a game is online, you can meet friends there. I have friends who have met their spouse playing a game.

**To work in this field, you typically need an undergraduate degree** in game design, digital art, software engineering, or software development. Given that the industry is relatively young, some game developers have never attended college. Others simply moved over from law, biology, or writing. It requires interest and aptitude as well as opportunity.

**I've had great fun working on franchises such as *Battlestar Galactica*, *Tiger Woods PGA Tour*, and *The Simpsons*.** It costs a lot to get something big out the door. Some games require 200 people or more to build because there are lots of specialties. It took four to five years to release *World of Warcraft*.

**Today, I lead the production department of a small gaming company** to make sure every element in the creation works, from the script and the artwork to the sounds and the animation. I also ensure projects stay on time and on budget. I enjoy relaxing and silly games as a way to decompress after a stressful day. One of my favorites is a farming game called *Stardew Valley*. It's a wonderful way to take your mind off things.

— AS TOLD TO DINAH ENG

**Sarah Levantine**  
Rotary Club of  
San Francisco  
Evening  
Video game  
producer

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A fashion designer connects cultures

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To Gordon, with love

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Start your project with a mindset for success

## PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

# Central to life

*UN environment body looks to Rotary's reach to protect freshwater ecosystems*

**W**hen Salvador Rico was a boy, his dad leased a farm near the town of Buenavista in the Mexican state of Jalisco. The Ameca River ran nearby, and his older siblings would often stop for a swim when they'd deliver lunch to their dad in the fields. When his sister Agueda contracted polio and died in the 1960s, his family believed the sewage-tainted waters where she swam were to blame. Sitting on his mom's lap and watching her cry over the loss night after night left an indelible imprint. "I promised myself I would do something to help," he says.

A path to making good on that promise opened after Rico joined Rotary in the United States in 2007. Two years later, his club, the Rotary Club of South Ukiah, California, partnered with a local environmental group to clean up the Russian River, a vital waterway north of San Francisco. "It brought memories of Mexico, of how the creeks and rivers are so polluted," Rico says. "I saw that we were doing the cleanup here, and we could probably empower people in Mexico to do the same."

Rico connected with Rotary members in Mexico at a 2013 project fair in the country. They stayed up late into the night mapping out an ambitious plan, looking at everything from cities where Rotary clubs were located to which communities had no sewage treatment to the biggest industries contributing to water pollution. The river the Mexican Rotarians proposed

starting with? None other than the Ameca. "I said, 'That touches home,'" Rico recalls.

Over several years, Rotarians along the Ameca initiated cleanups, advocated with governments to modernize sewage systems, and convinced a sugar mill to use a composting system for its waste. In the city of Puerto Vallarta at the mouth of the river along the Pacific coast, Rotary members launched a massive cleanup that was backed by government officials. Neighborhood associations took on the project and have continued the work. "That was what we saw was huge with Rotary clubs — their influence in the community," Rico says. "It's going and planting the seed, finding leaders, and letting them run with it."

It's this local reach and influence that Rotary and the United Nations Environment Programme are banking on for their new collaborative initiative, Community Action for Fresh Water. The two organizations are partnering to empower members of Rotary, Rotaract, and Interact clubs to adopt a body of water, with guidance from UNEP's experts, step-by-step instructions, and other resources. The strategic partnership was announced in January at Rotary's International Assembly in Orlando, Florida. "This partnership will help Rotary spur collective action and raise our profile in our newest area of focus, and make the most of existing assets at Rotary and The Rotary Foundation," RI President-elect Stephanie Urchick says.

Freshwater systems are under threat from climate change, habitat

Visit [rotary.org/unep](https://rotary.org/unep) to learn more about Rotary's partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme and to get involved. Email [caf@rotary.org](mailto:caf@rotary.org) for more information.





Eunice Kamau participated in a cleanup of Lake Naivasha through the Rotaract Club of Naivasha, Kenya. “If we don’t take care of this lake, then the whole of society of Naivasha will crumble,” she says. “I’m taking care of my people.”

and biodiversity loss, and pollution. Billions of people around the world are at risk because they don’t know how safe surface and groundwater sources are.

UNEP’s goal is to protect ecosystems, and the key is working with the communities living near those systems. That’s where Rotary and its global network come in. “UNEP is excited by this partnership with Rotary and its ability to work directly with local communities on a global scale,” says Gavin Reynolds, an expert with UNEP’s freshwater ecosystems unit. “Rotary, with its global reach, close connection to communities, and action-focused engagement ensuring projects create change and have impact, is an excellent partner for UNEP.”

The initiative will give Rotary clubs a coordinated way to work on protecting the environment, The

Rotary Foundation’s seventh area of focus. Clubs will be able to apply for district funds and global grants for Community Action for Fresh Water projects. Activities could include river cleanups, habitat restoration, native plantings, biodiversity projects, wastewater treatment, and lake monitoring.

Rotary’s history with the United Nations dates to the UN’s founding in 1945. For many years, Rotary celebrated Rotary Day at the United Nations. In 2018, that event was held at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, spurring talks about how the two organizations could advance their collaboration. Joe Otin, then Rotary’s representative to UNEP, worked with the agency’s staff to develop the adopt-a-river concept. As Otin was about to become the 2019-20 governor of Rotary District 9212 (Eritrea, Ethiopia,

Kenya, and South Sudan), the team worked to launch a pilot there.

Otin recalls a stream, a tributary of the Nairobi River, running through the backyard of his family’s home when he was growing up in Nairobi. There were frogs, crayfish, and fish that they would try to catch and keep as pets. “It was an amazing education for me and my siblings, seeing this whole ecosystem come together,” he says. But over time, development strained the waterway. The river became dirtier and dirtier, blackened with human, industrial, and agricultural waste, with a terrible stench, he recalls. The river was dead. “When you look at it on Google Maps, it looks like somebody has taken a black marker and drawn a line over the rivers,” he says.

Otin and his team started researching what success looks like,

and for that, they turned to the River Thames, which runs through London and across southern England. Surveys of the polluted river in the 1950s led scientists to declare much of it biologically dead. Thanks to conservation efforts that identified the sources and types of pollutants, incorporated stakeholders, and improved sewage infrastructure, the river today boasts more than 120 fish species.

Rotary members in District 9212, working with UNEP, took that example to heart. They selected nine rivers to focus on, involving 20 Rotary clubs. They focused not just on collecting garbage but cataloging information about the pollution and its impact to drive the development of a long-range plan. This type of data collection is known as citizen science.

“I felt from the beginning that we had to get the concept right,” Otin says. “If we didn’t get the concept right, we’d be doing the same things we’ve been doing from time immemorial.”

UNEP is relying on Rotary clubs to eventually conduct their own citizen science initiatives, with the data they collect contributing toward a global picture for policymakers and donors of the health of the world’s freshwater ecosystems.

While the Rotary-UNEP pilot was developing in Africa, Rico continued his work to clean rivers in Mexico and beyond, partnering with Rotary Action Groups, including those for water, sanitation, and hygiene and for environmental sustainability, to spread the project globally. Rotary clubs have been involved in river cleanups in countries including Ecuador, Colombia, India, Egypt, Serbia, Turkey, Venezuela, and more.

In September, Rotary clubs, non-profit organizations, companies, and



the government of Guatemala signed an agreement to create an alliance to clean up the Motagua River. The waterway, one of the world’s most polluted rivers, carries at least 8,500 metric tons of waste to the Caribbean every year. A few days later, Rico traveled to Honduras, part of the Motagua River basin, to attend a signing ceremony for participating Rotary clubs in both countries.

“I went to the beach. You cannot walk barefoot on the beach, there are so many needles, all kinds of plastics,” he says. “I wanted to do a cleanup, but we cleaned up about 50 meters. You could probably fill a truck, it was that bad.”

Still, he’s motivated to keep going. “It’s a promise I made to my mom,” he says, “so I cannot stop until it’s done.” — DIANA SCHOBURG

In the past, flooding had swept contaminants into Kenya’s Lake Naivasha, and there was an outbreak of cholera, says Eunice Kamau (left).

## HOW YOUR CLUB CAN GET INVOLVED

At all levels, the Cadre of Technical Advisers engages with activities, project design, and monitoring.

### BASIC

- River cleanup days
- Community awareness campaigns
- Commitment to local bodies of water

### INTERMEDIATE

- Ongoing water cleanup activities
- Basic measuring of water quality, assessing of threats
- Develop project plans and connect with partners

### ADVANCED

- Continuous monitoring and evaluation of watershed health
- Collective site-based action on causes of freshwater degradation
- Connect with UNEP experts and international advocacy
- Reporting to national database (citizen science)

## Short takes

For World Polio Day last year, more than 4,200 Rotary, Rotaract, and Interact clubs in 115 countries registered an event, and \$836,000 was raised online.



The 2023 Council on Resolutions concluded in November with the adoption of seven resolutions for the RI Board to consider. Read them at [my.rotary.org/cor/vote](https://my.rotary.org/cor/vote).





## PROFILE

# The leader his club needed

*A fashion designer connects cultures in Rotary and beyond*

**Ifechukwude  
Rex Omameh**  
Rotary Club of  
Blouberg,  
South Africa

**A**s a child in Nigeria, Ifechukwude Rex Omameh remembers slipping out of his back door to share food with a friend who didn't have enough. The experience drove him to give back, and it's what ultimately led him to Rotary, where he's multiplied his impact. In July, he became the youngest and first Black president of the Rotary Club of Blouberg in Cape Town, South Africa. The 30-year-old is using the position to encourage young South Africans from diverse backgrounds to get involved in Rotary. "Being president will inspire our young Rotaractors to step forward and give Rotary more of their time," says Omameh, a dual member of Rotary and Rotaract.

Omameh first encountered Rotary through Interact in Nigeria, volunteering at orphanages and with food programs. Since moving to South Africa to further his education, he has hosted his district's annual polio fundraiser and focused on addressing hunger, including by bringing together Interactors, Rotaractors, and Rotarians to make tens of thousands of sandwiches for distribution. "It's the power of those small projects to reach very close to the heart on a personal level," he says.

After joining the Rotary Club of Blouberg in 2020, he encountered some resistance to the idea of a young leader but also encouragement. "Our past president said he'd seen my kind of leadership and thought it was what the club needed," he says.

In his work as a fashion designer, too, Omameh seeks to broaden views and understanding. "When you make a unique design, it gives a view of your culture," he says. "I'm trying to share what our culture looks like with the world."

— ARNOLD R. GRAHL

The 2022-23 Rotary Annual Report is now available at [rotary.org/annualreport](https://rotary.org/annualreport).

The International Skiing Fellowship of Rotarians celebrates its 50th anniversary this month with a weeklong trip to Oregon's Mount Bachelor ski resort.

RI President Gordon McInally will convene a Presidential Peace Conference 9-10 February in London. Learn more at [rotarypeaceconference.london](https://rotarypeaceconference.london).




# People of action around the globe

By Brad Webber

## United States

Rotary clubs in the ski resort towns of Park City, Utah, and Breckenridge, Colorado, have a friendly rivalry for the longest “shot ski” — a ski affixed to shot glasses that people raise together to down whiskey (or apple cider) in unison from hundreds of shot skis held end to end. The event raised more than \$43,000 for grants to assist community organizations, club member Connie Nelson says. She concedes that she and fellow club member Mike Luers were inspired by the Colorado club during a “reconnaissance” tour of successful winter resorts. “Their main street was closed for a festival. I looked at Mike and he looked at me and we said, ‘We can beat that,’” she says. The festive affair is “branding for our Rotary club,” Nelson adds. “We not only sell out but we have people on a waiting list to try to get on the line. It’s not just to sample the alcohol. It’s about the getting together, the unique community sharing.”

**Rotary**   
Club of Park City Sunrise



45%

Share of Honduran children who complete secondary school



## Honduras

Nearly 40 percent of adolescents are not in secondary school in Honduras, where educational achievement scores are low. The Rotary clubs of Tegucigalpa Sur and Peterborough, Ontario, teamed up to address the issue. In 2018 the clubs, which have collaborated on projects before, constructed a teacher training center in the municipality of Lepaterique and supplied books and other learning materials. Most recently, the clubs partnered with a nonprofit organization and the country’s Ministry of Education to provide literacy training to primary school teachers. “Sixteen-hour workshops are being held on a rotating basis with 160 teachers” representing 62 schools, says Marie Press, a member of the Peterborough club. “The feedback has been incredibly positive.”

**Rotary**   
Club of Tegucigalpa Sur

**Rotary**   
Club of Peterborough, Ontario

65 million

Visits to U.S. ski resorts in the 2022-23 season



## England

For its centennial project, the Rotary Club of Halifax built a scenic overlook above the town on an ancient road and footpath known as the Magna Via. Illustrated panels identify landmarks such as Wainhouse Tower, Borough Market, Square Church spire, the Halifax gibbet (a replica of the 16th century precursor to the guillotine), and the Town Hall, designed by Sir Charles Barry, architect of Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament. QR codes link to descriptions of the landmarks on the club website. "The views are magnificent and span the horizon," says Ken Robertshaw, a past governor of District 1040. The \$25,000 project, dedicated in late June, was funded by sponsoring businesses and individual donors, including Robertshaw, who contributed in honor of his late wife, Pauline. The Town Council agreed to maintain the overlook. "Given the history of the site, it seemed like an appropriate place for us to build something that celebrates the rich heritage of the town," Robertshaw says.



# 1650

The year the Halifax gibbet claimed its last victim

Rotary  
Club of Halifax



## Senegal

The Rotary Clubs of Dakar-Soleil and West Chester, Pennsylvania, celebrated a milestone last year in their project to drill for water in three villages in Senegal. Despite delays during the pandemic and "several difficult months searching for water on the part of the construction company," productive boreholes were drilled in July and August in the southeastern Kédougou region, reports Samuel Lowry, a member of the Rotary Club of Greater Huntsville, Alabama, who assisted with the project. Three of five planned pumps are now in use providing potable water, Lowry says. A \$130,000 global grant supported the project. Funds were also raised online during the pandemic. A project Facebook page yielded contributions as well as comments like "How can we get one of these where we are?"

# 50%

Possible decline in Senegal's renewable freshwater by 2050

Rotary  
Club of Dakar-Soleil

Rotary  
Club of West Chester, Pennsylvania

## Sri Lanka

All the world's a stage for young Sri Lankan thespians who, with their Rotarian supporters, take their Shakespeare seriously. For nearly five decades, tens of thousands of them have participated in the All Island Inter-School Shakespeare Drama Competition. Known as the "Shakes," last year's contest, held in September and organized by the Rotary Club of Colombo North and the Colombo YMCA, included more than 1,000 students. The ensembles performed 30-minute scenes that organizers chose from eight plays. "They are judged mainly on acting, and marks are also allocated for direction, teamwork, and effects," Club President Lasika Jayamaha says. Rotaractors assisted with front of house and backstage roles. "The competition has been a springboard for thousands of young people across the island" to careers in acting, directing, and media, Jayamaha says. Adding to the shine, the coveted rotating trophy is a silver bust of Shakespeare that was a gift from the mayor of Stratford-upon-Avon, the birthplace of the Bard.

# At least 37

The number of plays written by Shakespeare

Rotary  
Club of Colombo North



ESSAY

## To Gordon, with love

On major membership anniversaries, Rotary members receive a letter from the RI president. Gordon McNally celebrates his 40th this month, which means the Rotary president is receiving a letter from — well, himself.





FROM THE DESK OF ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT GORDON MCINALLY

DEAR ROTARIAN Gordon McInally ,

9 FEBRUARY 2024

Congratulations on your 40 years of Rotary service. Your continued devotion to Rotary is an inspiration, and I hope your enthusiasm will inspire fellow members to care for each other as they would care for the people we —

All right, let's dispense with the formalities, shall we?

Hey, Gordon, it's me, Gordon, and let's talk man to man — or Rotary president to Rotary president — that is if you think an honest conversation isn't going to send you off whimpering like a wee, cowering, timorous beastie.

Och! Not one minute into this letter and you've got me quoting our favorite Scottish poet, Robert bloody Burns! Next thing you know I'll be parading around in a kilt rhapsodizing about bonnie lochs and auld acquaintances and the dubious advantage of taking the high road rather than the low.

You want Robert Burns? I'll give you some cleareyed Robert Burns. It's typically called "To a Louse," but before you take offense, here's the poem's full title: "To a Louse, On Seeing One on a Lady's Bonnet at Church." Its last verse begins: *O would some Power the gift to give us / To see ourselves as others see us! / It would from many a blunder free us.* Truer words were never spoken. So, Gordon, take a look at yourself as others might. Do you like what you see? Your kilt, for instance. What's that tartan called? Gordon Modern? More than 5,000 tartans to choose from and you gussy yourself up in one named after yourself? Though I must say, you have to admire those brawny Caledonian gams.

I digress. Back to the matter at hand. Forty years in Rotary. Can you believe it? Me neither. Forty years since your farmer friend gulled you into attending a meeting of the Rotary Club of South Queensferry, which you actually enjoyed and which — and here's the kicker — they even asked you to join. The 9th of February 1984 you officially became a member of Rotary. Do you even remember what they served for dinner? Me neither. But surely you remember what came next. Nine months later, to the very day — Crivvens! — your first child was born to you and Heather. Other husbands might at least have taken their wives out for a romantic candlelit dinner.

Pause here with me for a minute, Gordon. Let's have a generous dram of the good Glenmorangie whisky. Lang may your lum reek! Ah, that's the stuff. Loosens up the heartstrings. So, lad, let me give it to you straight. You and Rotary and Heather — a grand Rotarian herself — have done a great deal of good in those 40 years. More than we might have imagined when we started out, am I right? And more good years ahead and much more good to be done. Here, have another. Slàinte mhath!

So don't get too comfortable in semiretirement. "Steady of heart and stout of hand," as Sir Walter Scott, the bard of your beloved Scottish Borders, advised. That knave Shakespeare slandered a good Scots king when he created his fictional Macbeth and had him moan that life's but a walking shadow and we nothing more than poor players strutting and fretting our brief hour on the stage until we're heard no more. Rubbish! When our life's a tale told by a person of steady heart and stout hand — that is, when it's told by a four-way tested member of Rotary — why then, it signifies everything and its worth can last forever. So enough hurkle-durkle. Get back to work, you glaikit bampot.

Let me conclude by saying, as I normally do in these circumstances, that it's active and engaged members like you, Gordon McInally, who make it possible to *Create Hope in the World*. Thank you for your dedication to the Rotary family and your commitment to service.

Now go get Heather, give her a smourich she'll never forget, and this time, for St. Andrew's sake, show her you know what a romantic night out looks like.

WARMEST REGARDS,



Gordon McInally, President, Rotary International 2023-24

## GOODWILL

# Start with a mindset for success

Try a ‘theory of change’ exercise to ensure your project’s result is lasting

**Y**ou may have heard the term “theory of change” but not really known what it is. You may have even dismissed it as academic jargon.

But the concept is an important part of The Rotary Foundation’s Programs of Scale grant process because a theory of change that is well thought out can serve as an indispensable guide to successfully reach a project’s long-term goal.

And since programs of scale are all about substantial, measurable results with big impact, a theory of change is essential to develop.

There are many ways to illustrate a theory of change. But perhaps the easiest is to think of a theory of change as an explanation of how a program will achieve its intended impact and in what circumstances.

Let’s break that down further.

## Putting it into practice

Think of “change” as the long-term effect you want to have in a community. Take as an example the 2022 Programs of Scale award recipient, Together for Healthy Families in Nigeria, which is aiming to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality rates by increasing the use of maternal care and family planning services and improving care for pregnant women, mothers, and newborns in the country. For this program, the “change” is decreasing maternal and neonatal mortality.

The “theory” part is meant to convey that you have a reason for taking the actions you are proposing to reach the change you

want. In other words, you believe that certain actions (or outputs), given certain conditions (preconditions and key assumptions), will lead to outcomes that ultimately contribute to the goal — in this example, reducing these deaths in Nigeria.

Here is what the idea looks like for the Nigeria initiative. Evidence from the World Health Organization shows that giving birth at a health facility rather than at home can reduce maternal and neonatal deaths in the country. Thus, an outcome for this program is for more births to happen at health facilities instead of at home.

You may see that and think: We must build more health facilities! However, Rotary members in Nigeria know that building and equipping a new health facility alone will not lead to a reduction in maternal mortality. Why? They know that the clinic staff members would have to be trained how to use the equipment, and pregnant women and their families would have to want to travel to the clinic to receive services. If pregnant women are unable or unwilling to access the clinic, the quality of the staff and equipment at that clinic will not matter.

This is why many of the program’s actions are geared toward something different than building more facilities. Instead, they are intended to change behavior. These actions include improving the quality of care available at the health facilities, creating a referral system to encourage families to visit them, and increasing awareness of the

maternal and child health services available at the sites.

## Actions lead to outcomes

One way the program raises that awareness is through meetings with traditional leaders to encourage them to think of safe childbirth as a community responsibility. Another is training health workers to recognize when it’s necessary to refer women to health facilities for treatment.

In one of the program’s communities, Alhaji Ayuba Barau, a traditional leader involved in the effort, holds regular community dialogue meetings with men to encourage them to not only contribute money for prenatal services, but also to accompany the mother to the nearest health facility for classes before the birth.

Additionally, traditional leaders work with health facilities to ensure they provide quality services. The attitudes in this community are shifting, and there has been a gradual increase in families seeking care from health facilities.

A theory of change is not static. The Nigeria program began implementation in early 2023 and is continually monitored. If the outcome of more births occurring at health facilities is not realized, the program team will revisit its interventions to understand how to modify its theory to stay on track to see the overall desired impact.

A great exercise for your club or district is to draft a theory of change as a tool to help your group achieve success in your next Rotary project. ■

Learn how to develop a theory of change in the “Increase Your Impact” series on the Rotary Learning Center: [my.rotary.org/learn](https://my.rotary.org/learn).

View an outline of the Together for Healthy Families theory of change at [on.rotary.org/TOCNigeria](https://on.rotary.org/TOCNigeria).

Watch a video about Together for Healthy Families at [on.rotary.org/togethervideo](https://on.rotary.org/togethervideo).





EVERY  
ROTARIAN  
EVERY  
YEAR

## DOING GOOD WITH OUR ANNUAL FUND

Did you know that The Rotary Foundation's Annual Fund supports SHARE, the World Fund, and our areas of focus? When you give to the Annual Fund, you empower Rotary members to carry out sustainable projects in communities around the world. Contributions directed to Annual Fund-SHARE generate District Designated Funds and support our World Fund, which makes Doing Good in the World easier than ever.

**LEARN MORE:** [my.rotary.org/annual-fund](https://my.rotary.org/annual-fund)

**GIVE TO OUR ANNUAL FUND TODAY:** [rotary.org/donate](https://rotary.org/donate)





# Catalysts for peace

A Rotary Peace Center intends to  
strengthen peacebuilding in the  
Middle East and North Africa

**By Jason Keyser**



For Sherif Elnegahy, a 2016 Rotary Peace Fellow from Egypt, the opening of a peace center for the Middle East and North Africa is "a dream coming true."



# W

hen government officials in Saudi Arabia went looking several years ago for someone who could help establish mediation and conflict resolution as a pillar of the kingdom's judicial reforms, they ran into a problem. "This was a bit sad to hear, but they said they couldn't find an expert in the field who could speak Arabic," recalls Sherif Elnegahy. Fortunately, Elnegahy, a Rotary Peace Fellow from Egypt, had just co-authored a book on the topic — in Arabic — and it caught the eye of the justice minister himself. The Saudis had found their expert.

One of about 100 peace fellow alumni working in the Middle East or North Africa, Elnegahy has expertise that is in high demand in a region with a tremendous need for peacebuilders. Elnegahy, who completed his fellowship in 2016 at the former Rotary Peace Center at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand, remembers calling out the need for such a center in the Middle East on his program feedback form. Now, he has reason to celebrate. This month, after years of planning, Rotary is announcing its newest peace center partnership, with Bahçeşehir University in Istanbul. "It's a dream coming true," he says.

The certificate program will train peacebuilders who are from or have worked in the region, or who do related work elsewhere in the world. "This new peace center builds on Rotary's long history of working for peace," says 2006-07 Rotary President Bill Boyd, chair of the search committee for the site. "We will not solve every problem, but we will make a difference through the many peace fellows who will become catalysts for peace across the region."

The Istanbul center is another step forward in Rotary's plan to establish a total of four certificate programs by 2030 in Africa, the Middle East or North Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The program at Bahçeşehir (pronounced BAH'-che-sheh-hir) is the

second of those after the center at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, which welcomed its first cohort in 2021. In addition, the two-decade-old peace centers program has five master's degree offerings around the world.

Establishing a center in the Middle East has long been a goal for Rotary. The need for trusted local leaders to become effective advocates for peace is greater than ever, as evidenced by the war between Israel and Hamas and other long-running conflicts in Yemen, Sudan, Syria, and elsewhere. "This center will provide a place for fellows to openly talk about long-standing conflicts and the future of the region, and to explore new approaches and paths to building peaceful communities," says Laura Descher, director of the Rotary Peace Centers program. "The program presents an opportunity for them to examine issues of conflict, identity, poverty, and displacement, and discuss the complexities and possible solutions with each other."

**A**mong the 1,700 peace fellow alumni working in about 140 countries today are leaders in governments, nongovernmental agencies, education and research institutions, media and the arts, peace-

keeping and law enforcement agencies, and international organizations such as the United Nations and the World Bank. Some have founded their own organizations. They are working with refugees and displaced persons, young people, women and children, those affected by conflict and poverty, and others.

While only a small percentage of those peace fellows work in the Middle East, one of the goals for the new center is to build on that network of professionals who can create the conditions needed for peace by addressing the underlying causes and drivers of conflict. That concept, known as Positive Peace, addresses issues like poverty, discrimination, ethnic tension, lack of access to education, and unequal distribution of resources. To understand what that looks like, consider Elnegahy's work.

He is a former public prosecutor and a chief judge in his home country who now specializes in mediation and conflict resolution. Elnegahy crisscrosses the Middle East, advising UN agencies and programs, the Saudi Justice Ministry, private companies, and others. The work takes him from packed courthouses in the Persian Gulf region to village streets in Egypt's Nile Valley.

He has intervened in conflicts ranging from family revenge killings in Upper Egypt to disputes between major companies and communities, including one in



Turkey has been home to the largest population of refugees in the world in recent years, including more than 3.7 million people fleeing the war in neighboring Syria, like those at Suruç camp, seen here in 2014.





Istanbul, home to the newest Rotary Peace Center, has been a crossroads of cultures since antiquity.



which Egyptian farmers attacked workers and sabotaged the equipment of an oil and gas company. “The whole village went crazy over it,” he recalls. The solution he worked out over three weeks of shuttle diplomacy led to the company offering to use its influence to get the farmers permits to build shops and small businesses to cater to the project’s workers and bring the farmers income. “It was that simple,” he says.

In a similar case, he is working to resolve a dispute over a project in southern Egypt that is crucial to the country’s economy and to North Africa’s drive to become

**“We will not solve every problem, but we will make a difference through the many peace fellows who will become catalysts for peace.”**

a major renewable energy supplier. He has also trained court mediators to settle disputes in civil, family, commercial, and criminal cases. While visiting some of his trainees in the Saudi city of Dammam, he was moved by the scene of three mediators dedicatedly working through a docket of cases involving hundreds of people standing shoulder to shoulder inside the courthouse. The vast majority were settling their cases before trial. “I felt that in a way I had touched their lives,” Elnegahy says. “They were able to put their conflicts behind them.”

With his help, Saudi Arabia now has a robust mediation program and has institutionalized the practice across the kingdom. The impact of such work goes beyond individual disputes. “It establishes an atmosphere of conciliation; it becomes part of a community,” Elnegahy says. “It’s not just war or litigation; there are other methods. So I think it spreads a positive culture when it comes to how to deal with our differences.”

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To find out how to recommend a peace fellow, read “The path to a Rotary Peace Fellowship” on page 52.

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Now, he’s training the next generation, teaching mediation to law students in Egypt and facilitating a nationwide student mediation competition. He also worked with UN Women, a United Nations entity advancing gender equality, to design and present a training program

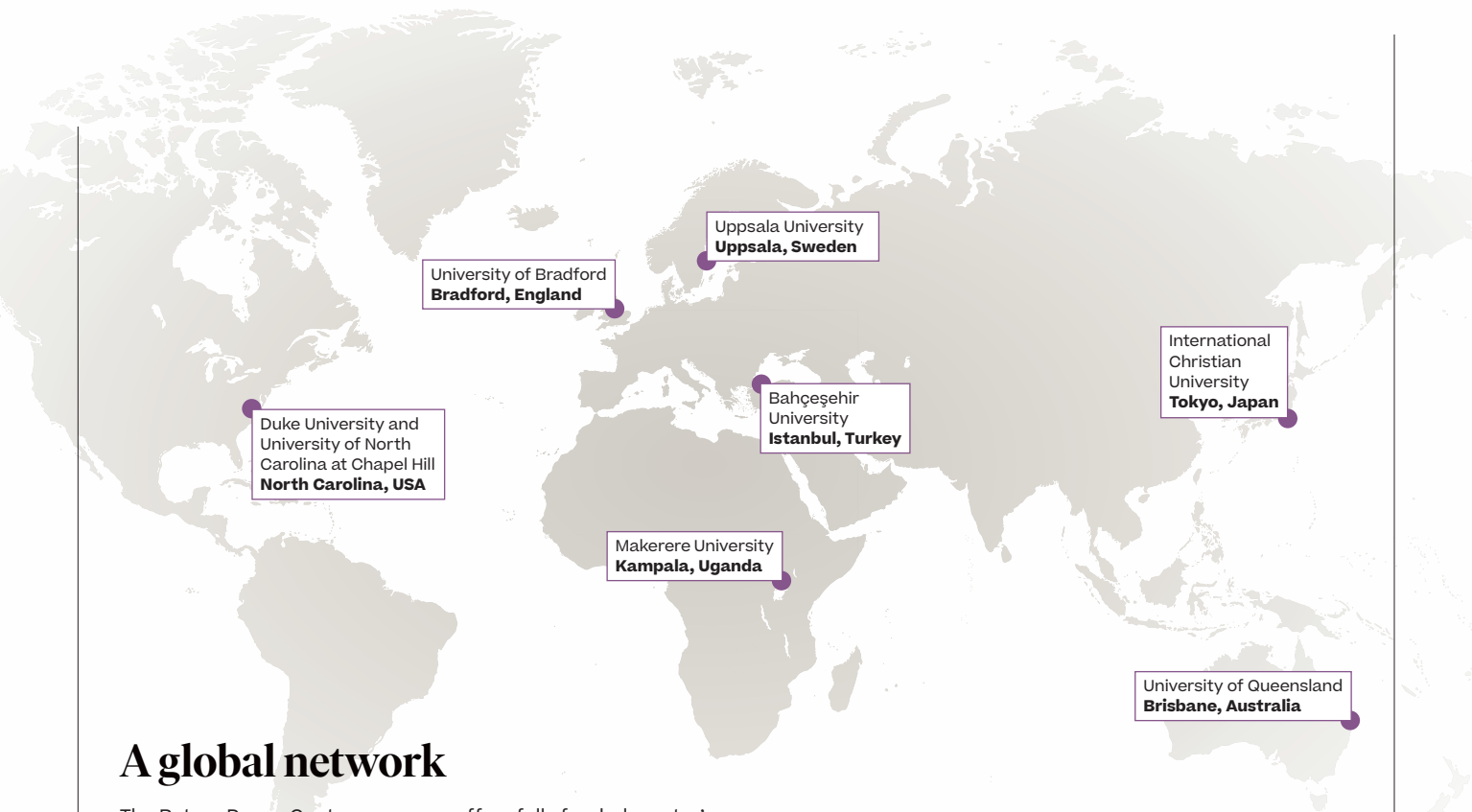
for young women peacebuilders from Arab nations. “The participants were amazing,” he says. “Any one of them is a future leader for sure.” The first cohort, in 2021, included women who went on to jobs with the UN agency that helps Palestinian refugees, the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization, and the African Development Bank.

**W**hile a peace center in the region has been a dream for Elnegahy and Rotary for some time, the effort gained momentum with the single-largest gift to the peace centers program, a pledge of \$15.5 million accepted by The Rotary Foundation from the Otto and Fran Wal-



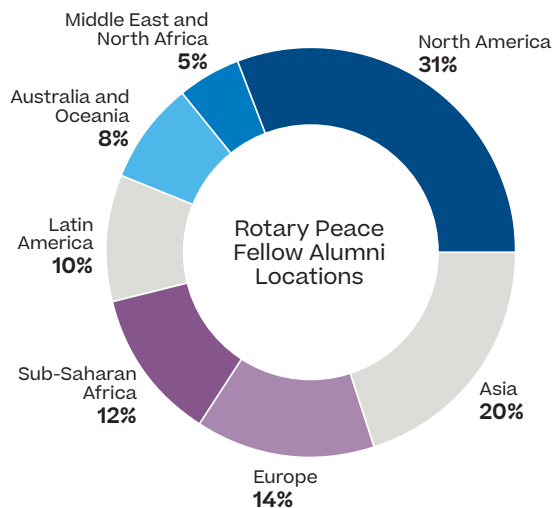
Peace fellow alum Mustafa Öztürk is an associate professor in the school of education at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul. He trains teachers in inclusive practices to integrate immigrant and refugee children.





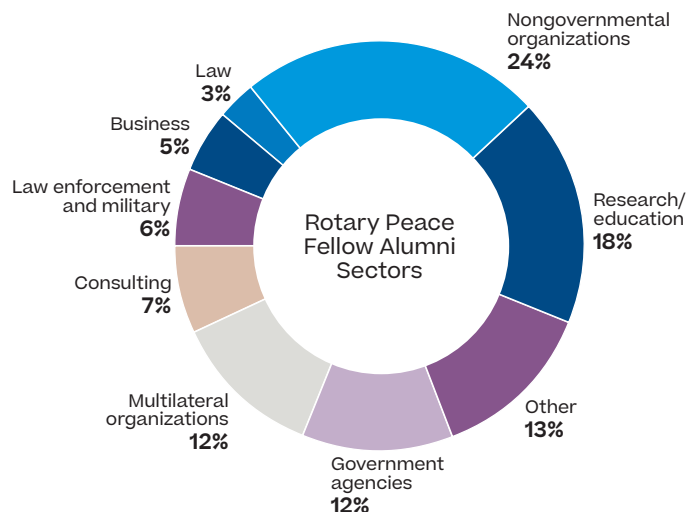
## A global network

The Rotary Peace Centers program offers fully funded master's degrees or professional development certificates through fellowships based at seven premier universities around the world. The newest program, at Istanbul's Bahçeşehir University, opens in 2025.



**735** certificate program alumni  
**1,023** master's program alumni

**88%** of alumni say they have opportunities to connect and collaborate with Rotary networks and partners



**96%** of alumni say the fellowship positively influenced their career paths

ter Foundation in February 2021. The next challenge was selecting a university partner. Rotary has a smaller footprint of clubs in the Middle East and needed to be deliberate in choosing a host institution, and it is convinced it found the right partner. “We’re bringing Rotary’s global network and our reach, and they’re bringing their expertise about the region and about peace and development,” says Descher.

Among the criteria, it had to be in a country with a Rotary presence, it needed to be accessible to all international students, and the university had to demonstrate a commitment to a true partnership with Rotary. More than 30 institutions in 11 countries were considered. Ultimately, three institutions were invited to submit full proposals. Besides Bahçeşehir, they were the American University in Cairo and Sabancı University, also in Istanbul.

Each had a particular strength in peace and development. At Bahçeşehir, for instance, peace fellows will benefit from a partnership the university maintains with the United Nations to advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which address challenges including poverty, inequality, climate change, and peace and justice. “Rotary Peace Fellows will participate in high-level diplomatic trainings and connect with United Nations experts working in sustainable peace governance,” explains Ebru Canan-Sokullu, dean of the university’s faculty of economic, administrative, and social sciences and director of its United Nations training center, called CIFAL Istanbul.

With campuses and offices in more than 10 countries, and more than 7,000 international students in Istanbul alone, Bahçeşehir promotes a global focus. “The university also stands out as a microcosm of the Middle East and North Africa, hosting many students from this region,” says Esra Albayrakoglu, the peace center’s academic director.

When the Otto and Fran Walter Rotary Peace Center at Bahçeşehir University welcomes its first students in 2025, its success will also hinge on the involvement of the region’s Rotary members, who will host and engage with the visiting peace fellows and connect them with peace fellow alumni in Turkey. The country’s three Rotary districts have a long history in peacebuilding, including facilitating a major peace conference for the Balkans in 2014. Suat Baysan, past governor of District 2420, chairs a committee that



Elif Avci, a 2019 peace fellow from Istanbul, says the new peace center can serve as a hub for research and advocacy and “has the potential to be a transformative force in our region.”

works with the new peace center and Rotary International to engage local members with the program. The job for Rotary members, including those in the fellows’ home countries, will be to support their work and offer guidance into the future, Baysan says. “That’s so critical,” he says. He knows it firsthand, having traveled the region for years as a telecommunications engineer. He compares the work of maintaining peace to the detailed care engineers take to keep Istanbul’s bridges safely suspended over the Bosphorus. “You have to take care of it all the time,” he says.

Sitting as a land bridge between Europe and Asia, the Anatolian Peninsula has been a crossroads of cultures and a center of empires — Byzantine, Seljuq, Ottoman — since antiquity. Today, the modern Turkish republic, a NATO member country of about 85 million people, is a regional power with influence in both Europe and the Middle East.

Its position straddling continents also made it home to the largest population of refugees in the world in recent years. More than 3.7 million came from neighboring





With campuses and offices in more than 10 countries, and more than 7,000 international students in Istanbul alone, Bahçeşehir University promotes a global focus.

Syria, where more than 12 years of war have wrought large-scale destruction and claimed at least half a million lives. Hundreds of thousands of additional refugees and migrants have come from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, and other countries.

That rapid influx, along with inflation and other economic troubles, has strained resources and led to social tension. The catastrophic earthquake that struck Turkey and northern Syria a year ago magnified the trauma and pressures.

Peace fellow alum Mustafa Öztürk is an associate professor in the school of education at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul. He designs and implements continuing education programs for teachers, with a focus on training educators in inclusive practices to integrate refugee children and other disadvantaged students, many of whom have experienced serious trauma. Along the way, he's come to realize that teachers can be powerful agents of peace.

He saw it happen in 2021, when violence erupted in Ankara after the fatal stabbing of a Turkish teenager during a fight with a group of Syrians. Mobs responded by vandalizing businesses, at-

tacking houses, and overturning cars in an area of the capital home to many Syrian migrants and refugees. Öztürk says it was the neighborhood's teachers who helped calm tensions. "They were entering the streets and they were going to families' houses easily, without any risk to their safety because they were trusted by both sides, and playing an effective role in negotiating," he says. "They have such a powerful role in bringing peace into schools and disseminating peace from schools to the wider society." Having a peace center focused on the region, Öztürk believes, will open more such avenues for building peace throughout society.

Elif Avcı, another peace fellow from Istanbul, says the new peace center can serve as a hub for research and advocacy. She began her career as a child and adolescent psychologist. Since completing her peace fellowship at the University of Bradford in England, she's been advocating for marginalized groups by helping them find a voice in local affairs and making sure those in power are listening. "The establishment of a peace center in Istanbul has the potential to be a transformative force

"This center will provide a place for fellows to openly talk about long-standing conflicts and the future of the region, and to explore new approaches and paths to building peaceful communities."

in our region and be a catalyst for sustainable peacebuilding," she says.

The opening of the new center is cause for hope. The region's conflicts may seem intractable, but Elnegahy's view is that peace and justice are possible, even in the aftermath of humanity's worst atrocities. It's an outlook shaped by an experience during his own fellowship half a world away in Southeast Asia. During a site visit to Cambodia's Killing Fields, his faith was shaken seeing a woman crying in front of a tree where young children had been killed during the Cambodian genocide. That evening, he found himself at a circus, watching a performance that told the story of a child survivor of the Khmer Rouge who finds healing through art. The circus, he learned, was founded by survivors of that reign of terror who made it their mission to spread healing and joy. It was a stark demonstration, he realized, that we have the freedom, as individuals and as a community, to choose the path of peace. "It's up to us," he says, "to decide which mark we want to leave." ■

*Additional reporting by Diana Schoberg.*

The Otto and Fran Walter Rotary Peace Center at Bahçeşehir University will welcome its first students in 2025. Applications are being accepted through 15 May for the one-year professional development certificate in peace and development studies. It will accept up to 40 students a year. The curriculum covers peacebuilding, sustainable development, conflict resolution, diplomacy, mediation, and cooperation. During field studies, the fellows will examine refugee issues and land and religious conflicts, and visit disaster sites and frozen conflict zones. Learn more about Rotary Peace Fellowships at [rotary.org/peace-fellowships](https://rotary.org/peace-fellowships).

# Second chances





A classic car repair program is reviving a lost art, and a lot more

By Katya Cengel • Photography by Ian Tuttle



**N**atalia Montiel pulls on yellow work gloves and bends over a piece of notebook-size metal. The energetic teen with long black hair holds a cutting torch in one hand and places her other hand underneath. “Is this the hand that guides me?” she says, turning to Tom Forgette, her instructor in the art of classic and antique auto repair.

“Steadies it,” corrects Forgette. “I’m the one that guides you.”

Forgette, an instructor of some renown in this part of central California, is nothing if not precise. Minutes earlier he instructed Natalia to wait until a feather of flame appeared, then to adjust it using the oxygen valve. Now Forgette watches as Natalia uses the torch to cut the metal, a skill she’ll need to perfect for auto body repair. “You’re a little too close,” he says, then adds, “Now you moved too far away.”

In an airy garage with a high ceiling and open entrance, surrounded by car parts, stacks of tires, and tools, Natalia bends closer. A strip of metal falls to the floor. A straight cut. That is what Forgette wanted. Had Natalia done it wrong the metal would have stuck. Still, Forgette makes his pupil repeat the process. She doesn’t complain. And Natalia, who is wearing mascara and silver hoop earrings, quickly earns his respect in what remains a male-dominated craft. “She’s just going for it,” Forgette says.

The youngest of six, Natalia grew up watching her father, David, fix cars. In his native Mexico, he was a mechanic. In Salinas, in California’s Central Coast, her dad fixed cars for family members. Natalia helped him, passing him tools and holding a light. She knew she could do more, but her father didn’t think of his “princess” as a future mechanic.

As she got older Natalia forgot about cars and found herself on a precarious path, surrounding herself with friends who were unmotivated and into marijuana. It felt like she was “living the same day over and over again,” she recalls. “Not really like going anywhere.”

During her junior year of high school a counselor suggested an alternative vocational school called Rancho Cielo that also helps with social services and life skills. When Natalia heard the nonprofit organization had an automotive program she signed up. “I was like, ‘Wow, that’s perfect. That’s literally what I am looking for,’” she says.

Natalia started the program in November 2022. By the following July, she was one of six students in the school’s classic and antique auto repair course learning under Forgette.







**Clockwise from above:**  
 Instructor Tom Forgette  
 works with students  
 Natalia Montiel (right)  
 and Abel Galindo at  
 Rancho Cielo; the earliest  
 automobiles are known  
 as horseless carriages;  
 Galindo and Forgette fix  
 a dent in a body panel;  
 a student adjusts a cutting  
 torch.



**MONTEREY COUNTY, WHERE SALINAS** is located, is one of the biggest classic and antique car hubs in the country. Classic and vintage car races are held each year at the world-famous WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca. And then there's the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, which bills itself as the world's most prestigious car show. "As someone who's grown up in Salinas, I've always been so fascinated looking at the classic cars that go up and down the main streets," says Natalia. "To think of myself working on one, it's very exciting."

It was this automotive legacy that inspired Rotarians Mark Grandcolas and Richardson "Ric" Masten to create the classic and antique auto repair course. In some ways they are an unlikely pair. While Grandcolas favors slim fit khakis and loafers, Masten wears dress shoes and slacks. "Mark's the backroom guy," says Masten, an 85-year-old former stockbroker. "And he's also the front."

A 67-year-old engineer, Grandcolas retired early to Mexico after his software startup made it big. It was there that he joined Rotary. He returned to the U.S. in 2019 to care for his aging mother and joined the Rotary Club of Carmel-by-the-Sea in Monterey County. He also joined the club's Foundation committee, which Masten was then chairing. A Rotarian for almost half a century, Masten had been interested in Rotary Foundation global grants but had not yet been able to secure one.

Grandcolas had better insight, having been a member of the Rotary Club of San Miguel de Allende-Midday in Mexico, which had designed projects that were awarded global grants. Grandcolas formed a global grants enthusiast group for District 5230 and challenged members to come up with a new idea. That is when Masten thought about classic car repair.

Masten's first car, a 1938 Pontiac Eight Cabriolet convertible with a rumble seat that he bought for \$200 when he turned 16, gave him trouble, so he learned to take apart the engine. It is a practical skill that used to be commonly taught in high school shop classes. The decline of vocational training in high schools is one of the reasons Masten thought about an automotive training program. The other was the need. As the owner of two classic Bentleys, a 1937 and a 1954, and a member of multiple classic car clubs, Masten knows that the mechanics who serve those cars are fast disappearing. "There's nobody to do it," Masten says. "They're retiring and dying."

The exact definition of clas-

sic cars varies. Grandcolas includes anything made before 1983; others say 1975 or even anything more than 20 years old. Then there are the subcategories of vintage, antique, and collector cars. What's not up for debate is that mechanics trained to work on modern cars can't simply switch over to classic auto repair; it's an entirely different craft. By the 1980s the automotive industry was rapidly transitioning from mechanical to electronic components, explains Grandcolas. No more carburetors, no more distributors. "To fix a modern car today you need a computer to run diagnostics," says Grandcolas. "That computer would be of no use in a classic car." For older cars, he explains, "you need somebody with an ear and with eyes."

It isn't just the inside of a classic car that is different. Unlike modern cars that use various plastic parts on the frame and body, the exteriors of most classic cars are made entirely of metal, which is more difficult to repair and replace. Although those trained to repair the cars may be dying out, classic cars are not. In the U.S. alone there are around 31 million collector vehicles, according to research conducted by Hagerty, a provider of specialty insurance for classic cars.

The Rotarians knew the demand was there and that the training could offer a path to college and well-paying careers for young people. They just needed a place to host the program. For that, they turned to Rancho Cielo.

**THE RANCH WAS THE UNLIKELY DREAM** of retired Judge John Phillips. A slim, tall man of 81 who plays racquetball on Wednesdays, Phillips served as Monterey County's assistant district attorney in his younger years. His job was to put people away. In 1984 he was appointed to the Monterey County Superior Court. In both roles he watched as gangs became more prevalent in the county. Toward the end of his career, he found himself sending teenagers to prison for life. "Most of these kids had lost hope for the future," he says. "It's really easy to pull the trigger if you don't have any hopes or dreams or anything."

In 2000 Phillips founded Rancho Cielo, a program designed to offer young people who committed first-time offenses an alternative to incarceration, along with a fresh start. He built the program on a rural site that had once been a juvenile incarceration facility. Phillips leased the land from the government and got to work. With an operating budget of \$75,000 and a staff of almost

**Clockwise from top:** Rotarians Ric Masten (left) and Mark Grandcolas at Rancho Cielo; Masten and Grandcolas with fellow Rotarians Doug Brown and Debbie Hale; practice cuts from a sheet of metal.







none, besides his wife, Patti, he welcomed the first class of about a dozen youths in 2004, the same year he retired. From there Rancho Cielo grew to what it is today, a nonprofit organization with a budget of over \$5 million and a staff of almost 50.

The 100-acre site in the foothills of the Gabilan Range is a working ranch with horses, fishponds, a garden, beehives, classrooms, and workshops in long outbuildings resembling barns. Today, the program serves students from families with low income, and only about 30 percent of the 200 students on campus on any given day have been involved in the juvenile justice system. The majority are between 16 and 18 years old, and about three-quarters come from Salinas, the county seat and center of the Salinas Valley's booming agricultural industry. Graduates of six vocational programs leave with an industry-recognized certificate and a high school diploma. Each program has a case manager. There is also a therapist. The program is free for students and they are transported to and from the campus and provided lunch and snacks. In some cases, they also receive stipends and can take part in work-study programs.

"It went from this little program to deal with at-risk troubled kids to a major vocational school, the only real vocational school anywhere around in this area," Phillips explained during a talk at a Carmel-by-the-Sea club meeting in April 2023.

Rotary and Rancho Cielo have a long history together. Carmel-by-the-Sea member Lesley Miller Manke, using her business and personal connections, was instrumental in securing funding for one of the ranch's first vocational programs, the Drummond Culinary Academy. Construction, agriculture, auto repair, and welding programs were added later. As Rancho Cielo grew, Manke encouraged the nonprofit to apply for grant funding from the club and invited its staff to speak at club meetings. "Our club has been following Rancho Cielo since day one," she says.

The club isn't the only one to support the ranch. The nearby Rotary Club of Corral de Tierra built a barbecue area at Rancho Cielo, says Doug Brown, chair of District 5230's district grants subcommittee. Brown helped Masten and Grandcolas apply for the global grant as did District Governor Debbie Hale.

To strengthen their case and demonstrate the need for classic car mechanics, the two Rotarians identified nearly 50 shops servicing classic cars within a 37-mile radius of Rancho Cielo. Every one of the shops they visited had the same problem: They needed help. "Some



**Clockwise from above:** Abel Galindo balances a wheel on a vintage car during class; Elias Pineda (left) and Giovanni Landeros restore the body on a pickup truck; examining a spark plug.







of them would say, 'If you can train a kid and get them here, I need them last week,'" says Grandcolas.

According to their research there are only three or four places in the country that teach classic car repair. None of them are in Monterey County. The data convinced Rancho Cielo CEO Chris Devers to add classic car repair to the offerings. "I've been doing development work for 25 years, and I've never had anybody drop a project in my lap or a program in my lap that well designed and funded and connected to industry, doing everything that is within our mission to do here," he says.

The first eight-week course began in summer 2022 with 14 students, 10 of whom completed it. The first three years are funded by a Rotary Foundation global grant of over \$56,000. Rancho Cielo has since received state and federal funding to keep the program running, as well as \$100,000 from donors connected to the Pebble Beach Concours with promises of more if Rancho Cielo can successfully expand the program.

The plan is to increase the current 110 hours of instruction to 500 hours and the number of students enrolled each year to 24. The students are all part of the automotive program and learn the basics of modern car repair as well as classic car repair. And all of them, according to retired Judge Phillips, "would be heading in the wrong direction if they hadn't come on campus."

**SALINAS IS HOME TO 160,000 PEOPLE,** including many migrants from Mexico who come to work in the valley's farms. It's the birthplace of John Steinbeck, whose book *The Grapes of Wrath* told of an earlier generation of migrants fleeing Oklahoma's Dust Bowl during the Great Depression. The Salinas Valley is still known for its agricultural industry, which earned it the nickname "salad bowl of the world," but Phillips knows the city for another reason: gangs. "Some of these kids grew up in some areas that it's almost impossible not to be involved in that, gangs have got that kind of influence," says Phillips.

When Phillips confronted one student who had been reprimanded for associating with gangs, the student explained he had grown up with the gang members. Two of them were his cousins and lived next door. Rancho Cielo's vocational training and similar programs can offer another path.

The idea to redirect young people away from the justice system is not new, says Nate Balis, director of the Juvenile Justice Strategy

Group at the Annie E. Casey Foundation. In some ways, getting into trouble is a typical adolescent behavior, he explains. As such it is generally understood that society doesn't want teenagers' mistakes to haunt them later. "What we know is that when we respond to that with the juvenile justice system, we get worse outcomes than if we responded without the juvenile justice system," he says.

When young people get into trouble almost all of them need something to do that steers them back toward a positive path, Balis says. "And so programs that are about promoting youth development, promoting skill building, building strong relationships, those are the things we want for all young people," he says.

That is what Rancho Cielo is trying to do. It isn't always a straight path.

**AROUND A MONTH AFTER ENTERING** the automotive program at Rancho Cielo, Natalia started backsliding, getting into trouble at school. Growing concerned, her case manager signed her up to talk to a therapist. Therapy was a new idea to Natalia, who says her parents had always told her she should simply talk to her siblings. Seeing a therapist was different. "I can't express how needed that was for me," she says.

Among other things, the therapist helped her become comfortable with pursuing her ambitions despite what she sometimes felt were low expectations from others. "I like to think big," she says. "I want to be proud of myself." In the shop at Rancho Cielo, Natalia finds that encouragement.

After cutting the sheet of metal, Natalia and Jose Martinez, 17, examine a banged-up fender. Forgette taught them to use their fingers to feel the material. Jose, who has taken on the role of unofficial spokesperson for the class, came to Rancho Cielo in February 2023 after falling behind in high school. "There would just be like, constant sitting" in school, he says. "I don't really like doing that, as I want to do something."

Here he has learned how to figure out what's wrong with the body of a car and fix it. He isn't sure if he will work in the automotive industry, but he is sure he will be able to save himself money by fixing his own car. His classmate, Abel Galindo, also 17, has less to say about school — "it was like, whatever" — and more to say about classic cars. "I'm in love with old cars. Like, I wish I could have an old car," says Abel, who is from nearby King City.

Ross Merrill, president of the Laguna Seca Raceway Foundation, a nonprofit that helps finance improvements at the course, isn't surprised by the interest. "There's

**Right:** A student practices welding on a piece of scrap metal during class.





a car culture here in Monterey County that is world-renowned,” he says.

A third-generation Salinas farmer, Merrill grew up riding his bike to watch the races at Laguna Seca. Now he races in them. Hoping to preserve that history, Merrill serves on the advisory board of the classic and antique auto repair program at Rancho Cielo. “It’s becoming a lost art,” he says. Not among the students at Rancho Cielo.

Elias Pineda is taking the course for the second time, in a more advanced form so he can finish working on his 1997 GMC Sierra. The 18-year-old is smoothing the roof of the cab with another student, standing on a wood crate in the truck bed that houses a speaker system he installed. Pineda also redid the suspension and overhauled several other things. Although his blue-green truck has an old body style, it is not technically a classic car. Nevertheless, he considers it his presentation card, the piece of work he can point to when he goes job hunting. A Salinas native, Pineda has always been into trucks, muscle cars, “anything that involves four wheels and an engine.” Although he has yet to graduate, he has already started doing freelance automotive work.

After Jesse Hoffman graduated from the program last year, the 19-year-old found work fixing Mazdas. From there he tried another car shop and more recently took a job building parts for airplanes. Although different, he says the skills he learned in the classic and antique auto repair program have helped him. “The bodywork part of it very much goes into working with the aviation side of everything,” he explains. Most importantly it is a career he enjoys. “I love it in every way,” he says.

Back at Rancho Cielo as class nears its end for the day, several horseless carriages — as the earliest automobiles are known — putter up. Steve Hughes, with the Salinas Valley chapter of the Horseless Carriage Club of America, walks into the garage. Natalia bounds over. She wants to know if Hughes remembers her from an earlier visit (he does) and if he brought his vehicle (he did). His 1915 Locomobile needs constant attention.

Hughes serves on the program’s advisory board and regularly visits the class with fellow members of his club. They aren’t here for repairs; instead they offer the students rides.

Natalia takes shotgun in Hughes’ Locomobile, and two boys from class hop in the back. Hughes jokingly tells Natalia to press her finger to the dashboard so the vehicle will start. She knows her finger will not start the car, but she smiles and does it all the same. The car chortles to life and bounces down the road. ■







**Clockwise from above:**  
Members of the Horseless Carriage Club of America give students rides; Steve Hughes (left) shows students and staff an antique car engine; Jose Martinez searches a cabinet for the right tool.

Interview by Diana Schoberg  
Photography by Lucy Hewett

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# Simply irresistible

*President-elect Stephanie Urchick sees Rotary's  
Action Plan as key to a vibrant future*

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**I**t's late October at One Rotary Center, one of those autumn days that feels like summer, a last blast of warmth before the Chicago-area weather abruptly shifts. In less than a week, on Halloween, nearly an inch of snow will fall. ¶ Luckily, Rotary President-elect Stephanie Urchick isn't one to wither in the face of change. Instead, she embraces it. On the bookshelf in her office at Rotary headquarters, among the club directories and banners, the commemorative plates and plaques, and — surprise! — even some real books, there is a wooden sign adorned with multicolored leaves that reads, “Fall is proof that change is beautiful.” ¶ “It's the same reason I like butterflies,” explains Urchick. “They start out in little cocoons and don't look like much, but then they burst out and become a beautiful creature.”





Urchick, who wears an Action Plan pin this day on her black quilted jacket, champions the Rotary plan as a guide for Rotary clubs hoping to undergo a similar metamorphosis. “I’m all about helping clubs look for ways to change their culture so they become simply irresistible,” she says. “If you look at our worldwide numbers, there’s something like 150,000 people who come into Rotary every year, but there are 160,000 who leave. What that says to me is that some people are not finding value in their club experience. They’re not really leaving Rotary; they’re leaving a Rotary club. We need to get clubs to examine what’s happening.”

A member of the Rotary Club of McMurray, Pennsylvania, Urchick joined Rotary in 1991 and was quickly drawn to the work of The Rotary Foundation. As a new member, she heard about Rotary’s work to eradicate polio and became intrigued. She became the Foundation chair for her club and then for her district. Later, at the zone level, she served as a regional Rotary Foundation coordinator, focusing on fund development, and in 2012-14, she was a Rotary Foundation trustee at the international level. “There are so many great things that Rotary clubs do, and much of it is because they have worked through the Foundation,” she says.

As fall teetered between summer and winter, Urchick sat down with *Rotary* magazine senior staff writer **Diana Schoberg** to talk about her past and Rotary’s future.

**You’ll be the second woman to serve as president of Rotary. Should we even be making that distinction anymore?**

From my perspective, no. It’s about being the best leader for the time. However, I also recognize that people, especially women, will look to the position of Rotary president, and if they see a woman, they’ll say, “Wow, if that’s somebody who could do it, maybe I could do it too.”

I’ll also be one of only a few Rotary presidents who have been single while in office. Lots of people come up to me and say, “I’m single too, and it’s so great that you’re in the position.” To me, having a spouse does not determine whether you’re qualified for this role. But again, it does mean a lot to people to see someone in this position who looks like them or who has the same life status as they do.

**It’s like another element of diversity. Do you think the view of diversity at Rotary has shifted over the past few years?**

Diversity has always been one of our core values. But I think the way we’ve measured diversity has definitely changed. Today it means so much more than it did 40 years ago when we were an all-male organization. For instance, we now ask people to look at their community and see if their Rotary club mirrors that community. That could mean all kinds of things. It could be age; it could be gender; it could be religion or political affiliation. It could include things like a different perspective, the fact that people think differently. If your club mirrors the community, then you really have a handle on the future. And if it doesn’t, you have an opportunity.

**You became a Rotary member in 1991, shortly after women were allowed to join. Why did you join and why did you stay?**

Well, I was recently divorced. And when you are married, you tend to do a lot of things together. You go out to dinner together, you go on vacation together, and so on. I suddenly didn’t have that. Much like Rotary founder Paul Harris, I was looking for ways to meet new people. A woman walked into my office and asked me about going to a Rotary club meeting with her. I didn’t know anything about Rotary, but when she talked about the service and the internationality, I got interested. So I went, and I ended up joining.

Originally for me, it was about the fellowship. I wanted to meet new people. And I did; I met all kinds of people. But I also immediately got involved in service activities. By the fourth meeting, I was doing the newsletter, so I was already doing club service. That club was active in Rotary Youth Exchange and Group Study Exchange and Rotary Foundation grants. It was all amazing to me. So like most people, it was the service that kept me engaged in Rotary.

**Why did you want to become Rotary president — and what makes you the right leader for the organization right now?**

Becoming Rotary’s president was never really on my radar screen. I’ve served Rotary in so many different ways over the 30-plus years I’ve been a member. A special opportunity that really shaped my thinking was chairing the Strategic Planning Committee. We had the chance

to look at the organization’s strengths and weaknesses and reach out to the Rotary and non-Rotary world to get information about what people thought would move us into a thriving future.

Rotary had had the same meeting model for decades. We met four times a month; we rang the bell; we took attendance, etc. Clearly the world had changed, but we hadn’t. We really needed to catch up! Now we have e-clubs and passport clubs and satellite clubs and corporate clubs, all different opportunities for people to come into Rotary and to serve.

I started to look at all of that, and I realized that we are positioned to move into a thriving future. That’s what really propelled me to put my name forward. I truly believe that if Rotary districts and clubs use the Action Plan, we can thrive. It’s a future where there are many more Rotary members involved in service and fellowship.

**What skills from your past professional life will you lean on as president?**

I have a background in three different fields. I sang with a band when I was in college and for a few years after that. I had the experience of getting on stage and inspiring people, getting them to dance and have fun. It may sound simple, but it really did develop a set of skills. My second career was in higher education. I worked in college and university settings. For much of that time, I was helping students find careers and jobs. It was both fulfilling and eye-opening. My third career was as a self-employed person at my consulting and business development firm. I did a little bit of training and a whole lot of business development. I don’t think there’s any skill that we leave behind. They all become part of your package.

**What was your band name?**

The Harmonizers.

**Will there be any Harmonizers music playing as you arrive onstage at any events?**

No, I don’t think so. I hope they’ll be playing Robert Palmer’s “Simply Irresistible.”

**You used that phrase earlier: “simply irresistible.” Is there a significance to it?**

That’s what I want Rotary to be: simply irresistible. I’m hoping Rotary and Rotaract clubs will be simply irresistible to community members who have a heart for



service and fellowship. They will use the Action Plan to assess where they are and figure out where they need to go. Hopefully the outcome is clubs that are more attractive and will retain more people.

Every club is different. There's not a cookbook that we can give to clubs and say, "Do this and you're going to be fine." Every club develops its own culture. Country to country, Rotary is done differently. You can have Rotary clubs in the same district that are very different. We need every club to take a moment, do an assessment, and look at the four priorities of the Action Plan. Then they must ask themselves, Is there something we can do a little differently, or are we already doing the best we can in this or that category? If you're already irresistible, then stay that way. But we have to attract people to our existing clubs, and we have to start new clubs. That's the way to grow Rotary and to have a future.

**What's your theme, and how did you come up with it?**

It's simply *The Magic of Rotary*. People can put any verb they want in front of it. *Believe* in the magic of Rotary. *Spread* the magic of Rotary. *Build on* the magic of Rotary. *Celebrate* the magic of Rotary. There are all kinds of words that we can use.

It came from a visit to the Dominican Republic. We were helping install a water filter in a home where a grandmother, a mother, and three little boys lived. We assembled the water filter and then put dirty water in it so that the family could see that it came out clean. The women learned how to use the filter, and we were getting ready to leave when one of the children grabbed my sleeve and said, "Show me that magic again." That caught me, and I thought: It is magic. We're helping create a change in their lives.

**What will be your priorities as president, and why did you choose them?**

Advancing the Action Plan to grow membership is at the top of my list. I love this organization, just like every member of Rotary whom I meet. I want Rotary to have a future.

My second priority is healing a divided world through Positive Peace. There are several ways to get involved. If everyone would live The Four-Way Test instead of just reciting it, we would have a more peaceful world. I hope clubs will

rally around The Four-Way Test and use it in creative ways. And there is the peace pole project: Clubs can have peace poles erected in their local park, town square, or college campus. The message of peace on the poles is a visible sign to the community that Rotary is a peacebuilding organization. Additionally, Rotary has a Positive Peace Academy, which is an online activity. Any Rotary member or non-Rotary member can take the time to go through that. And our Rotary Peace Centers are powerful activators in changing lives. We're opening a new peace center in the Middle East, in Istanbul. In February 2025, we will have a peace conference at that location.

My final priority will be continuity. That means two things: all of us in leadership positions working with our predecessors and those who follow us. It also means looking at the things that

clubs have rallied around and things that have taken root. Just because a president leaves office doesn't mean that you should drop a successful program. What would have happened if Rotary had abandoned its efforts to eradicate polio after Clem Renouf or James Bomar were no longer president?

**One of your favorite mantras is "life is more interesting on the other side of yes."**

**Can you talk about that?**

Usually what I tell people is: "Say yes, and then just figure it out." "Hey, do you want to be newsletter editor?" "Yes." "Hey, do you want to be president?" "Yes." "Hey, do you want to do this?" "Yes." The only time I say no is if I follow it up with the word "problem." No problem. Life gives you so many opportunities. Say yes to them. You'll have time to figure out what to do next. ■



**That's what  
I want Rotary  
to be: simply  
irresistible.**

# OUR CLUBS

## VIRTUAL VISIT

### Global citizens

Rotary Club of Global Partners in Peace

**What do you get** when you put close to 20 Rotary Peace Fellow alumni in a (Zoom) room twice a month to discuss some of the world's most challenging issues?

Something like Global Partners in Peace, a 2-year-old Rotary club whose international membership meets online and specializes in developing thought leadership on issues ranging from refugee advocacy and human rights to youth empowerment and anti-poverty initiatives. “We have really meaningful conversations,” says Linda Low, a 2016-18 peace fellow at Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. “Guests often say, ‘You have the kinds of conversations that I have never seen in any other Rotary club.’”

The club, chartered in January 2022, has 18 members living in about a dozen countries. They include peace fellow alumni, global development professionals, and others with an interest in peacebuilding. Given its global membership, the club has also become a natural forum for advancing

diversity, equity, and inclusion — within Rotary and within members’ communities.

Low, a communications and advocacy professional living in Seattle, had initially joined a Rotary club in North Carolina after her peace fellowship there. But with a full-time job, she found it hard to meet attendance and participation requirements. When she left, members in her district encouraged her to form a club that could better meet her needs.

At the beginning of the pandemic, she began meeting online with other peace fellows from her class. “We all were looking for a way to connect,” she recalls. Inviting colleagues they knew from the global development field, they continued meeting, and soon peace fellows from other classes found them. After a year, they decided to form the partners in peace club. “We realized this still fills a void” even after pandemic shutdowns, Low says. “We knew we had a model that worked.”

That model is open and flexible. Members take turns chairing the discussions held two Saturdays a month. They don’t take attendance, but members are encouraged to log in at least once a month. Meetings are informal with some people dialing in while walking their dogs or late at night, depending on their time zone.

Meetings begin with a warmup question to get discussion going. It can be as whimsical as, “What is your favorite breakfast drink?” After that, members share updates on what is going on in their communities. “In 30 minutes, you have scanned the world,” says Patrick Bwire, a member from Uganda and peace fellow from the 2016-18 class at Duke-UNC.

“We get to hear what issues need to be addressed and how our colleagues are addressing them.”

Members choose guest speakers from their networks, careful to select diverse voices and perspectives. Topics have included rural poverty in Pakistan, human trafficking in Chile, and transformative peace initiatives in Somalia. The impact of those discussions hinges on skilled moderation. Low and her co-facilitators employ a dialogue model that focuses on sharing and listening to peers’ experiences to highlight their common humanity.

Members bring a wealth of experience and perspectives to the table. “If you ask a question about the definition of a concept, it’s possible that you will not come out with a single answer,” says club member Kevin Fonseca, a professor at the Universidad de los Andes in Colombia who focuses on peacebuilding, historical memory, and human rights. “Members elaborate with their answers so that it’s a collective action.”

Fonseca notes that the club’s current all-female leadership team demonstrates its commitment to equity and breaking traditional molds. And while Rotary is nonpolitical, these members aren’t afraid to discuss politics. “We talk about policies and governments, what’s happening in the States, and how it affects other countries,” says Low. “It doesn’t go there [get confrontational] because we’ve gotten to know each other so well.”

Sajjad Hussain says being part of the club allows him to see beyond his own focus on peacebuilding in Afghanistan and his native Pakistan. “It also gives me





a sense of responsibility, belonging, and fulfillment as a global citizen,” he says.

Members are reaching out to other clubs to share their expertise, with a focus on DEI. Low says this grew out of work she and her classmates did at Duke to bridge divides on campus following the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Low created a “leadership dialogue” model that she and classmates used to hold workshops with students from different colleges. “People walked away saying it had been a transformational weekend,”

Low says. “We kept getting requests to do more and more.”

After the club chartered, she trained other members in the techniques and began fielding requests to talk about DEI from other Rotary clubs including ones in California, North Carolina, and Washington.

Bwire says the club approaches DEI differently because members have already experienced it in the peace program. “My class had students from 21 different countries,” he says. “That already gave me a

hands-on experience in how to interact, relate to, and communicate with other people, and how to understand others, appreciate differences in culture, skin color, and people from other regions.”

Low agrees. “The whole point of the peace program is to bring different points of view and different lived experiences together to come up with something that is even better at the end,” she says. And reaching something better, together, is what the partners in peace club is all about.

— ARNOLD R. GRAHL

## HOW TO LEAD A DEI DISCUSSION

The dialogue model developed by Rotary Peace Fellow Linda Low emphasizes building connections, understanding needs and interests, and listening. She has this advice:

### Reframe the conversation.

“I try to frame questions in a way that invites people to reflect on their own experience of an issue and hear someone else’s experience with the same issue,” Low says.

### Find shared values.

Another activity involves forming circles of people, with a facilitator asking participants to write key values on paper plates. Participants drop the plates in the middle of the circle, reading the words aloud and pledging to uphold each value in the discussion.

### Pass the mic.

A moderator asks a question to get discussion going, then passes around a talking stick. To encourage listening, only the person holding the stick is allowed to speak.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

## Where the rubber meets the road

Florence Maher transforms academic theory into practical application, and her aspirations into impact

### Gethen is in the midst of an ice age.

It's a bitterly cold planet where even the warmest summer day is frigid. This is where Florence Maher spent her childhood. Figuratively speaking, of course. Gethen exists only in the tales of Ursula K. Le Guin, predominantly in her 1969 novel, *The Left Hand of Darkness*, one of many speculative works of fiction that Maher grew up reading.

"A lot of science fiction looks at social issues, but in a different context," Maher says. "It allows you to ask big questions about how the world would be different if things had evolved in a different way. I'm very interested in those sorts of structural issues and how they look when the rubber meets the road."

As an adult, Maher continues to ask those big questions as she looks for ways to maximize her knowledge and skills by pairing them with global institutions. Today, this Rotary Peace Fellow works as a social scientist for the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, gathering data and forming policy recommendations to achieve more diversity in the nuclear energy sector on a global scale.

Growing up, rural Oregon (on planet Earth) was home base for Maher, but her father's work took the family all over the Pacific Northwest, including Alaska. However, one move took them to Berlin for two years soon after the reunification of Germany in the 1990s. "That was the moment I realized there's a bigger world out there," she says. "That experience started me down an international career path."

Maher spent two years at Earlham College in Indiana (where the undergraduate student population totaled about 1,100) before taking time off to backpack around India and work as an au pair in Germany. "By the time I had finished scratching that itch, I realized I was not going back to Indiana," she says. "I wanted to do something different."

Although she was interested in the world, she didn't know a lot about her own country. She wanted to put herself in situations where she could grow, she said, and she



"The identity of being a peace fellow ... tells the world that you are aligning yourself with certain values," says Florence Maher.



completed her last two years of studies at Howard University, a historically Black college in Washington, D.C., to learn more about diversity in the United States. Being a white student at Howard, she tried to be respectful of the history and traditions in that welcoming environment, to learn without being the “center of attention,” she says. “As a white person, this is not my space. I’m here to shut up and listen.”

Maher graduated from Howard in 2009 and, following a lengthy, intimidating, and competitive hiring process, eventually landed a job as a foreign service officer with the U.S. Department of State. “At the time, it was definitely my dream job to live around the world and represent our government overseas,” she says.

Maher was assigned to consular duties in Mexico, where she conducted visa interviews. The work drained Maher emotionally as, contrary to her own impulses, she often had to deny people entry into the United States under the law. “You may feel different personally, but you’re not there to give your personal opinion about how the world works,” she says. “You’re there to interpret U.S. immigration law.”

Maher was then sent to Italy as an economic officer and vice consul before relocating to Washington, D.C., in 2018. That’s when she realized that this may have been the dream job of her 20s, but not of her life. She applied for and re-

ceived a Rotary Peace Fellowship at International Christian University in Tokyo. “I needed time to explore and find myself,” she says. “I wanted two years to take classes, have professional experiences, and perform field research. ICU has a very strong emphasis on doing a research-based thesis, and I was able to do field interviews and really develop my research skills to complement my practitioner skills.”

Specifically, Maher examined an attempt to develop a national action plan on business and human rights in Mexico. The endeavor, conducted between 2015 and 2018 by representatives from the government, business, and civil society, was ultimately unsuccessful in building a coalition. Nonetheless, in her 50,000-word thesis, Maher researched how Mexico’s attempt to create the plan offered a framework through which long-standing structural grievances might be better understood and more equitable social structures erected in their place.

Maher graduated from ICU with her master’s in peace studies in 2020. Now, at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, she believes she has found that sweet spot where academic theory can find practical application — and where her individual aspirations, paired with her well-honed skills, can have their greatest impact. “In June,” she says, “our member countries passed an

international policy instrument to improve representation of women in our nuclear sectors. There’s a well-established body of research showing that diverse teams perform better in innovation and performance,” which could offer significant benefits to combating climate change. More women in the nuclear sector, Maher adds, could also help garner trust in and support for nuclear technology, closing the gap between how it’s perceived and its real potential.

Some of the research supporting these conclusions was provided by Maher. “I don’t know if I would have been successful with the data collection if I hadn’t been a peace fellow,” she says. “Having done a robust, research-based thesis, I had the confidence to gather the data and write the report.”

Last year, Maher was elected to the board of the Rotary Peace Fellow Alumni Association. “The identity of being a peace fellow has been very powerful,” she says. “It tells the world that you are aligning yourself with certain values — of trying to work on structural change, of trying to make the world a better place.”

And if the planet Gethen is ever discovered, it’s a safe bet that Maher will be on the first diplomatic mission, welcoming the Gethenians to the interplanetary family. Until then, her focus remains here on Earth, where the rubber meets the road.

— JP SWENSON



#### Florence Maher

- **Bachelor’s in economics and political science,** Howard University, 2009
- **Rotary Peace Fellowship,** International Christian University, 2018–20
- **Board member,** Rotary Peace Fellow Alumni Association, 2023–25

From left: In 2018, Florence Maher addresses an audience that includes her classmates at International Christian University in Tokyo. A year later, she takes a break during an applied field experience in France.

DISPATCHES FROM  
OUR SISTER MAGAZINES  
*ROTARY DOWN UNDER*

## Get connected at the Three C's Cafe



**Isolation and a lack of support have taken a toll** on the mental health and well-being of health care providers around the world, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Members of the Rotary Club of Global Nurses and Midwives saw it in the experiences of colleagues and recognized the importance of having a safe virtual space to meet and talk about matters that may be difficult to discuss in workplaces.

There was an evident need among nurses and midwives to connect with others to ease a sense of isolation, loneliness, and, for some, despair and depression. And thus, the Three C's Cafe was created: an online space for the community to check in, connect, and chat.

The concept was inspired by the Frazzled Cafe initiative developed by comedian Ruby Wax in the United Kingdom — a walk-in cafe

hosted by facilitators trained to sit with people and provide them support, a friendly ear, and a place of connection.

Wendy McIntosh, charter president of the nurses and midwives club, is a trained group facilitator with over 30 years of experience as a mental health nurse. McIntosh recognizes the importance of understanding group dynamics and that the skills required to facilitate a virtual cafe differ from the usual skills nurses and midwives demonstrate in their professional roles.

In 2022, the club sponsored an eight-week intensive training program for Three C's Cafe facilitators. "The training was at a good pace, with a mix of explanations, videos, and activities, then a chance to reflect," says charter member Helen Cole. "The experience of being in the cafe and learning with the group was good. It was a very supportive, nurturing way to learn."

Participants were also able to integrate the skills learned from the cafe training into their professional roles. "The most difficult thing is to allow for silence but also to be curious with your questions to allow cafe participants to bring forward what is important for them to discuss," says club member Sue Walker.

Cafe participants don't need to be Rotary members, but they do need to be a nurse or a midwife. With the support of the International Council of Nurses, the reach has been great, with colleagues from countries including Mexico, Bangladesh, and Saudi Arabia joining the supportive chat.

Cafe sessions are available via a video meeting link provided after registering. Each session lasts an hour, with several offered each month.

— WENDY MCINTOSH  
AND MARIA CLEMENTE

For more information, look for the Three C's Cafe tab on the club's homepage, [gnmrotaryclub.com](http://gnmrotaryclub.com).



## A carbon calculator for Rotary clubs

**Ever wonder what your club's carbon footprint is?** Thanks to the Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group and partners, you can now estimate the carbon emissions linked to club meetings and projects using an online calculator and then identify ways to offset or reduce them.

"We are united by the common goal to reduce climate change," says Ludwig Kalthoff, of ESRAG Europe. "Our aim is to spread the Every Club Carbon Friendly initiative across Europe and across the world."

The ESRAG Club Carbon Calculator Project began in 2018-19 when the Rotary Club of Wellington, New Zealand, calculated its annual carbon footprint to be 8 metric tons of carbon dioxide. Using a club emissions reduction plan and carbon offset purchases for regenerating growth on sites of native forests, it became the first Rotary club in the world to be certified as carbon neutral.

"The committee decided that we could make a real difference if we could encourage 46,000 Rotary clubs in the world to become carbon zero and 1.4 million Rotary members globally to reduce their personal and household carbon emissions," says Roger Blakeley, chair of the Wellington club's climate change committee.

ESRAG's 2022-23 chair, Patricia Armstrong, convened Rotary members in 2020 from Australia, New Zealand, the UK, Mali, and the United States to develop a carbon calculator that had global application. Toitū Envirocare New Zealand, one of the country's biggest climate action certifiers, was commissioned to develop a spreadsheet carbon calculator for Rotary clubs, and a pilot version was successfully trialed in Australia and New Zealand.

Garry Fowler, a member of the Rotary Club of Melbourne, was part of the core group. "We wanted



a way for clubs to easily gather data on their emissions from club meetings, events and projects," Fowler says. "This included travel by members to and from meetings, food and drink consumed, electricity used, and waste. We provided a standard format to capture the data."

The ESRAG spreadsheet calculator was launched at an international event over video conference in May 2022. "It was exciting to launch the calculator initially for New Zealand and Australia as we envisaged it could be extended for use in other countries," says ESRAG Oceania

Chair Ted Waghorne.

Matt McLeod, 2022-23 governor of District 9910, volunteered to develop a web-based calculator version. The online estimator is quick and easy to use to identify emission levels and suggest where reductions can be made. Some clubs may prefer to use the spreadsheet calculator, with more details and accuracy and the option to print pie charts and graphs. "So go online now and estimate or calculate your club's emission levels, then plan how these can be reduced," says Blakeley.

**"The committee decided that we could make a real difference if we could encourage 46,000 Rotary clubs in the world to become carbon zero."**

Estimate your club's carbon footprint at [esragoceania.org/take action](https://esragoceania.org/take-action).

## HANDBOOK

# The path to a Rotary Peace Fellowship

Each year, Rotary awards up to 130 fully funded fellowships for leaders from around the world to study at one of its peace centers. Here's how you can recruit candidates and support them through the application process and beyond.

# 1

## Recruitment of candidates

### Ongoing

Candidates should be highly motivated peace and development leaders with the potential to have even greater impact in their work through the advanced knowledge, training, and skills that the Rotary Peace Fellowship provides. They could include journalists, social workers, therapists, artists, environmentalists, and lawyers who are advancing social justice and human rights. The program accepts both early-career professionals and experienced change-makers who can benefit from the fellowship's broad network of peacebuilders, academic experts, and Rotary members.

Rotary and Rotaract members should look for candidates within their workplaces, social and professional networks, universities, local governments, and nongovernmental and community organizations.

Use the referral form you can find at [on.rotary.org/peacereferral](https://on.rotary.org/peacereferral) to send potential applicants more information.

Learn more about supporting Rotary Peace Fellowships at [rotary.org/peace-fellowships](https://rotary.org/peace-fellowships).

# 2

## Candidate applications

1 February–15 May

Candidates need to complete an online application. They are encouraged to use the Club Finder tool at [my.rotary.org/club-search](https://my.rotary.org/club-search) to locate the nearest Rotary or Rotaract club or an online club to learn about Rotary's work. Club members can support candidates by inviting them to Rotary activities, helping them prepare a competitive application, providing feedback on résumés and essays, and volunteering to submit a club or district recommendation.

# 3

## Staff review

15 May–June

Staff members evaluate applications for eligibility and completeness. Candidates must be proficient in English, have a bachelor's degree, and have a gap of at least three years between the completion of their most recent academic degree program and the intended start date for the fellowship (students enrolled in a university program are not eligible).

Master's candidates must have at least three years of full-time relevant experience in peace or development work. Certificate candidates must have at least five years and be from the region where they are applying, have worked in the region, work elsewhere with communities or initiatives related to the region, or demonstrate a compelling interest in peacebuilding approaches in the region.

Active Rotary members and employees of Rotary clubs, Rotary International, or other Rotary entities, as well as immediate family of members and employees, are not eligible. Rotaractors are eligible to apply as long as they do not hold dual membership in a Rotary club.



# 4

## Scoring of qualified applicants

July–September

Rotary evaluators and university partners thoroughly review applications based on criteria including commitment to peace and development, leadership potential, compatibility with fellowship objectives, and fit with Rotary; academic record and compatibility with the candidate's preferred university program; and for certificate candidates, the feasibility and impact of their proposed social change initiative. University staff interview the top candidates.

# 5

## Selection of finalists

September–October

Rotary Peace Centers Committee members and university partners select the finalists, who are approved by The Rotary Foundation Trustees. Each year, they award up to 130 fully funded scholarships, typically to 50 master's degree and 80 certificate students.

# 6

## Candidate notification

November

Fellowships cover tuition and fees, room and board, round-trip transportation, and internship and field study expenses. Those receiving a fellowship for a master's program must apply separately for admission to the university where the peace center is located.

# 7

## Peace fellows engagement

Ongoing

Rotary and Rotaract clubs can work with fellows on peacebuilding projects, support their initiatives with district grants, invite them to speak at club meetings, and include them in activities.

## ROTARY PEACE CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

### MASTER'S PROGRAM UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

15- to 24-month course with a two- to three-month applied field experience; best for early-career candidates

#### ♥ Duke University and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Fellows earn a master's degree from Duke or the University of North Carolina; in addition, fellows at both universities can earn a graduate certificate in international peace and conflict resolution from UNC, a few hours' drive from Duke.

#### ♥ International Christian University, Tokyo

Fellows earn a master's degree in peace studies at the ICU Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, known for its interdisciplinary program and liberal arts approach.

#### ♥ University of Bradford, Bradford, England

The Department of Peace Studies and International Development at Bradford is the largest academic center of its kind in the world.

#### ♥ University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

Fellows earn a master's degree in peace and conflict studies at the Graduate Centre in Governance and International Affairs.

#### ♥ Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden

The Department of Peace and Conflict Research is known for its collection of data related to armed conflict and organized violence.

### CERTIFICATE PROGRAM UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

One-year blended learning program that includes a nine-month social change initiative; best for midcareer professionals

#### ♥ Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda

The program integrates theory, research, and practice with a focus on issues relevant to Africa. Fellows earn a postgraduate diploma in peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

#### ♥ Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul

Opening in 2025, the multidisciplinary program offers a postgraduate diploma in peace and development studies for fellows focusing on peacebuilding within the Middle East or North Africa.

## CALENDAR

## February events

### A CHILLY DIP

**Event:** Alpharetta Polar Bear Plunge

**Host:** Rotary Club of Alpharetta, Georgia

**What it benefits:** Local schools and nonprofits

**Date:** 3 February

For this event, now in its sixth year, schools, nonprofits, and other organizations form teams of participants who don costumes and jump into a cold pool to raise money for their group. Last year's plunge generated about \$120,000, with more than 80 brave souls making a splash in outfits that included hot dog and pink bunny suits.

### GET UP AND GIVE

**Event:** Rise.Shine.Give.

**Host:** Rotary Club of Lincoln, Nebraska

**What it benefits:** Lutheran Family Services and local projects

**Date:** 10 February

This Saturday morning brunch is held at the University of Nebraska's Innovation Campus. In addition to food and drinks (which include bottomless mimosas and bloody marys), the event features speakers, silent and live auctions, and a raffle with the chance to win a vacation. Half the funds raised go toward a social services organization that offers programs focused on children, community, and behavioral health.

### LET IT SNOW

**Event:** Snow Festival

**Host:** Rotary Club of Deerfield Valley (West Dover), Vermont

**What it benefits:** Local nonprofits

**Date:** 11 February

The annual festival on the grounds of a 19th-century inn offers an antidote to the winter doldrums. Attendees can take part in cold weather activities such as ice



### COOKIN' LOW AND SLOW

**Event:** Annual Crock-off

**Host:** Interact Club of District 117, Illinois

**What it benefits:** EdPowerment, an educational nonprofit based in Tanzania

**Date:** 9 February

What began over a decade ago as an annual chili cook-off is now a "crock-off," in which a wider range of slow cooker dishes, from soups and stews to mac and cheese, can be entered. Attendees try samples and then vote for their favorite. The event includes a silent auction, a raffle, and live music. It is held before a basketball game between rival high schools; the Interact club, which is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Antioch, is made up of students from both schools.

skating and a snowshoe race and then warm up with hot chocolate and s'mores by a fire pit or duck inside for cocktails and bites to eat. The event includes kids games, a raffle, and live music performed by club member Ian Campbell, a folk-rock singer-songwriter.

### HAVE A BALL

**Event:** Indoor Mini Golf Classic

**Host:** Rotary Club of Williamsport, Pennsylvania

**What it benefits:** Local nonprofits

**Date:** 18 February

For its annual Mardi Gras-themed event, the club installs in a hotel an 18-hole miniature golf course designed and built by club members and supporters. One hole is a replica of the Operation board game, requiring golfers to use forceps to

fetch their ball from an opening in the board. Other holes send golf balls up ramps or through tunnels. Adults can play for \$8, with discounted rates for children and for parties of four.

### BARGAINS AHOY!

**Event:** Gigantic Nautical Market

**Host:** Rotary Club of Upper Keys, Florida

**What it benefits:** Local scholarships

**Dates:** 24-25 February

First held in 1995, this popular flea market at a park in the Florida Keys focuses on all things nautical. More than 300 vendors sell clothing, fishing and diving gear, boats, motors, and more, while over a dozen food trucks spread around the park feed hungry bargain hunters. Organizers expect some 20,000 people to attend.

**Tell us about your event.** Write to [magazine@rotary.org](mailto:magazine@rotary.org) and put "calendar" in the subject line. Submissions must be received at least five months before the event to be considered for inclusion.





# YOUR PROJECT PLANNING EXPERTS



**G. VIVIANA  
SANTA CRUZ MÉRIDA**  
Bolivia, District 4690

**CADRE TITLE:**

Cadre Adviser for Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene and  
Regional Organizer for Central and South America

**OCCUPATION:**

Civil engineer specializing in water and sanitation



**WHAT ARE ROTARY  
MEMBERS SAYING  
ABOUT VIVIANA?**

“Viviana’s contribution has been  
fundamental for Rotary members  
in our district to be trained on water  
and sanitation projects being planned,  
structured, sustained, and based on  
the needs of the community.”

— Livio Zozzoli, district governor and former district  
Rotary Foundation chair, District 4690 (Bolivia)

**The Rotary Foundation Cadre of  
Technical Advisers** is a network of  
hundreds of Rotary members who  
are experts from around the globe.  
These advisers use their professional  
skills and technical expertise to  
enhance Rotary members’ grant  
projects in our areas of focus.

**THE CADRE CAN SUPPORT YOU BY:**

- Providing project planning advice  
and implementation guidance
- Helping with community  
assessment design
- Incorporating elements of  
sustainability into projects
- Answering questions about Rotary’s  
areas of focus
- Providing financial management  
best practices

Connect with a Cadre member  
today by visiting the Cadre page  
on My Rotary, or email us at  
[cadre@rotary.org](mailto:cadre@rotary.org).

**There are hundreds of experts  
standing by to help you plan or  
enhance your Rotary project!**



TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

## The groundwork for peace

**Following the news is challenging these days.** Stories of war and violence are deeply discouraging. It breaks my heart when I hear about innocent bystanders, particularly women and children, who are caught in the crossfire of conflict.

Is there anything we can do about it? We certainly can't turn away from the problem. I think in these times, we need to shift our focus from what we can't change to what we can do. We can also support what we know works.

February is Rotary's Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention Month. It is one of our areas of focus because peace is central to everything we do in Rotary. Even though most of us aren't diplomats at the negotiating table or peacebuilders working on active conflicts, in Rotary's singular way, what we do works to promote peace and prevent conflict somewhere, every day.

Every Rotary member should remember this during the month of February: When you support any of the areas of focus of The Rotary Foundation, you are contributing to peace. Foundation grants that address fundamental issues — such as a global grant focused on enhancing basic literacy in a community — will cultivate a better understanding of the world and lead to greater economic stability, laying the groundwork for peace.

You can say the same for all the areas of focus, from the environment to eco-

nomic development. They help stabilize communities, lift families out of poverty, and foster the pursuit of education.

Peace is and always has been interwoven into the fabric of Rotary beyond our projects, too. In 1999, when we established the Rotary Peace Centers through a visionary initiative of our Foundation, we reaffirmed this commitment. This month, we are once again renewing that vision, with Bahçeşehir University in Istanbul, our host partner for the newest Rotary Peace Center, as it takes its first steps to prepare for the initial cohort of students arriving in early 2025.

All along the way, as Rotary has evolved into a global force for good, it has championed peace and understanding in countless ways, and our Foundation remains the great driving force behind that vision. It will be part of Rotary's eternal legacy.

And by supporting our work, you will be able to say that you are a part of that legacy. You can directly support it by visiting [rotary.org/donate](https://rotary.org/donate) and selecting peacebuilding and conflict prevention as the area of focus.

So, yes, there is a lot you can do to support peace and prevent conflict. The next step is up to you.

**BARRY RASSIN**

*Foundation trustee chair*

## SERVICE ABOVE SELF

### THE OBJECT OF ROTARY

The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

**First** The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;

**Second** High ethical standards in business and professions, the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations, and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;

**Third** The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life;

**Fourth** The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

### THE FOUR-WAY TEST

Of the things we think, say or do:

1. Is it the **truth**?
2. Is it **fair** to all concerned?
3. Will it build **goodwill** and **better friendships**?
4. Will it be **beneficial** to all concerned?

### ROTARIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

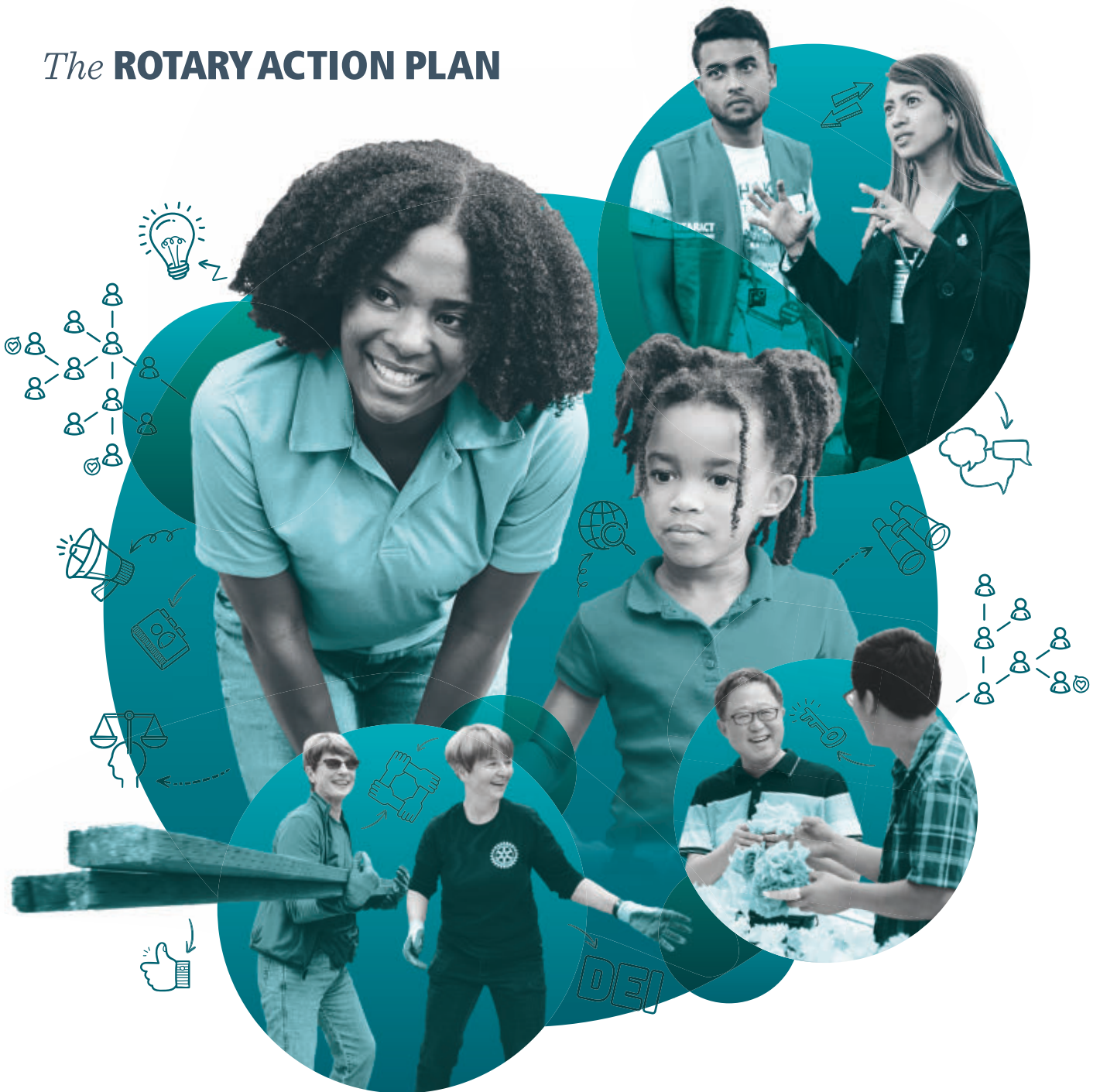
The following code of conduct has been adopted for the use of Rotarians:

As a Rotarian, I will

1. Act with integrity and high ethical standards in my personal and professional life
2. Deal fairly with others and treat them and their occupations with respect
3. Use my professional skills through Rotary to: mentor young people, help those with special needs, and improve people's quality of life in my community and in the world
4. Avoid behavior that reflects adversely on Rotary or other Rotarians
5. Help maintain a harassment-free environment in Rotary meetings, events, and activities, report any suspected harassment, and help ensure non-retaliation to those individuals that report harassment.



# *The* **ROTARY ACTION PLAN**



Is your club looking for new ways to  
connect with your community?  
**The Action Plan can help.**



Learn about expanding your club's reach:  
**[rotary.org/actionplan](https://rotary.org/actionplan)**



Health workers in Pakistan mark the little finger of a child after vaccinating him.

## THE ROTARY FOUNDATION

# 2022-23 Service Award for a Polio-Free World

The Rotary Foundation Trustees established the Service Award for a Polio-Free World to honor members who have made outstanding contributions to Rotary's polio eradication efforts. Members can nominate individuals for regional or international service. The 68 members listed received the 2022-23 award.

## INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

Kunle David Adeyanju, District 9110  
 Antonio Amoroso, District 2102  
 William Ferreira, District 6440  
 Ramesh Ferris, District 5370  
 Keshav Kunwar, District 3292  
 Greg Owen, District 5320  
 Charles Robert "Bob" Rogers, District 5130  
 E.K. Sagadhevan, District 3203  
 Dolly Siew Keat Yeap, District 3310

Nominations for the Service Award for a Polio-Free World are accepted each year between 15 July and 1 October. To learn more, visit [rotary.org/awards](https://rotary.org/awards).

## REGIONAL SERVICE

*Regions are as defined by the World Health Organization.*

### AFRICA

Achabi Akouavi "Cathy" Attiogbé,  
 District 9101  
 Elvis Chibiko Chukwu, District 9125

### AMERICAS

Douglas M. Kauffmann, District 7750  
 Alka Khanolkar, District 6000  
 Leonel Eduardo López Treviño, District 4130  
 Fernando Meier, District 4355  
 Raimunda Gisele Oliveira, District 4720  
 David John Palmer, District 7410  
 William Randy Perkins, District 7690  
 Ricardo Henryque Reginato Quevedo Melo,  
 District 4700

Geison Rodrigues, District 4500  
 Mary Eileen Shackleton, District 7230  
 Charlotte Smith, District 5000  
 Marie R. Turnbull, District 6970  
 Peter Joseph Van Well, District 5060

### EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Rana Saeed Ahmad, District 3272  
 Abdul Qaum Almas\*  
 Safdar Hussain Arain, District 3271  
 Ahmed Ejaz, District 3272  
 Muhammad Moosa Khan Gondal,  
 District 3271  
 Azmat Hayat, District 3272  
 Shakeel Kaim Khani, District 3271  
 Shahzadi Mansoor, District 3271  
 Bushra Maryam, District 3272  
 Sadardin Memon, District 3271  
 Afzal Muhammad, District 3272  
 Muhammad Ismail Qamar, District 3272  
 Arshad Muhammad Qureshi, District 3271  
 Muhammad Aslam Ranger, District 3271  
 Aqeela Shamsi Saeed, District 3272  
 Abdul Jabbar Shaikh, District 3271  
 Dileep Singh, District 3271  
 Saira Zaffar, District 3272

*\*Member of a nondistricted club in Afghanistan*

### EUROPE

Barry Buttenshaw, District 1145  
 Lorentzos Chazapis, District 2475  
 Faruk Mustafa Güler, District 2430  
 Wim Leerman, District 2130  
 Luis Santos, District 2203  
 Michel Zaffran, District 1710

### SOUTHEAST ASIA

Mohammad Tayub Chowdhury, District 3282  
 Sridhar Jagannathan, District 3232  
 Shivakumar JM, District 3190  
 Narasinha Ramchandra Joshi, District 3170  
 Sasanka Mahapatra, District 3262  
 Rabinderjit Singh Panesar, District 3240  
 Shyamashree Sen, District 3291  
 Parameshwar Shiggaon, District 3182  
 Narasimhan Subramanian, District 3011  
 Lakshmanan Veerappan, District 3000

### WESTERN PACIFIC

David Anderson, District 9685  
 Mark Anderson, District 9685  
 Enrique Guillermo Andres, District 3860  
 Josephine Vergara Bernabe, District 3800  
 Apolinario Caballero Castillo, District 3780  
 Carla Garcia Espinosa, District 3790  
 Mohan Kishan Lalwani, District 3770  
 Sang-Chul Lee, District 3700  
 Anne Maree Matthews, District 9560  
 William Peter Sheehan, District 9560



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IN MEMORIAM

# The business of serving others

Richard D. King  
1938-2023



**Richard D. King**, a past Rotary International president who had a passion for improving people's lives, died 11 October at age 84.

King, a longtime member of the Rotary Club of Niles (Fremont), California, served as Rotary International president in 2001-02. With the theme of *Mankind Is Our Business*, he encouraged members to extend compassion and aid to people in need and find workable solutions to the world's persistent challenges. He said it is Rotary's business to improve the quality of life in each of the communities where clubs are located.

In a 2016 interview conducted by his Rotary club, King recounted an early experience that shaped his Rotary life. He was leading a Group Study Exchange trip in India when he accompanied a Rotarian doctor to a poor village. The doctor had performed cataract surgery and, with the patient's children nearby, removed the bandages to determine whether she could see.

"For the first time in her life, she saw her own three children," King recalled. "I'll never forget the look on her face. I'll never forget it. It seared me. She wasn't the only one who got vision that day."

One initiative King launched as RI president was a strategic alliance with the Wheelchair Foundation through which Rotary members helped provide thousands of wheelchairs to people around the world. King was a member of the foundation's international board of advisers.

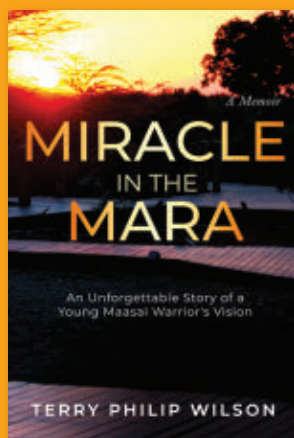
A Rotarian since 1968, King served as district governor in 1982-83, RI director in 1989-91, and Rotary Foundation trustee in 1996-2000. He was honored with The Rotary Foundation's Citation for Meritorious Service, Distinguished Service Award, and PolioPlus Pioneer Award.

King earned undergraduate and law degrees from the University of California, Berkeley, after which he taught law at Brigham Young University and then served in the Army in military intelligence. For many years, he was a senior partner in the law firm of King, King & King. Early in his career, he also performed as a singer and actor. In addition, King was an active fundraiser for Boy Scouts of America and served in leadership roles with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

King is survived by his wife, Cherie Kay King, and their two sons, Robert and Tyson.

— ARNOLD R. GRAHL

PHOTOGRAPH: ROTARY FILE PHOTO



Stories from Rotarian visits to southwestern Kenya



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[rotary.org/membership](https://rotary.org/membership)



2024 CONVENTION

# Inspiration around every corner



**It's a tale as old as the Rotary International Convention:** Two members from different clubs bump into each other, start chatting, and get the spark of an idea for a project.

So don't be shy about starting a conversation with the stranger standing next to you or someone you meet over a meal at the convention 25-29 May in Singapore. After all, two people who talked at a bus stop at the 2016 convention in Seoul went on to plan a project fair in Africa.

Members regularly share stories about chance convention encounters that lead to meaningful projects — the kind that fulfill this year's convention theme: *Sharing Hope With the World*.

They have met while painting a playground during the 2012 convention in Bangkok, lingering after breakout sessions,

and, of course, visiting House of Friendship booths. Members relish the chance to meet new friends from other countries to find global grant project ideas, but they also run into potential project partners from their own state, province, or district.

After making a convention connection, Rotary members from countries across the world have worked with new partners on countless initiatives, including providing ShelterBoxes to refugees, launching a Rotaract multidistrict information organization, and recycling millions of plastic bottle caps to raise money to end polio.

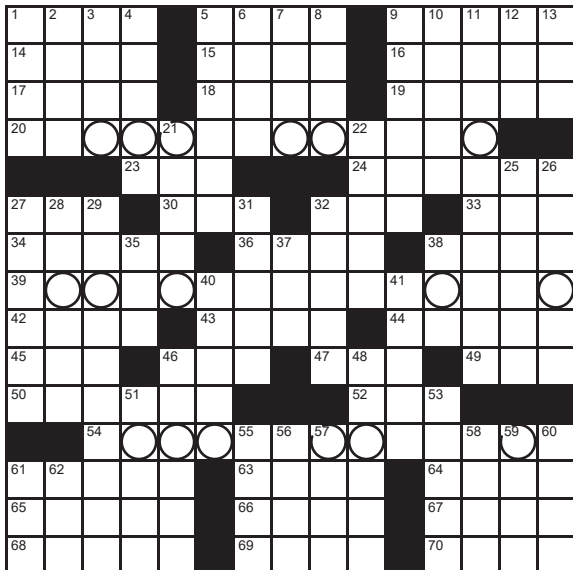
A Georgia club's article about a global grant with a club in India to build toilet facilities captures the convention's influence: "This all began at the Atlanta RI Convention in 2017." What seed of an idea will you find in Singapore this spring? ■

Learn more and register at [convention.rotary.org](https://convention.rotary.org).

CROSSWORD

# What's new in Istanbul?

By Victor Fleming  
Rotary Club of Little Rock, Arkansas



Solution on **page 10**

ACROSS

- 1 It's a long story!
- 5 Neighbor of Vietnam
- 9 Bob of choreography
- 14 Trudge
- 15 Farm division
- 16 Mandolin cousins
- 17 Managed, with "out"
- 18 Costa \_\_\_\_
- 19 Les \_\_\_\_-Unis
- 20 Vessel in one's neck
- 23 Long of *Soul Food*
- 24 Antarctic and Arctic
- 27 Abbr. after a year
- 30 ABA member
- 32 Sra., in Paris
- 33 Asian festival
- 34 Cake component
- 36 Actress Martha
- 38 Aircraft carrier, e.g.
- 39 Revenue from actively doing business
- 42 Korbust or Kurylenko
- 43 "And away \_\_\_\_!"
- 44 Draw a bead on
- 45 Brooks or Blanc
- 46 Start to -icure or -estal
- 47 Cool, in 1980s hip-hop
- 49 WSW opposite

- 50 *The Thinker*, for one
- 52 Everest and Zion (abbr.)
- 54 Actors who draw the most attention
- 61 *An Enemy of the People* playwright
- 63 Agitate
- 64 Chimps and gorillas
- 65 Refine, as ore
- 66 Fruit-flavored drink mix
- 67 "Peachy \_\_\_\_!"
- 68 Airline seat choice
- 69 Card game fee
- 70 Wriggly swimmers

DOWN

- 1 Architect's detail
- 2 \_\_\_\_-Seltzer
- 3 Movie's end?
- 4 Annex
- 5 Rancher's rope
- 6 Battery fluid
- 7 *Free Willy* animal
- 8 Scorch on a grill
- 9 Sheep's coat
- 10 Beyond unconventional
- 11 Like some parents
- 12 Established
- 13 Alpine road shape
- 21 Pageant crown

- 22 Marisa of *The Rewrite*
- 25 \_\_\_\_ Marcus (retail chain)
- 26 Tampa neighbor, casually
- 27 Flourishes
- 28 Ibuprofen dose, maybe
- 29 Optometrist's inventory
- 31 Endeavored
- 32 "Heavens!"
- 35 Pitcher's stat
- 37 *Hulk* director Lee
- 38 Bio. or chem.
- 40 10-to-12-year-old
- 41 1992 campaign issue
- 46 Bandleader Tito
- 48 Come forth
- 51 Immune system agent
- 53 Quench alternative
- 55 This Cuban?
- 56 Lee or Musial
- 57 Salon job
- 58 Fencing blade
- 59 Angler's device
- 60 Figs. with two hyphens
- 61 "... \_\_\_\_ penny earned"
- 62 ASCAP competitor



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## A decadent history

When it comes to dessert, Boston is the creme de la creme

**The Boston area is home** to many delicious confectionary treats, and our Rotary club is located in the sweet spot. If you come visit, our members will be happy to give you a tour of our town's delicious history. Just down the road from where our club meets was the famous Toll House, a restaurant in Whitman, Massachusetts, that hosted numerous dignitaries and celebrities as they traveled to and from Boston. Experimenting with cookie dough, Ruth Wakefield, who founded the restaurant with her husband, added chocolate chips and created what came to be called the Toll House cookie. That treat, whose recipe has been printed on bags of Nestlé chocolate chips since around 1940, is now the official cookie of Massachusetts.

**GETTIN' FIGGY:** The Fig Newton has its origins in Philadelphia, where James Henry Mitchell invented a machine that enabled mass production of a cookie-like sweet, made of pastry dough filled with fig paste, that was considered a means of improving digestion. But when a Massachusetts bakery began using the machine, it called the concoction the Newton, after a Boston suburb.

**AND FOR DESSERT:** The Boston cream pie dates to the late 19th century when it is said to have been created by a French chef at the Parker House Hotel. The dessert (actually a cake) is two layers of spongecake filled with custard and topped with chocolate. In 1996 the Boston cream pie was named the state's official dessert.

— MIKE KRYZANEK

**Mike Kryzanek**  
Rotary  
Club of The  
Bridgewaters,  
Massachusetts

What food is your region famous for? Tell us at [magazine@rotary.org](mailto:magazine@rotary.org) and you may see it featured in an upcoming issue.



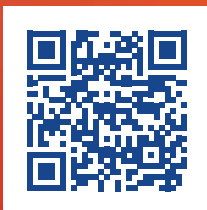


# CREATE HOPE in the WORLD

When we nurture peace, opportunities,  
and one another, we help heal the  
world and create lasting change.

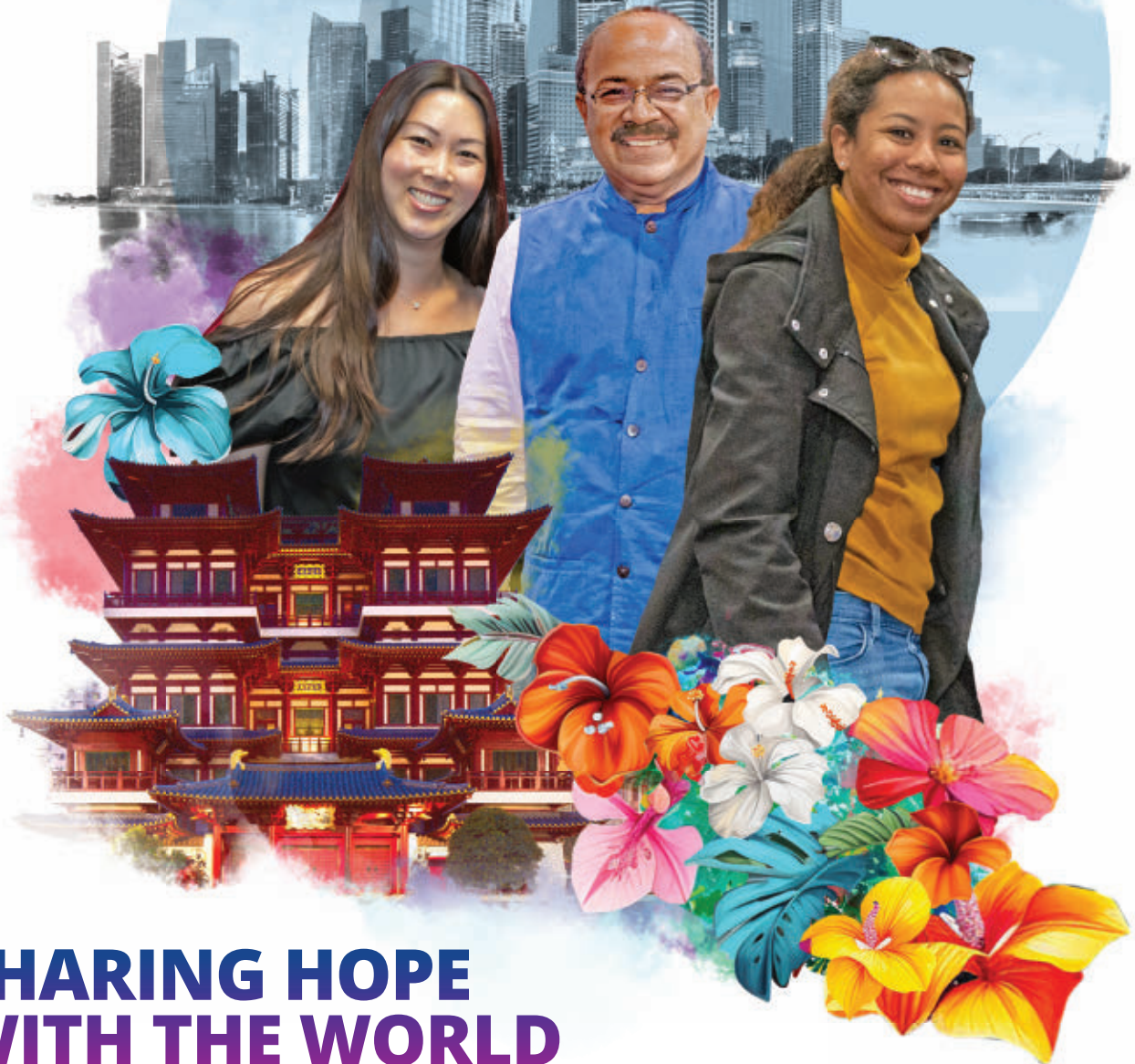
## Let's create hope by:

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