

## The Rotary Foundation

The Rotary Foundation is a not-for-profit corporation that supports the efforts of Rotary International to achieve world understanding and peace through international humanitarian, educational, and cultural exchange [programs](#). It is supported solely by voluntary [contributions](#) from Rotarians and friends of the Foundation who share its vision of a better world.

The Foundation was created in 1917 by Rotary International's sixth president, Arch C. Klumph, as an endowment fund for Rotary "to do good in the world." It has grown from an initial contribution of US\$26.50 to more than US\$117.9 million contributed in 2004-05. Its event-filled [history](#) is a story of Rotarians learning the value of service to humanity.

The Foundation's [Humanitarian Programs](#) fund international Rotary club and district projects to improve the quality of life, providing health care, clean water, food, education, and other essential needs primarily in the developing world. One of the major Humanitarian Programs is [PolioPlus](#), which seeks to eradicate the poliovirus worldwide. Through its [Educational Programs](#), the Foundation provides funding for some 1,200 students to study abroad each year. Grants are also awarded to university teachers to teach in developing countries and for exchanges of business and professional people. Former participants in the Foundation's programs have the opportunity to continue their affiliation with Rotary as [Foundation Alumni](#).

For more information on current Foundation program awards and financial status see the Rotary Foundation Fact Card and the Rotary Foundation Annual Report, both of which are available for [download](#).

Here is a sampling of what some Rotarians, Foundation alumni, and others who have worked with the Foundation have said about the international work of The Rotary Foundation:

*"Rotary set me on a course that I am still continuing. If I had not gone to the United States as an Ambassadorial Scholar, I don't think I would have pursued the study of International Relations."*

**Sadako Ogata**

Former United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees  
Foundation Scholar, 1951-52

*"Rotary International's masterpiece is The Rotary Foundation. It transforms our dreams into splendid realities . . . it is the most generous expression of Rotarian generosity – a generosity that not only brings benefits but also brings help and cooperation to solve the problems that affect mankind. The Rotary Foundation achieves the best that mankind can possibly achieve."*

**Paulo V.C. Costa**

President, Rotary International, 1990-91

*"We always wanted to do something through Rotary. Our decision was based on six years' involvement with Matching Grant projects in Haiti, Mexico, India, and South Africa. We were extremely impressed with the way the program reaches and touches people with much less administrative problems and costs than any other international humanitarian organization."*

**Frank and Mildred Branscombe**

Rotary Club of Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada  
donors of an endowed fund to support the Matching Grants program

*"From Seattle to Santiago, from Bogota to Bombay, and everywhere in between, the children of the world are waiting. They are the hope of the future, and you are their hope that the future will be bright. I thank you, Rotary, for alleviating the suffering of children."*

**Audrey Hepburn**

discussing the PolioPlus program on behalf of UNICEF

*"In Warsaw, Wojciech Sierpinski, a Rotary club president, took me on a tour I will never forget. We visited his parent's house – where they lived during World War II. There in the kitchen, under a dusty stack of crates was a secret wooden panel in the floor. Wojciech removed the panel to reveal a tiny room underneath the kitchen floor where his parents hid their neighbors – a Jewish family – during the war. As I stood speechless, listening to Wojciech describe how they evaded the Nazis, I realized the full value of the Group Study Exchange program."*

**Ian Oxman**

Group Study Exchange team member from California, USA  
describing part of his trip to Warsaw, Poland

*"The Rotary Foundation's programs are all the more important because we live in a world of sharp contrasts: fear and hope, illness and good health, poverty and wealth. Worse, we live in a world in which inequalities of income, unemployment – and presumably exclusion from well-being – have sensibly increased in the last fifteen years, not so much between countries, but within countries, developed and developing alike. In such a situation, the role of The Rotary Foundation is of the utmost importance."*

**Bertrand Rene Munier**

Professor of Economics

Ecole Normal Supérieure, Cachan, France

Ambassadorial Scholar 1967-68