

Educational Reading #1

The Rotary Foundation – Rotary's Greatest Tool for Doing Good

The Rotary Foundation is often called the "engine" that allows Rotary clubs around the world to transform ideas into action. While Rotary clubs raise money locally for projects in their own communities, the Foundation provides the resources that allow Rotarians to tackle problems on a global scale. Since its creation in 1917 by Rotary International's sixth president, Arch Klumph, the Foundation has grown into one of the world's most respected charitable organizations.

Arch Klumph envisioned a fund that would allow Rotary "to do good in the world." What began with a single contribution of just over \$26 has grown into a foundation that has distributed billions of dollars in grants for humanitarian projects, scholarships, vocational training, and peace initiatives.

Today, Rotary Foundation grants support projects in six Areas of Focus:

- Promoting Peace
- Fighting Disease
- Providing Clean Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
- Saving Mothers and Children
- Supporting Education
- Growing Local Economies

In addition, Rotary has added Protecting the Environment as an important area of emphasis in recent years.

Every Rotary club has opportunities to apply for Foundation grants. District Grants allow clubs to support local community needs, while Global Grants help fund larger international projects that involve partnerships between Rotary clubs in different countries. Global Grants typically address one or more of Rotary's Areas of Focus and are designed to create sustainable, long-term improvements rather than temporary assistance.

One of the Foundation's strengths is stewardship. Rotary carefully monitors how grant funds are used, ensuring that donations are spent responsibly. Because of this accountability, the Foundation consistently receives high ratings from independent charity evaluators.

Individual Rotarians also play an important role. Members are encouraged to contribute annually to the Annual Fund, which finances many of the grants awarded each year. Donations may also be directed toward the Endowment Fund, ensuring Rotary's work continues for future generations, or the PolioPlus Fund, which supports the eradication of polio.

Recognition programs encourage giving. A person who contributes \$1,000 to the Annual Fund becomes a Paul Harris Fellow, named after Rotary's founder. Additional recognition levels acknowledge continued generosity, and many Rotarians proudly wear pins that reflect their commitment to "Doing Good in the World."

The Rotary Foundation demonstrates that relatively small individual contributions can combine to make an enormous global impact. Millions of people have received medical care, clean water, educational opportunities, and economic assistance because Rotarians chose to invest in the Foundation.

Perhaps the Foundation's greatest accomplishment is showing that ordinary people, working together across cultures and borders, truly can change lives.