

Philippine Rotary

THE MAGAZINE OF CHOICE

NOVEMBER 2024

Lessons in media
literacy for our time
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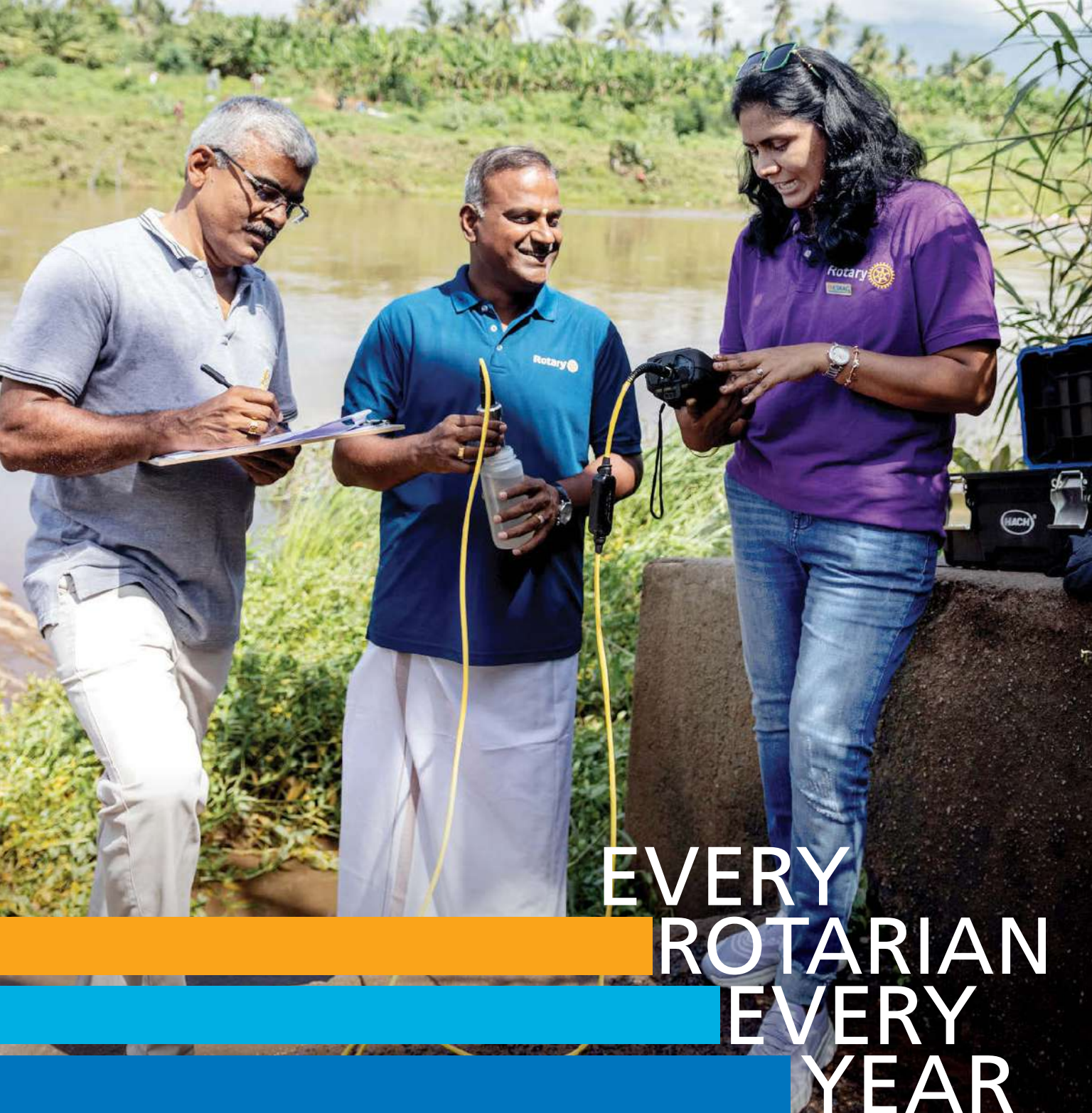
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fellow changes
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STILL STANDING

With Rotary's
help, Turkey's
earthquake
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their lives
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EVERY
ROTARIAN
EVERY
YEAR

ROTARY FOUNDATION MONTH

November is Rotary Foundation Month, a time to celebrate and support the life-changing work of our Foundation. Since The Rotary Foundation began, it has awarded more than US\$6.5 billion to help members transform communities locally and globally. We are deeply grateful to Rotary members like you who make Doing Good in the World possible.

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A solid Foundation

One of Rotary's greatest strengths is the ability of our members to come together to create lasting change, and The Rotary Foundation helps us transform dreams of change into reality.

From eradicating polio to building peace, much of the work we do around the world would not be possible without our continued support of our Foundation.

The cause of peace is especially important to me, and one of the most effective ways we build peace is our Rotary Peace Fellowship — a product of The Rotary Foundation. The program helps current and aspiring peace and development professionals around the world learn how to prevent and how to end conflict.

Thanks to a \$15.5 million gift from the Otto and Fran Walter Foundation, we can continue supporting peacebuilders in more regions with the next Rotary Peace Center, at Bahçeşehir University in Istanbul.

Opening yet another peace center is a monumental achievement that we will celebrate at the 2025 Rotary Presidential Peace Conference in Istanbul.

The three-day conference 20-22 February will highlight the many ways our family of Rotary advocates for peace. Keynote speakers, panel discussions, and breakout sessions will allow us to share ideas about building peace and foster meaningful conversations about promoting peace everywhere.

Registration for the Presidential Peace Conference is open. I hope to see you there, but if you can't make it, our Foundation offers so many ways to change the world for the better. November is Rotary Foundation

Month, a great time to get to know your Foundation better and pursue causes that appeal to you.

Global grants support large international activities with sustainable, measurable outcomes in Rotary's areas of focus. By working together to respond to pressing community needs, clubs and districts strengthen their global partnerships.

District grants fund small-scale, short-term activities that address needs in your community and in communities abroad. Each district chooses which activities it will fund with these grants.

Our Foundation can even help you support our wonderful youth programs, including Rotary Youth Exchange, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, and Interact.

Your gifts to our Foundation also make Programs of Scale possible. These are long-term projects that seek to solve otherwise intractable problems.

To ensure these good works continue beyond our lifetimes, it is up to us to reach our ambitious Rotary Endowment goal of \$2.025 billion by 30 June 2025.

The Magic of Rotary does not appear out of nowhere. We create the magic with every new member inducted, every project completed, and every dollar donated to our Foundation.

Please join me in supporting The Rotary Foundation, and together, we will change the world for the better.

STEPHANIE A. URCHICK
President, Rotary International

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▲ ON THE COVER:

Ferit Binzet, pictured with his wife at the remains of their home in Turkey, chronicled his city's damage and coordinated Rotary aid after the 2023 earthquakes. *Photograph by Faid Elgizry.*



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Focus on TRF

November is The Rotary Foundation (TRF) month, so I wish to write about our Foundation.

At the 1917 convention, outgoing Rotary President Arch Klumph proposed setting up an endowment “for the purpose of doing good in the world.” That one idea and an initial contribution of \$26.50, set in motion a powerful force that has transformed millions of lives around the globe.

TRF’s mission helps Rotary members to advance world understanding, goodwill and peace by improving health, providing quality education, improving the environment and alleviating poverty.

Since it was founded more than 100 years ago, TRF has spent more than \$4 billion on life -changing sustainable projects. With every Rotarian’s help, we can make lives better in your community and around the world.

TRF is organized as a public charity operated exclusively for charitable purposes and governed by a Board of Trustees. In contrast, the operations of Rotary International, a member organization, are overseen by its Board of Directors.

The headquarters of Rotary International and TRF are in Evanston, Illinois, USA. We have associate foundations in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, India, Japan, Korea and the United Kingdom.

Here’s a rundown of the 2023-2024 Global Grants funded by the Rotary Foundation: 1) Basic education and literacy, 102; 2) Community economic development, 154; 3) Disease prevention and treatment including Polioplus, 620; 4) Maternal and child health, 102; 5) Peacebuilding and conflict resolution, 57; 6) Water sanitation and hygiene, 141; and 7) Environment, 59.

In conjunction with these, I would like to share the speech of District Governor Ariel Jersey of D3790 at TRF banquet last Oct. 23 at the Laus Convention Center in San Fernando City, Pampanga *(Please see page 10 for full text.)*

Indeed, as Governor Ariel Jersey aptly reminds us all: “Through selfless giving, we embody our motto, Service Above Self, and in doing so, we create a life that touches hearts and transforms communities.”

EMILIANO D. JOVEN
Chairman, PRMFI



“Through selfless giving, we embody our motto, Service Above Self, and in doing so, we create a life that touches hearts and transforms communities.”

Philippine Rotary

THE MAGAZINE OF CHOICE

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Servant leadership core

As we celebrate this month the essence of Rotary's motto, Service Above Self, we are reminded that this calling goes beyond mere charity or good deeds. It speaks to the core of servant leadership, a commitment to putting the needs of others first, even when it requires sacrifice, self-abnegation, and personal struggle.

In the daily grind of life, this commitment is tested. It's easy to embrace the idea of selfless service when the path is smooth, but the true measure of leadership emerges when faced with challenges and adversity. Whether in our professional roles or personal lives, the willingness to prioritize others, to lead with empathy and humility, is often what sets apart a true servant leader. This is the essence of Service Above Self: not just in moments of ease, but in the face of difficulty, when our own comforts and desires must take a back seat to the greater good.

In this context, I reflect on a concept I've been advocating through my work — the Diwa-Kapwa Filipino management ethos. The principles of Diwa (spirit, values, and vision) and Kapwa (shared identity, relational consciousness, and community) have much to offer in understanding servant leadership in the Philippine context. These values are not just abstract ideals but deeply embedded in our collective consciousness. They call for a leadership style that is rooted in empathy, understanding, and a commitment to the common good.

The Diwa-Kapwa ethos suggests that true leadership is not about asserting power or control, but about nurturing relationships, uplifting communities, and empowering others to lead alongside us. In times of hardship, it is this spirit of solidarity — this shared commitment to service — that allows us to endure and thrive.

As Rotarians, we are called to embody these values not just in grand gestures, but in everyday actions. The challenges we face in our communities, in our businesses, and in our personal lives are the proving grounds for the strength of our service. Let us remember that service, at its heart, is not just an act, but a way of being — a way of living for others, through the values of Diwa and Kapwa.

Sonny Coloma
SONNY COLOMA
Editor-in-chief



“It’s easy to embrace the idea of selfless service when the path is smooth, but the true measure of leadership emerges when faced with challenges and adversity. Whether in our professional roles or personal lives, the willingness to prioritize others, to lead with empathy and humility, is often what sets apart a true servant leader.”

Embracing the magic

by Maricel Borromeo-Amores

Ever met a woman who effortlessly weaves the roles of nurturing mother, devoted wife, and dynamic Rotarian, all while quietly conjuring magic in her leadership across countless organizations? Enter Caroline Andrade or Caycay as she is affectionately known, who is set to make history as the first Lady Governor from the Tacloban clubs and the sixth lady governor of District 3860.

Her journey to this esteemed position is a testament to her dedication, resilience, and the profound impact she has had on her community and beyond.

Caycay's story with Rotary began in 2006 when she joined the Rotary Club of Kandaya, Tacloban. From the outset, she demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to the Rotary ideals, taking



Above: District Governor Caycay exemplifies love for nature, as she cultivates plants with gusto. **Left:** Her husband Bobby shares her passion for Rotary service, leading his club and being a perennial TRF donor.



on various roles such as Director for Membership, The Rotary Foundation, Club Administration, Public Image, Club Treasurer, Auditor, and Vice President.

Her leadership skills shone brightly during her presidency in RY 2012-2013, a period marked by the theme "Peace through Service." Her term was distinguished by several district awards, including Outstanding President and Outstanding Club. Her second term as Club President in RY 2013-2014 was marked by her courageous leadership during the aftermath of super typhoon Yolanda, where she guided her club and community through one of its most challenging times.

Caycay's contributions extend far beyond her club. She has served in

numerous district roles, including Assistant Governor, Deputy District Governor for three consecutive years, District Governor's Representative to the Philippine Rotary Magazine, District Stewardship Subcommittee Chair, District Endowment and Major Gifts Adviser, District Empowering Girls Chair, and District Executive Secretary. Her dedication to service is resolute, and her impact is felt throughout the district.

A passionate supporter of The Rotary Foundation, Caycay's commitment to the organization began even before her official membership, as she became a Paul Harris Society member in 2006. Along with her husband, Bobby, she is a Major Donor Level 4 with a named endowment fund, reflecting their deep-rooted belief in the power of Rotary to effect positive change.

In her professional life, Caycay is known as "Mrs. McDonald's" in Tacloban, being the first franchisee to open a McDonald's restaurant in the city. Her entrepreneurial spirit and dedication have led to the growth of her business across the region, earning her numerous acco-



Above: Just as she dotes on her five children, DG Caycay showers children with care and affection as she demonstrates Rotary's commitment to raising kids to become responsible citizens.

lades. These include the Ray Kroc Press On Award, Community Excellence Award, George T. Yang Leadership Award, People Award, Regional Franchisee Award for Visayas, National Franchisee Award by the Philippine Franchising Association Franchising Excellence Awards, and the prestigious Fred L. Turner Golden Arch Award, which honors the top 1% of McDonald's franchisees globally.

Caycay's personal life is as rich and fulfilling as her professional and Rotary journey. She is married to Robert Andrade, a past president of the Rotary Club of Tacloban, and together they have nurtured a loving family. Their five children — Carl, a specially gifted child; Tanya, a lawyer; Meggy, a graduate of Hotel Restaurant and Institution Management; Sean, a certified public accountant; and Denise, an incoming college student — are a source of immense pride and joy.

As Caroline Andrade steps into her role as District Governor of District 3860, she brings with her a legacy of service, a heart full of compassion, and a spirit that inspires. Her journey is not just a tale of professional success but a story of love, resilience, and magic that will cast a change in lives of many. With her at the helm, District 3860 is poised for a future of growth, service, and extraordinary accomplishments.

The author, Dr. Maricel Borromeo-Amores from RC Cebu Fuente is the District Governor's representative to the PRM.



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Club of Paranaque Central
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FEATURE

► **Clockwise from right:** PRID Guillier Tumangan addresses the assembly; TRF Trustee Chair Mark Maloney and wife Gay, administers oral polio vaccination, assisted by Past President Liezl Ampatuan of RC Cabuyao Circle and other Rotarian leaders; Past District Governor Everett Olivan talks on importance of persistence in polio immunization drive.

► **Below right:** Mothers and children avail themselves of goodies distributed after the immunization.



TRF CHAIR BOOSTS POLIO VAX DRIVE

by Lzl Ampatuan

Last Oct. 22, District 3820 achieved a milestone by vaccinating 105 babies aged 6 to 11 months with their 3rd dose of Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) in Cabuyao City, Laguna. This significant number symbolized the 105 years of Rotary's presence in the Philippines, highlighting a shared mission to end polio once and for all.

The day was marked by the distinguished presence of The Rotary Foundation (TRF) Trustee Chair and Past Rotary International President Mark Maloney and his spouse, Gay. They were accompanied by Past RI Director Guillier

Tumangan and his spouse, Letty of District along with Past District Governors Edna Sutter and Ador Tolentino.

District 3820 Governor Arnold Mendoza and Past District Governor Everett Olivan coordinated the event.

It was participated in by 22 clubs from D3820. The Rotary Club of Cabuyao Circle, under President Gunter Alipon, hosted the event, supported by RC Cabuyao led by President Clark and RC City of Cabuyao Premier, led by President Mahen Vargas; and Past Presidents Neris Santiago and Barbs Arenas. RC Lucena South also participated.





▲ **Top row:** D3820 Rotary leaders who organized and led the event; Youthful participants pose for posterity with Rotary leaders.

◀ **Middle row:** TRF Trustee Chair Mark Malone and spouse Gay are flanked by District Governor Arnold Mendoza and Past District Governor Gina Sy of D3820; Special guests Cabuyao Mayor Dennis Hain (second from left), Past District Governor Joyce Ambray and partner Past President Hermie Esguerra are joined by RC Cabuyao Circle President Gunter Alipon, Past District Governor Rey Castillo, and Past President Liezl Ampatuan.



◀ **Bottom row:** A children's band provides musical entertainment to Rotarians and guests at the special event.

City Health Officer Dr. Ellen Diamanté, guided Rotarians through the vaccination protocols. Midwives and Barangay Health Workers went house-to-house, informing and encouraging mothers to bring their children to the event.

Other Rotarian leaders who graced the occasion were Past District Governors Rey Castillo, Gina Sy, Joyce Ambray, Past President Hermie Esguerra of RC Manila and Arch Klumph Society member Past President Boy Mercado of RC Lipa.

Cabuyao Mayor Dennis Hain spoke on the collaboration between Rotary and

the local government to eradicate polio.

The incumbent Magical Presidents and the Champion Presidents who served in 2019-2020 with Past RI President Maloney pitched in for the event's success. The generosity of Rotarians brought smiles and joy to the families, turning the event into a celebration of passion for service reinforced the collective spirit of commitment and care that defines Rotary's work.

The event was more than just a vaccination drive — it was a celebration of unity, shared purpose, and a testament

to Rotary's enduring promise to create a healthier, polio-free world. The sight of mothers holding their vaccinated children, the Rotarians working shoulder-to-shoulder, and the collective applause resonating as families departed with hope all marked an extraordinary day. It was a moment that reinforced Rotary's legacy of compassion, determination, and unwavering service.

The author is past president of the Rotary Club of Cabuyao Circle D3820.



FEATURE

‘Making a life’

by Ariel Jersey

As we gather here today, we celebrate not only the generous contributions of the Rotarians of District 3790, but also the profound spirit of giving that lies at the heart of all we do. Winston Churchill once said, “We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” These words beautifully capture the essence of Rotary. Through selfless giving, we embody our motto, Service Above Self, and in doing so, we create a life that touches hearts and transforms communities.

Service is the heartbeat of Rotary, but it is the Rotary Foundation that is its lifeblood. Through your contributions and unwavering dedication, we are able to support life-changing initiatives—from eradicating polio to ensuring clean water, promoting education, and fostering peace across the globe. Today, we honor and recognize the Rotarians of District 3790 for answering not only the call to serve but also the call to give.

Your generosity has ignited hope in countless lives. It has not only changed circumstances but also inspired others to believe in a better world. We are building a world where every child has access to education, where families can drink clean water, and

where peace and understanding triumph over conflict and division.

You have infused the magic of Rotary into the world. Through your giving, you’ve sparked hope, spread love, and made this planet a better place to call home. Today, we celebrate you—your heart, your dedication, and your unwavering commitment.

We are also incredibly inspired by Past Rotary International President Mark Maloney. Thank you for being here to personally recognize each of these remarkable Rotarians, for their generosity and dedication to Rotary’s mission of service and giving. Your presence is a true inspiration and reminder of what is possible when we work together.

As we look toward the future, let us remember that the magic of Rotary isn’t just something we witness. It is something we create, together. Let us continue to embody that magic, to spread it far and wide, ensuring that every act of kindness, every dollar given, and every project completed helps create a world where hope and love shine brighter than ever before.

DG Jersey (first from the right) standig with PRID Guillier Tumangan at the TRF Banquet in San Fernando.

Remarks at the TRF Banquet in San Fernando, Pangasinana on Oct. 23, 2024 by DG Ariel Jersey.

PH Rotary Open in January 2025

The 11th Philippine Rotary Open is scheduled for January 30-31, 2025, at Pradera Golf and Mimosa Golf. This was announced by Past District Governor Boboy Valles who will chair the event which is held under the auspices of the Philippine Rotary Friendship and Golfing Fellowship (PRFGF).

He is supported by other leaders from District 3790, including Past District Governors Jess Nicdao, Bong Joven, Jaypee Cadaing, and Rep. Mark Go, and District Governor-Elect Dan Torres.

This year's tournament will feature the traditional Inter-District, Inter-Club, and individual competitions, as well as a best-in-uniform contest on the first day.

Looking ahead, Past District Governor Tato Dimayuga from District 3820 has been selected as Chairman for the 12th Philippine Rotary Open, scheduled for February 2026.

The Philippine Rotary Friendship and Golfing Fellowship (PRFGF) is a non-stock, non-profit organization founded in 2015 by 15 members of the Philippine College of Rotary Governors (PCRG), with Past District Governor (PDG) Mel Salazar Jr. serving as founding Chairman and EMGA PDG Jun Farcon as founding President.

The organization aims to promote fellowship through golf among Rotarians and friends of Rotary across the ten Rotary Districts in the Philippines.

Both Past District Governor Mel Salazar, former editor-in-chief of the magazine, and EMGA Jun Farcon, then PCRG chair were instrumental in organizing PRFGF, establishing an annual tradition of golf fellowship and competition for Rotarians across the Philippines.

PRFGF has continually fostered camaraderie through the Philippine Rotary Open Golf Tournaments attracting golfers nationwide.

Though PRFGF was incorporated in 2015, the first Philippine Rotary Open was held on February 23, 2013, at Valley Golf and Country Club in Antipolo City under PDG Jun Farcon's chairmanship. The event, co-chaired with PDG Mel Salazar, successfully raised P500,000 for the Philippine Rotary Magazine (PRM). Since then, PRFGF has consistently achieved both its fellowship and funding goals,

Philippine Rotary Open Golf Tournament History

YEAR	VENUE	CHAIRMAN	DISTRICT
2013	Valley Golf, Antipolo	PDG Jun Farcon	3800
2014	Mimosa Golf, Clark	PDG Jess Nicdao	3790
2015	Malarayat Golf, Lipa	PDG Chito Recto	3820
2016	Marapara Golf, Bacolod	PDG Jude Doctora	3850
2017	Pueblo Golf, Cagayan de Oro	PDG Manny Along	3870
2018	Orchard Golf, Cavite	PDG Lito Colona	3830
2019	East Ridge and Forest Hills	PDG Danny Fausto	3780
2020	Northwoods Golf, Bulacan	PDG Tito Enriquez	3770
2023	Palos Verde and South Pacific, Davao	PDG Bing Garcia	3860
2024	Forest Hills and East Ridge	PDG Mac Hermoso	3800

contributing at least P150,000 annually to the magazine's coffers. This the tournament evolved into a two-day event.

PRFGF membership is open to both Rotarians and non-Rotarians, with a lifetime membership fee of P1,000, granting

access to the annual Philippine Rotary Open, traditionally held in February to celebrate Rotary's founding anniversary. The PRFGF Secretariat holds office at the D3780 Rotary Center on Panay Avenue, Quezon City.

J. Alfonso L. Katigbak
Chairman of the Board



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Email: al_katigbak@hotmail.com

MAY ANDREA LOCSIN KATIGBAK
Katigbak Enterprises, Incorporated
Website: KatigbakRoofing.com
Globe Mobile Phone: (63) (917) 526-20-53
Email: may_annkatigbak@hotmail.com



PROUD MEMBER
Rotary 

MEDIA LITERACY

The other literacy crisis

Amid a rise in misinformation and AI-generated content, Rotary members promote media savvy

It's typically not fun for a teenager to start attending a new school, but your first day at Virginia Hall High School is even stranger than usual. Your grandfather reveals that he used to be a government spy, your stepsister gets locked in a closet by the other students, and some kind of monster seems to be stalking the hallways.

Don't go grabbing a weapon and storming into battle. This is just a video game, and you have to use your brain. You interview a fellow student who seems suspicious and dig through the school newspaper for articles about the monster, all the while asking questions like: Do these sources provide multiple pieces of evidence for their claims? Do they stand to make money because of what they're saying? Do they cast a negative light on people who disagree with them?

Why all the questions? Because this isn't just any video game; it's one designed to increase your media literacy. *Agents of Influence* was co-created by Anahita Dalmia, a member of the Rotary Club of Newport Beach, California, to help middle schoolers think more critically about what they see on social media and in the news.

"We're teaching kids to understand media bias, logical fallacies, and confirmation bias. We teach things like reading closely — tools you can use to determine what to trust online," says Dalmia, the co-founder and CEO of game developer Alterea Inc.

A third-generation Rotarian, Dalmia says the game's approach

was inspired partly by The Four-Way Test. "The first question is, 'Is it the truth?' And there's a reason that's the first question," Dalmia says. "If it's not the truth, you cannot make a strong judgment call based on any of the other questions, because you're starting on an unstable foundation."

"An unstable foundation" is a good way to describe the state of today's wide-ranging media landscape. We're exposed to far more media than ever before, and figuring out what to believe takes a lot of work. Mysterious algorithms, rather than editors, determine what's in your social media feed, and artificial intelligence technologies are flooding the internet with manipulated photos, videos, and text.

"Before the internet, if I went to get a newspaper, it was run by journalists for whom truth was an important standard. But today, people who want to believe things just post stuff," says Alan Dennis, the John T. Chambers Chair of Internet Systems at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business. "There are active disinformation campaigns by foreign governments designed to influence voters in democratic countries. The actors have become much more sophisticated, and they have learned quite a bit about what messaging works."

There's a widespread awareness of this problem, and people desperately want to learn to be savvy about the media that engulfs them. A survey last year by the Poynter Institute, a nonprofit dedicated to media literacy, found more than 80 percent

Visit [rotary.org/our-causes](https://www.rotary.org/our-causes) to learn about Rotary's work in supporting education and get involved.



“It’s one of the big reasons that people have turned against media, but I think it’s an overcorrection,” says Freeman, who is completing a master’s in media and communications at the London School of Economics with the support of a global grant. “A lot of people have turned to independent journalists who are more willing to incorporate their own personal experience into their reporting. But without a traditional media apparatus — without standard practices for ensuring accuracy — it’s hard to know who’s trustworthy.”

On the other hand, independent voices can be crucial in countries where the news organizations are restricted by repressive governments or simply underfunded. When Zimbabwean Rotary Peace Fellow Thomas Sithole realized his hometown was being ignored by major media outlets, he launched a community radio station. Then he founded the Zimbabwe Centre for Media & Information Literacy to teach people to be more critical and tell their own stories effectively. He believes the two skills are intertwined.

“We tell citizens how to arm themselves against disinformation and misinformation,” he says. (Misinformation is any incorrect information, while disinformation refers to falsehoods that are spread to deceive others.) “We also train citizen journalists and community-based or grassroots content creators. We teach basic skills like fact-checking and ensuring that the story you’re telling is balanced. We’re trying to build a movement across the region, because we see that there is no appetite from our governments to push for policies that support media and information literacy among citizens.”

Even as he works to train an army of storytellers, Sithole worries about the future. Like many people who teach media literacy, he’s afraid the rise of artificial intelligence will make it easier to create and spread disinformation.

“For unsuspecting citizens, like in rural communities, it’s creating



The video game *Agents of Influence* is designed to increase students’ media literacy. It was co-created by Anahita Dalmia, a member of the Rotary Club of Newport Beach, California.

of adults in the U.S. and the UK considered misleading or AI-generated images a problem for society, but nearly three-quarters weren’t very confident they could identify them. And less than 40 percent reported that they frequently did basic fact-checking on potential misinformation. Such steps may include investigating the source, checking the original publication date, or even just reading the caption. The assumption that media literacy is simply a matter of separating truth from fiction is itself inaccurate.

“We need to be able to judge things like: What’s the bias behind it? Who created it? Who’s benefit-

ing from it? So there’s not a simple fix here,” says Jeff Share, who teaches media literacy at the University of California, Los Angeles, and has authored books including *The Critical Media Literacy Guide*. “We need to slow down and investigate. It might mean it’s going to take me a couple more minutes, but I can go to some different sources. I can also recognize that some are more legitimate than others.”

Many people already believe that ideological biases and financial interests guide major news outlets’ coverage. But that thinking may do more harm than good, says Rotary scholar Alex Freeman.



BY THE NUMBERS

68%

Share of Americans interested in learning how to better distinguish between true and false information online

2011

Year UNESCO began commemorating Global Media and Information Literacy Week

59%

Portion of American households with children that report some type of media literacy education in their public schools



Anahita Dalmia is CEO of game developer Alterea Inc. “We’re teaching kids to understand media bias, logical fallacies, and confirmation bias,” she says.

a lot of challenges,” he says. “It becomes very difficult now to tell whether a piece of content is true or false, especially if it’s in the form of videos or images. It’s something that is really a challenge even to the professional journalist.”

Some believe the key to countering the misuse and dangers of AI lies with the next generation. Erin McNeill meets a lot of students through her job as CEO of the U.S.-based nonprofit Media Literacy Now. She says she’s heartened by what she sees.

“AI is definitely making it harder to identify good sources and credible sources. But you can use the same skills” to analyze both AI-generated content and human-made visuals and text, McNeill says. “Young people are so creative and smart. We’re educating them so

they can rise to the challenge of the world. They’re going to find solutions as long as they’re given the skills and the education they need.”

The same belief animates Dalmia as she continues to develop and promote *Agents of Influence*, which she hopes will be finished in two years. She has presented the game to numerous Rotary clubs and hopes members will play a role in getting it in schools.

“This started as a passion project, but there was a huge demand from parents who were concerned about how social media was shaping their kids’ perspectives and interactions with the outside world,” Dalmia says. “The resounding feedback we’ve gotten is, ‘Can I have this for my kid who thinks TikTok is a reliable source of information?’”

— ETELKA LEHOCZKY

Short takes

The Service Project Center at spc.rotary.org is Rotary’s new digital hub for club service activities. The platform, which replaces Rotary Showcase, offers members improved ways to share and browse projects.

Rotaract UN Days, a conference in Geneva that empowers future leaders and inspires them to build peace, takes place 30 October-2 November. Learn more at rotaractundays.com.



PHOTOGRAPHS: (BOTTOM) JASPER MCEVOY; (TOP) GETTY IMAGES



PROFILE

Life and breath

In the wake of tragedy, a Rotarian works to save infants' lives

Charlotte Israel
Rotary Club of
Palm Harbor,
Florida

Charlotte Israel has lived through every parent's nightmare: She couldn't save her 45-year-old daughter Dorian Matthews when she died suddenly in 2020, likely of COVID-19 troubles.

"I went in to wake her up to go to work, and she was lying on her bed," Israel recalls. "I called [emergency services] and they told me to try giving her CPR. But I had never done CPR. That has always been on my mind: Maybe if I had the training, I could have helped my daughter."

Israel got CPR training, but she wanted to make a larger impact. She learned about Helping Babies Breathe, a program that trains health workers to resuscitate newborns who aren't breathing. Birth asphyxia kills an estimated 900,000 infants each year, but many can be saved if resuscitation is begun immediately. Israel, who has roots in Sierra Leone, collaborated with Rotary members in the country to train 656 health workers there.

"It was just astounding to me that so many babies were dying because no one was trained in those basic techniques," she says. "I made a vow: If I can help it, no mother is going to have to go through that."

A pastor and 2023-24 club president, Israel brought a different kind of first aid training to several clubs closer to home. She organized an eight-hour course in mental health first aid, which taught people to identify their own emotional problems and support others with struggles.

"It's just like on a plane, when the oxygen mask comes down," she says. "You've got to put it on yourself before you can help others."

— ETELKA LEHOCZKY

Read about the Helping Babies Breathe program at rotary.org/fighting-their-first-breath.

More than 880 Rotaract clubs earned the 2023-24 Rotaract Giving Certificate for clubs whose members donated a total of at least \$100 to The Rotary Foundation.

Aidan O'Leary, who worked closely with Rotary members as the World Health Organization's director for polio eradication, died 6 August.



World Interact Week is 4-10 November. The annual celebration commemorates the certification of the first Interact club on 5 November 1962.

People of action around the globe

By Brad Webber

\$2.4 billion

Share of Canada's 2022 GDP from live performance industry



Canada

The annual Concert to Feed the Need has raised nearly \$90,000 since 2018 to offer meals in the Durham region in Ontario, through a network of food banks, meal and snack programs, shelters, and other social service providers. Feed Ontario reports an increase of 47 percent in the number of employed people using food banks since 2018. "With the rising cost of food and the impact of the pandemic still being felt, food bank use is soaring," says Joe Solway, a member of the Rotary Club of Bowmanville, which initiated the event. Members of six other Rotary clubs also sell sponsorships and tickets and promote the show, an eclectic mix of pop, folk, country, rock, blues, gospel, "and maybe this year some opera," Solway says. Media attention surrounding the concert and its acclaimed performers helped it yield nearly \$23,000 in 2023. The 2024 event will take place on 8 December.

Rotary Club of Bowmanville

Guatemala

The Rotary Club of Guatemala La Reforma's Upcycling Art Festival featured whimsical sculptures and paintings created with cast-off materials such as paper and cardboard, wood scraps, glass, plastics, metal, rubber, and electronic waste. Like many countries, Guatemala struggles with solid waste management, notes Esther Brol, a past club president who pioneered the event in 2023. "Pushing artists out of their comfort zone by challenging them to create works of art from waste has generated wonderful results," including raising funds for club projects and The Rotary Foundation, she says. The club partnered with the Rotaract Club of Guatemala La Reforma and the Rotary Club of Los Altos Quetzaltenango to organize the three-week exposition and sale that concluded 5 June.

Rotary Club of Guatemala La Reforma

\$34.9 million

Record auction price for work by a Latin American artist



Bulgaria

In 2007, the Rotary Club of Sofia-Balkan teamed up with the Bulgarian Basketball Federation and the National Sports Academy to form a basketball club for wheelchair users, and the project has kept growing. Over the years, the club has lured coaches from the European Wheelchair Basketball Federation to offer a player clinic, cultivated referee skills, and established a Rotary Community Corps to help. On 13 February, in conjunction with a Rotary zone event, the Bulgarian team faced off against a Serbian team for a friendly match. RI's president at the time, Gordon McNally, sounded the starting whistle and tossed the ball into play. The club's signature project is a point of pride for Rotarians, says Past Club President Krasimir Veselinov, and several organizations that advocate for people with disabilities have signed on to support the venture.



47%

Share of urban populations in Europe interested in basketball



Ethiopia

With the wind at their backs, members of the Rotary Fellowship of Kites and its founder, Henock Alemayehu, gathered for a day of kite making and flying with 250 children, many of them displaced by conflict among the more than 80 ethnic groups in Ethiopia. The children and volunteers converged on the grounds of an elementary school in Quiha, in the northern Tigray region, for the Ashengoda Kite Festival on 9 June. "The simplicity of this activity carried profound significance, offering a rare moment of peace and joy for these children," says Alemayehu, a member of the Rotary Club of Addis Ababa Central-Mella. The kite fellowship, which has more than 100 members from 12 countries, is "creating lasting change through the simple yet powerful act of kite flying," says Alemayehu.



200 B.C.

Earliest written account of kite flying

Kenya

Recognizing the importance of sleep to child development, the Rotary Club of Nairobi delivered bed kits for 8,000 school children in 2024, a milestone in a long-running project. Over the past 16 years, the club has partnered with Toronto-based charity Sleeping Children Around the World to supply bed kits to a total of 80,000 children at a cost of about \$4 million, says club member Mumbi King. Each kit includes a mat or mattress, bedding, and mosquito netting, along with school supplies and clothing. The kits have an outsize influence on children's lives, since better sleep improves health and school performance, King says. Twenty Nairobi Rotarians mobilized for the five-day delivery mission in February, serving the town of Naro Moru at the base of Mount Kenya and other villages, including in the Maasai Mara region. "The heat couldn't keep the team from visiting the villages and interacting with the families," says King.



9-12 hours

Recommended amount of sleep for children ages 6 to 12



GOODWILL

Grow your legacy

Creative ideas for promoting Rotary's Endowment

By Carol Tichelman

When I joined Rotary 30 years ago to get more involved in my community, I didn't know much about the organization. I set about learning as much as I could and soon discovered The Rotary Foundation. Impressed with its impact, I became a regular donor to the Annual Fund and to PolioPlus.

Everyone's donation journey is different and changes with life circumstances. As my career advanced and my finances became more stable, I increased my giving and eventually created my own personal endowment to provide a legacy that will live on beyond me.

Creating a legacy and promoting awareness of The Rotary Foundation Endowment can be fun and creative. The Foundation launched a campaign to grow the Endowment to \$2.025 billion by 2025. A celebration will be held in my home Zone 28 when we host the Rotary International Convention in Calgary, 21-25 June.

You can help achieve this goal.

As an endowment/major gifts adviser, I participated in one innovative approach with fellow adviser Mary Shackleton from Zone 32 at a Rotary institute in Toronto. We sat at the registration table and passed out apples with QR code stickers that linked to the District Guide to Growing the Endowment. The guide materials include a video titled "Your Rotary Legacy," which uses an apple tree to represent how our gifts to the Rotary Endowment ensure our legacies carry on. Affixing the QR

code on the apples was a great way to make a connection with the video for attendees.

My colleague Senior Major Gifts Officer Carolyn Ferguson came up with the idea to challenge each district in our zone starting in the 2023-24 Rotary year to secure 25 new gifts to the Endowment by 2025. These gifts of \$10,000 or more can be outright, pledged, or planned gifts/bequests, and designated to what matters most to the donor. If each district in our zone achieves this, that would be \$5 million toward the Foundation's goal. Pretty impressive stuff!

I now challenge every other zone and district to join us in growing Rotary's Endowment to do good in the world — and then come to Calgary in 2025 to celebrate our success! Here's how:

Raise awareness. When people think of The Rotary Foundation, they often think of the Annual Fund or PolioPlus. Some may not even be aware that the Foundation has an Endowment. The Endowment Awareness PowerPoint, available with the District Guide to Growing the Endowment, covers the basics. The slideshow is ready to present with speaker notes for each frame. Consider sharing the presentation at your next club meeting.

Promote Rotary's Promise Club. Rotary launched a new club designation called Rotary's Promise Club, which is achieved when 100 percent of a club's members con-

tribute \$1,000 to the Endowment outright or through a bequest. Rotary's Promise Club status is a great way to get members thinking about what legacy they might want to leave. The Introducing Rotary's Promise Club newsletter, offered with the District Guide, is an excellent resource to share with your club to spark the conversation.

Encourage gifts and commitments to the Endowment. Once your club is informed and excited, you can begin encouraging members to support the Endowment. The Know Your Enduring Impact tool accompanying the District Guide includes the various gift and commitment designations. And when members have included Rotary in their estate plans, please remember to say thank you!

When you endow a gift through Rotary, your donation will "share forever," leaving a legacy for your family, your Rotary friends, and your district. Like any other gifts to the Foundation, endowed gifts are credited to clubs and districts. If an endowed gift is directed to SHARE, it will provide annual spendable earnings that benefit your district forever.

This truly is about legacy and the story you want to share about your values — what is important to you in the work that we do. It is the example you set and the memory you leave for those you love.

Carol Tichelman is an endowment/major gifts adviser for Zone 28 and a member of the Rotary Club of Chilliwack, British Columbia.

Find resources to promote Rotary's Endowment, including the District Guide to Growing the Endowment, at rotary.org/shareforever.

ROTARY LEADERSHIP

Sangkoo Yun to be 2026-27 Rotary president

Sangkoo Yun, of the Rotary Club of Sae Hanyang in Seoul, Korea, has been selected as president of Rotary International for 2026-27. He will be the organization's second Korean president.

Yun received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the Syracuse University School of Architecture in the U.S. and an honorary doctoral degree from the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. He is the founder and CEO of Dongshuh Corp., which engineers and markets architectural materials, and the president of Youngan Corp., which operates in real estate and financial investment. He is involved in many civic organizations and has a special interest in the preservation of cultural heritage.

A Rotary member since 1987, Yun has served Rotary International as a director (2013-15), trustee (2018-22), committee member and chair, and RI learning facilitator. For eight years, he was co-chair of the Keep Mongolia Green project, initiated by Korean members of Rotary. His RI committee roles include the Board Administration, International Assembly, and End Polio Now Countdown to History Campaign committees. He also chaired The Rotary Foundation's Executive Committee and Programs Committee.

Yun received The Rotary Foundation's Distinguished Service Award in 2021-22. He was appointed an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II, awarded the Friend-



ship Medal by the president of Mongolia, and recognized for distinguished services by the president and prime minister of Korea. He is a veteran of the Republic of Korea Army and an emeritus elder at Andong Presbyterian Church.

Yun and his spouse, Eunsun, are Rotary Foundation Benefactors, Major Donors, and members of the Arch Klumph Society, the Paul Harris Society, and the Bequest Society. They have two adult children. — ETELKA LEHOCZKY



THE ROTARY FOUNDATION

Arch Klumph Society 2023-24 honorees

Named for the founder of The Rotary Foundation, the Arch Klumph Society was established to recognize the Foundation's highest tier of donors — those who have contributed \$250,000 or more.

This distinguished society includes about 1,600 supporters from more than 50 countries and geographical areas. Their generosity enables the Foundation to continue its mission of advancing world understanding, goodwill, and peace through the alleviation of poverty, the support of education, and the eradication of polio.

The members listed below were recognized in the 2023-24 Rotary year through a formal induction or elevation ceremony.

Contribution levels as of 30 June 2024; locations according to club affiliation

PLATINUM TRUSTEES CIRCLE

Contributions of \$2,500,000-\$4,999,999

Dahyabhai S. and Angela J. Patel,
United States

FOUNDATION CIRCLE

Contributions of \$1,000,000-\$2,499,999

Ming-Ho Chen, Taiwan

Richard C. Courson and Tina N. Tom,
United States

Michael S. and Gity S. Hebel,
United States

Judy Huang and Ricardo Lynn, Taiwan

Santiago Martin and Leema Rose Martin, India

Aziz Memon and Samina Aziz,
Pakistan

William W. and Jean D. Wilson,
United States

CHAIR'S CIRCLE

Contributions of \$500,000-\$999,999

Joyce Michelle L. Ambray and Herminio S. Esguerra, Philippines

Helge Andersen, Denmark

Vicente JG. Arbesú and Ma. Enriqueta (Kikis) López, Mexico

Ronald J. and Marilyn K. Bedell,
United States

Plastic Ray-Ching Chang and Linda Shu-Chen Chang, Taiwan

David Gibson-Moore, Thailand

Nirupama and Anil Goel, India

Roop and Beena Jyoti, Nepal

Inseok Kim and Youngryeo Jo,
Korea

Satish Chand Mark Markanda and Uma Sharma Markanda, United States

V.R. Muthu and Malarvizhi Muthu, India

K.P. Nagesh and Uma Nagesh, India

Jong-Yoon Pak and Ji-Min Jeon,
Korea

Ramanathan and Nallammai,
India

Dilip and Bhavini Shah, India

Sarah C. Sheehan, United States

Daniel Tung-Hsien Tsai and Lillian Li-Ling Hung, Taiwan



Rotary leaders Gordon McNally (left) and Barry Rassin (right) welcome Olivia A. and Robert E. Ryans to the Arch Klumph Society at a 2023 ceremony.

PHOTOGRAPHS: JOE UNDERBAKKE; (OPPOSITE) VIVID MEDIA

S. V. Veeramani and Radha, India

Mildred and York Vitangcol,
Philippines

Johnny Gaw Yu and Veronica Yu,
Philippines

TRUSTEES CIRCLE

Contributions of \$250,000-\$499,999

Farhan Essa Abdullah and Nadia Farhan, Pakistan

Ghanshyam and Saroj Agrawal,
India

Ananth H.R. and Girija Ananth, India

W. Patrick and Alice J. Anselmi,
New Zealand

Augustine and Victoria Avuru,
Nigeria

J. Randell Barclay and Dianne Richoz Barclay, United States

Mary and Ivar Berge, United States

Eldon L. Bohrofen and Augusta Crane,
United States

Jaekyung Byeon and Jonghwan Lee,
Korea

John Chan Sung Tong and Chen Wee Ping, Malaysia

Joseph Chen and Ilona Liu, Taiwan

Paul W. Chen and Salina Chen Lee,
Taiwan

Chen Tung-Chu and Lin Li-O,
Taiwan



Cheng, Chen-Ming and Lin, Shu-Hui,
Taiwan

Mary, Yi-Chen Cheng, Taiwan

Chilukuri Sarat Babu and Annapurna,
India

Krishna and Meena Choudhary,
India

Sita Kantha Dash and Kalpana Dash,
United States

Dennis and Heidi Drager,
United States

Bruce and Julie Dunbar, United States

Abbie and Mads Engelstoft,
United States

İlter and Suzan Ergürbüz, Turkey

Michael L. Escaler and Patricia Maria L. Escaler, Philippines

Fang Chin-Ying, Taiwan

Suresh and Anjana Gandhi, India

James F. Hart and Maureen K. Reed,
United States

Charlotte Hartmann-Hansen and Tore Hartmann-Hansen, United States

Joshua Hassan and Mary Hassan,
Nigeria

Martha H. Peak and Frank G. Helman,
United States

Eddie M. Hocson and Aida C. Hocson,
Philippines

Mohmed A. and Mahabuba Hoque,
Bangladesh

Tang-Chih Hsu and Yin-Chen Wei,
Taiwan

Guity Javid and Mark Ameli,
United States

Peter C. and Carolyn F. Johnson,
United States

Naohisa and Junko Kashihata, Japan

“The Rotary Foundation truly creates the means for each Rotary member to create lasting and positive change across the world, in communities, and in ourselves.”

— Peter C. and Carolyn F. Johnson, United States

OUR CLUBS

Taeyun Kim and Jinyoung Seol,
Philippines

Yvonne Kumoji-Darko, Ghana

Shirley M. Kwok, United States

Yong Joon Kwon and Gi Nam Han,
Korea

Philippe and Dugan Lamoise,
United States

Ki Woon Lee and Yeon Ju Jin,
Korea

Lee Sung-Nan, Taiwan

Kim and Jill Lorenz, United States

Warren and Marilyn Lovinger,
United States

Nathan G. and Alla O. Lubin,
United States

“We support The Rotary Foundation because of its commitment to causes that resonate with us deeply. From disease prevention to clean water and education — every project has a story, a face, a heartbeat.”

— *Joyce Michelle L. Ambray and Herminio S. Esguerra, Philippines*

Michio and Akiko Matsuoka, Japan

Roger May and Patti Sadowski,
United States

Patrick Mennesson, Gabon

Yoichiro and Eiko Miyazaki, Japan

Don and Cindy Mizelle, United States

Takashi and Tatsuko Okura, Japan

Everett Uy Oliven and Maryselle Uy Oliven, Philippines

Ranjit Pratap and Uma Ranjit,
India

Jhansi Premanand, India

James Campbell Quick and Sheri Schember Quick, United States

Ajith and Supriya Rai, India

PHOTOGRAPHS: (LEFT) JOE UNDERBAKKE; (CENTER) MONIKA LOZINSKA; (RIGHT) VIVID MEDIA



Above: Arch Klumph Society members (from left) Augusta Crane, Eldon L. Bohrofen, Jonghwan Lee, and Jaekyung Byeon talk at a 2023 ceremony at One Rotary Center in Evanston, Illinois. Right: Honorees assemble in the building's Arch Klumph Society Gallery the previous day.



P. V. Rai and Sandhya V. Rai, India

Eileen Rau and Robert J. Rau, Jr.,
United States

**John E. Robertson and Susan E.
“Honey” Robertson**, Bahamas

Pablo Rafael and Alejandra Ruiz,
Mexico

Robert E. and Olivia A. Ryans,
United States

Vinod and Usha Saraogi, India

Nelia Cruz Sarcol, Philippines

**Christopher H. Schneider and
Ute A. Schneider**, United States

Nagin and Priya Shah, United States

**K. Shanmugasundaram and
Parimaladevi**, India

**Tony Sharma and Harjinder Kaur
Sharma**, United States and England

Gowri Srinivas and Srinivas T, India

Satoshi and Kazuko Sugikawa, Japan

Gina Sy and Jeffery Sy, Philippines

Arturo C. Tanyag, Philippines

Barbara J. Tracy and James M. Tracy,
United States

Asha Venugopal and Venugopal B.N.,
India

**Vommina Sathish Babu and Arra
Bhanumathi**, India

**Robert A. Wallace and Katherine E.
Wallace**, Canada

Mary Ellen and Bob Warner, Jr.,
United States

Charles Warren and Laura Kann,
United States

Pam and Terry Weaver,
United States

Tom and Yvonne Wolf, Singapore

Stanley S.Y. Yang and Jennifer Yang,
Taiwan

Stela Yang (Yi Lan) and Spencer Lee,
Taiwan

Yiu Chih Hao and Hsu Li Hua,
Taiwan

Jeff Yong and Betty Wong,
Brunei

Hisashi and Miwako Yoshihara,
Japan

Hamada Zahran and Soha El Gazzar,
Egypt



Left: Society members and Rotary leaders gather at a reception in April at the Rotary headquarters building. Below: Taeyun Kim and Jinyoung Seol (center) receive their certificate of Arch Klumph Society membership at The Rotary Foundation Donor Summit in May in Singapore.



HANDBOOK

The path to impact

Long-term change demands a strategy beyond just supplying books, computers, or vaccines

Your club wants to install a latrine block at a school or provide computers and books for classrooms. Great, but why?

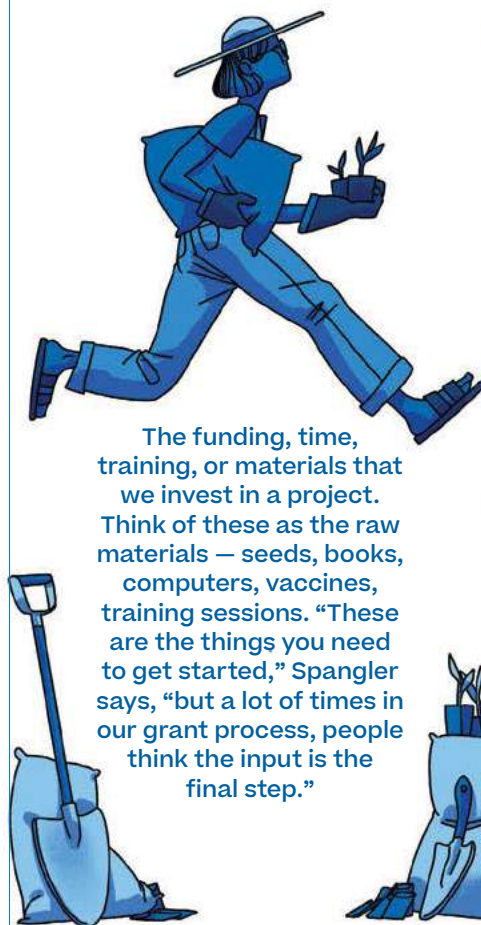
Rotary’s “building blocks to impact” approach to project design could help you formulate the answer. It’s a way to visualize your project strategy — the path to your goal, also known as your theory of change.

“Sometimes we think about what we do — supplying books, for instance — as the terminal activity, when in fact what we’re trying to accomplish is healthier kids who can read so they become happier, healthier adults,” says Barb Spangler, a member of The Rotary Foundation Cadre of Technical Advisers and of the Rotary Club of Lakewood Ranch, Florida. “The idea is to help people take their thinking from nuts and bolts to: What do we really want to get done?”

The building blocks to impact can also be used in reverse. Maybe you already know your “why” for an initiative — your club wants every person in a region to have access to clean water, for example. But how will you achieve it? The building blocks planning tool “is a way to take ambitious long-term goals and back them down into building blocks to see how it happens,” Spangler explains.

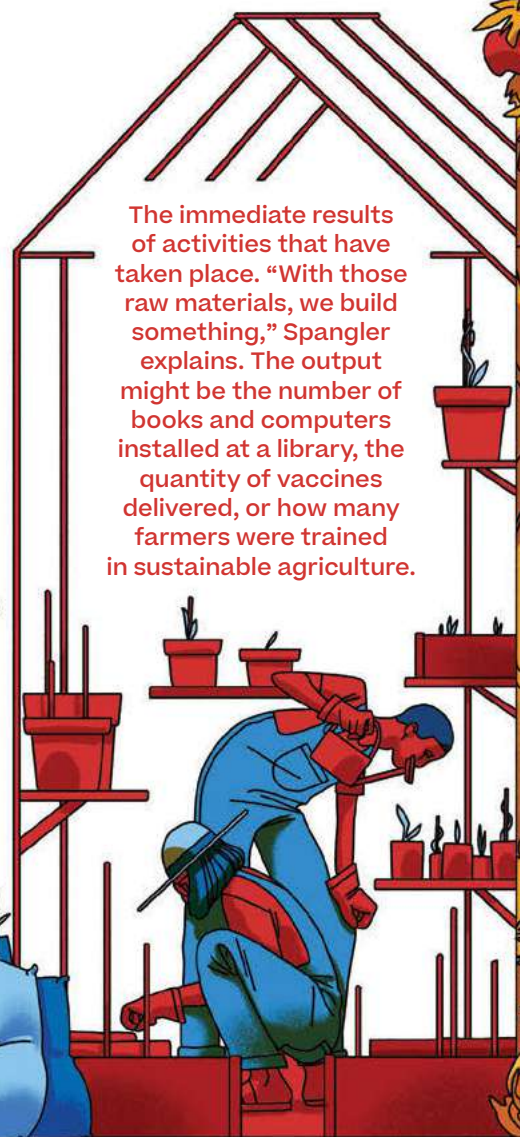
Once you’ve visualized the building blocks, you can use them to determine what kind of data you’ll need to track your project’s progress. “How will we know we did what we thought we did?” Spangler says. If your efforts aren’t going as planned, use what you’ve learned to refine your strategy and improve your future projects. — DIANA SCHOBERG

INPUT



The funding, time, training, or materials that we invest in a project. Think of these as the raw materials — seeds, books, computers, vaccines, training sessions. “These are the things you need to get started,” Spangler says, “but a lot of times in our grant process, people think the input is the final step.”

OUTPUT



The immediate results of activities that have taken place. “With those raw materials, we build something,” Spangler explains. The output might be the number of books and computers installed at a library, the quantity of vaccines delivered, or how many farmers were trained in sustainable agriculture.



OUTCOME

The intermediate results of our actions — things like a change in attitude or behavior. “After we put those things in the ground, do that work, we need to take a little longer view,” Spangler says. That could look like an improvement in students’ reading comprehension, more vaccines given, or farmers incorporating new techniques into their growing practices.

IMPACT

The long-term changes resulting from our actions. These are measurable improvements that wouldn’t have occurred otherwise, such as an increase in the literacy rate or a reduction in hunger or disease, attributed to the project.

ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Spangler suggests two series of questions to help you construct your project’s building blocks:

The “five whys”
“If you say ‘why’ enough times, things start to put themselves in the blocks where they belong,” she advises.

If/then questions
“If I have these resources, then what can I do? If I do these things, then in the short term what will happen?” she says. “Ultimately, I’ll achieve our overall game plan.”

To learn more about the path to impact and applying the building blocks in your service activities, download the Rotary Impact Handbook at my.rotary.org/document/rotary-impact-handbook.

From *the* ruins

By JP SWENSON and HANNAH SHAW

Photography by FAID ELGZIRY



More than a year after powerful earthquakes hit Turkey,
Rotary's relief efforts remain for many a path out of the wreckage



It was just past 4 a.m.

when Ferit Binzet finally drifted off to sleep. All night, one of his cats meowed and paced through his apartment in the city of Adiyaman, in southeastern Turkey. It was, looking back, as if the unsettled animal knew something was different about this night.

At 4:17 a.m., Binzet knew it too.

Loud booms shook him and his wife awake. Their bathroom walls exploded into the hallway. The kitchen caved in. The building lurched side to side. Binzet cried out to God.

“Please don’t take my soul.”

They ran from their crumbling home into a cold, heavy rainstorm, only to look back and see Binzet’s brother, who was living with them at the time, staring out a window, unmoving. Waves of concrete rubble rolled through the streets. Buildings swayed and fell. Screams pierced the roar of rain smacking against pavement.

After 85 seconds of sheer terror, the earth stilled.

Binzet went back inside the ruined building. He slapped his brother out of his shocked daze. “We can’t leave without the cats,” pleaded his wife, Mehtap Bostancı Binzet. They dug through the dust and debris, found their two cats, and left their home for what would be the last time.

Turkey is known for its deadly earthquakes. The country sits at the junction of three major tectonic plates, with a fourth, smaller one squeezed between the others. (Scientists use the analogy of pinching a watermelon seed between your fingers and watching it squirt out.) Still, with a 7.8 magnitude, the quake, which occurred on 6 February 2023, was the strongest to hit the country in more than 80 years.

Its epicenter was near Kahramanmaraş in south central Turkey, near the border with Syria and about 75 miles from Adiyaman. What scientists called a “cascade of ruptures” tore along the East Anatolian Fault’s clamped rocks in both directions for a staggering 190 miles in total, shifting the earth more than 26 feet in some places. Nine hours later, a second quake, similar in size at 7.5 magnitude, struck north of the city in what seismologists call a “doublet,” compounding the damage.

Up to 9.1 million people were directly affected, according to some estimates. Between Turkey and Syria, the quakes left more than 50,000 people dead, over 100,000 injured, and several million homeless.

People felt the trembling far from the epicenter, including in Egypt, Greece, Armenia, and Iraq. The first quake awoke Emre Öztürk, then governor of Rotary District 2430, that morning at his home in Ankara, about 300 miles away. Within hours, he and the two other Turkish governors, Suat Baysan of District 2420 and Serdar Durusüt of District 2440, were on a video call to start mounting a response. “The first thing we did was turn on the TV and try to understand what happened,” Baysan says. “And we immediately realized the power of the earthquake.”

That same morning, they outlined a three-pronged plan that would grow into a multimillion-dollar

Millions of people were left homeless after earthquakes struck Turkey and Syria in February 2023.





Ferit Binzet, a member of the Rotary Club of Adiyaman-Nemrut, Turkey, lost 41 family members in the disaster.



global relief effort: fulfilling immediate emergency relief needs, providing shelter in the form of container cities, and meeting the long-term needs for everything from water treatment to kids' education.

Throughout the day, Öztürk, whose district encompasses the affected area, called the Rotary club presidents and district team members who live there. He learned that some Rotary friends were under the rubble. In the end, six Rotarians and Rotaractors died in the quake.

One of his calls was to Binzet, who was then the president of the Rotary Club of Adiyaman-Nemrut and would become a key contributor to relief efforts despite his own staggering personal losses, which he had only begun to tally.

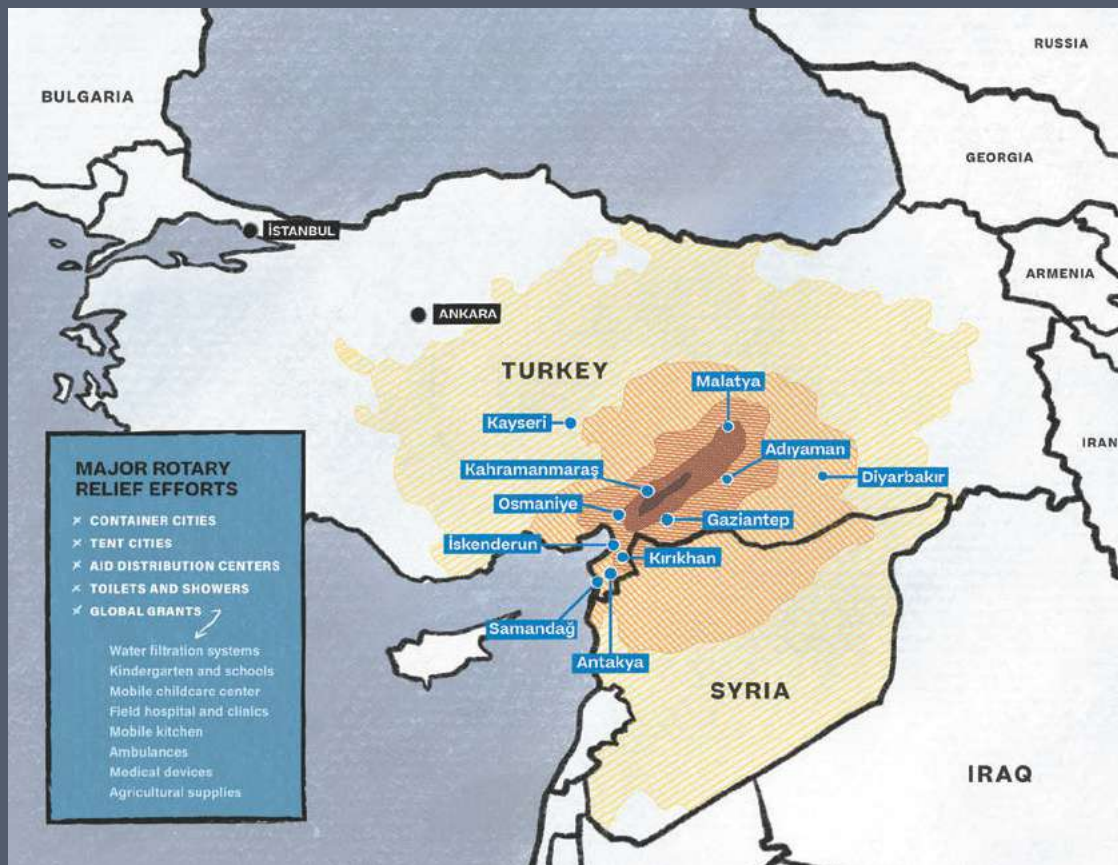
A video journalist for Turkey's NTV news, Binzet recorded the aftermath on his cellphone as he and his family emerged from the wreckage. About three of every five buildings in his neighborhood had collapsed. Muffled cries emanated from the rubble: *Save us. Rescue us. We can't breathe.*

In the early afternoon, he and his brother went to check on their mother. They were especially concerned about her because she had Alzheimer's. The door was open. Her nurse had left, and they found her inside, confused. "I'm dizzy," she said. "What's happening?" The two urged her to leave, but in her confusion she did not seem to grasp the situation and refused. At 1:24 p.m. the second earthquake struck. Binzet ran outside as a nearby building crumbled. Binzet's brother jumped from a balcony just before the platform collapsed. (Their mother, still in the building, survived that second quake but has since died.)

Buildings weakened by the first earthquake were quickly consumed by the second. "It was like a horror movie," Binzet says. People were gathering personal items from their homes when the second earthquake hit. Others who had been trapped since morning by debris or, in some cases, by the steel gates on their doors were crushed in the afternoon. One of Binzet's cousins was rescued in the morning but died of a heart attack in the afternoon when a building collapsed near him.

In total, Binzet lost 41 relatives — an unimaginable toll. In time it would be felt especially hard during holidays like Ramadan, when he used to visit 15 or 20 homes among his extended family. After the disaster, that once joyful promenade shrank to just two homes. In an interview more than a year later, he weeps at the thought, adding, "We don't have anybody here. All our relatives are gone."

But in those days after the quakes, he was focused on surviving. There was no food and no electricity. In desperation, people had emptied market shelves



BY THE NUMBERS

\$2.7 million

Contributions to a dedicated disaster relief fund through The Rotary Foundation

\$1.4 million

Global grants dedicated to the earthquake response

50,000+

People who died in the earthquakes

Millions

Displaced or left homeless

within hours. On that first cold night, everyone remained in the darkened streets, sleeping in any shelter they could find. Binzet and six others took turns sleeping in his brother-in-law's car.

While recording scenes on his camera, he wandered into a gym where it looked like people had taken shelter. He shot video of a dark room full of people under blankets. "Why are people lying on the floor?" he asked the security guard. "Those are dead bodies," the guard replied. Binzet fainted.

As news spread of the devastation across southern Turkey, Rotary clubs in other parts of the country were desperate to do something. "There was a desire to send stuff immediately," Baysan says, "but if you do, is there anybody that will take it, distribute it, make sure it goes to the right people?" The day after the earthquakes, he, Öztürk, and Durusüt met with the clubs in their districts and outlined their developing plan.

They quickly set up help centers in six hard-hit cities. Assigned Rotary club members coordinated the centers, discovering residents' needs and relaying them so that donors could send the right supplies. Rotary, Rotaract, and Interact clubs in the three districts sent more than 200 trucks of emergency





supplies, including food, water, generators, heaters, diapers, sanitary pads, fuel, toys, and body bags.

“The whole Rotary family in Turkey acted as one,” Öztürk says. “We used all of our power, all of our collaboration, to do something to create some relief for the earthquake victims.”

The day of the earthquakes, temperatures were only 37 degrees Fahrenheit at the epicenter, and in the following days they dipped below freezing. The rainstorms changed to snowstorms in some areas, and survivors battled the windchill and hypothermia. District 2440 had an existing supply of tents and immediately established a tent city in İskenderun, on the Mediterranean coast, that Rotary members administered for more than a month before the country’s disaster agency took it over. “We were the first NGO [nongovernmental organization] that was present in that region,” Baysan says. Tent cities in Adiyaman and Kırıkhan quickly followed. Rotary clubs worked with ShelterBox, Rotary’s project partner in disaster relief, to distribute over 2,500 tents and played a pivotal role in that organization’s relief efforts by making introductions to local leaders.

Öztürk spent the next 40 days trekking back and forth between the three tent cities, six coordination centers, and his home in Ankara to report back on what he saw and plan future steps. Baysan and Durusüt similarly traveled into the field to witness the needs and help.

Meanwhile, Rotary’s global membership mobilized to support their work. Within hours of the earthquakes, Jennifer Jones, then the Rotary International president, activated Rotary’s disaster response efforts, and within the week, Rotary established a dedicated disaster response fund that received more than \$2.7 million in contributions. Additional aid efforts used Rotary Foundation global grants totaling about \$1.4 million. Projects were confined to Turkey since Rotary has no clubs in Syria, where the earthquakes compounded a humanitarian crisis triggered by more than a decade of civil war.

Lifesaving relief and direct donations streamed in from all over the Rotary world, and so did volunteers. A Rotary member and doctor from Indonesia texted Öztürk, “I’m coming with medical supplies and will be there in two days.” The doctor lived in one of the tent cities for weeks and treated people.

Today in Adiyaman, children bike and play in the streets, conversation is exchanged over aromatic platters of kebab, and the melodic Muslim call to prayer crackles over loudspeakers five times a day. But even as life goes on in many respects, in other ways time seems to have stopped, like the clock tower that stands tall in the

Above: Donations from Rotary members supplied 350 container homes for displaced people.

Opposite (from left): Ferit Binzet, Suat Baysan, and Emre Öztürk visit a field hospital for earthquake survivors in Adiyaman. A Rotary Foundation global grant helped fund the project.





Above: The modified shipping containers can be outfitted with the comforts of home such as porches and gardens.

Opposite: Sadet Pişirici lives in one of the homes provided by Rotary.



Tune in to the *Rotary Voices* podcast and journey with reporters JP Swenson and Hannah Shaw as they encounter stories of loss and hope in Turkey's earthquake zone. Don't miss this two-part series, released 11 November at on.rotary.org/podcast.

city center, its four faces frozen in time at 4:17, the moment the first earthquake struck.

Before the disaster, Adiyaman was known for its blend of archaeological sites and modern architecture, its stunning natural landscapes, its apricots and pistachios. Now, mountains once blocked from view by towering buildings have reclaimed the city's backdrop. Shells of destroyed buildings and abandoned businesses loom next to sweeping fields of rubble. Distant cranes offer a constant reminder that Adiyaman is in an extended period of transition.

Rotary members from around the region know Adiyaman. Its province is the site of an annual project in which they accompany people with disabilities on a hike up Mount Nemrut. The UNESCO World Heritage Site features colossal stone heads and statues at the tomb of a first century B.C. ruler of a Greco-Persian kingdom. Rotary relief efforts focused here and in Hatay province on the Mediterranean coast, places with a lot of damage and strong Rotary cultures. "A Rotary club can change the fate of a city," Öztürk says. "If we didn't have Rotary clubs in Adiyaman and Hatay, we wouldn't likely have been able to deliver this much aid."

There was also the "Ferit effect," he says of Binzet. "He was always in the field and knew the needs," Öztürk says. "The city of Adiyaman should erect a statue of Ferit."

Binzet was born in Adiyaman and has lived there his entire life. He joined Rotary in 2008. As a journalist, Binzet had the communication skills and the reach

to advocate for the city. In the early days after the earthquakes, for example, he took a video of a toilet overflowing with waste and menstrual hygiene products for the news. Following the broadcast, people all over the region sent menstrual products. "He is a born communicator," Baysan says.

His wife, Mehtap, a photographer and designer, joined the Rotary Club of Adiyaman-Nemrut shortly after the earthquakes and was the club's president in 2023-24.

Adiyaman became the location of one of four container cities that Rotary members supported in the affected region, the second prong of their plans. In total, donations from Rotary members supplied 350 of the prefabricated small homes. The temporary city on the northern edge of Adiyaman includes two streets of Rotary-sponsored homes: Imagine Street and Hope Street.

The modified shipping containers, laid out in tight rows, provide enough space for essentials such as toilets, showers, cooking utensils, beds, and air conditioning, as well as comforts of home such as televisions, porches, and gardens.

Sadet Pişirici, 74, lives alone in a Rotary-provided container. Before the earthquakes, she lived a "proper life," she says. Her hopes echo those of survivors all over Turkey: She wants her grandchildren to go to school and become active citizens. She wants to maintain her health so she can keep walking and enjoying life.

Along with the hundreds of other residents of this container city, Pişirici benefits from Rotary's field hospital, a short distance from her home. The hospital has been operational since April 2023 and serves about 200 patients every day. It has its own generator, an ambulance, monitoring and ultrasound devices, a blood testing lab, and a shower that doctors can use between shifts.

Today, chief physician Mesut Kocadayı sits with a patient surrounded by the hospital's white canvas walls. Working as a doctor in the city, he began treating his fellow survivors in the wreckage immediately after escaping his own home.

Survivors suffered significant wounds and many required amputations. The health system collapsed momentarily when the city was struggling to even bury its dead. But other health care workers streamed into Adiyaman from China to Sweden to help.

"The first three to four days were the most difficult because there was no electricity, water, and heating," Kocadayı says. People lost their appetites, suffered from scabies and gastrointestinal diseases, and endured poor hygienic conditions. Some injuries will last a lifetime.



**“The children
needed
materials
like toys and
books. With
the support of
Rotary, they
got all of it.”**





Mehtap and Ferit Binzet step out of their car into the stillness of their old neighborhood. The familiar call to prayer buzzes from the loudspeaker of a distant mosque, its only competition the occasional passing car. Their old apartment spills into the street around them, where it will stay until the city clears the rubble.

This was the building they moved into 13 years ago after they got married, but one day the remaining pieces of it will be erased. “All my memories are here,” Ferit Binzet says.

Concrete and glass crunch beneath their feet. They call out for one of the stray cats they took care of before the earthquakes. “Gece!” The cat, whose name means “night,” dutifully appears.

After the earthquakes, the two sought help to deal with their emotional trauma. Their therapist recommended replacing painful memories with positive ones. That’s what brings them to their old home every other day, when they come to feed the stray cats. It helps, but it’s hard. “Every time I come here, I live that day again,” Mehtap Bostancı Binzet says. “It’s not easy.”

They remember escaping the house, the sound of the first earthquake. And they feel the pain of others who, like them, are trying to survive surviving. “Everywhere we look, we remember our loved ones. We also suffer from their pains.”

But they find that helping others helps them. Their optimism, their gratitude, breaks through. “Thank God we have friends all around the world,” Ferit Binzet says, as Gece observes from a nearby cement wall. “It’s better to say ‘Thank God’ than ‘I wish.’” ■



The disaster affected nearly every aspect of daily life, which shows in the assortment of projects that Rotary members have supported: building water treatment plants, providing farmers seedlings and cows, opening a veterinary clinic. “Rotary has done great, great work here,” Baysan says. “People are working to rebuild and reshape their lives. I’m very happy to see that.”

But when looking at the results from the third prong of the Rotarians’ response plan — sustainable long-term projects — a kindergarten might be the most appropriate place to start.

After one kindergarten in Adiyaman was destroyed, funds from Rotary members in Japan paid to build a new school from the ground up.

Taking a tour, a group of Rotarians greets the school’s principal, Zeliha Özlem Atlı, with a warm “merhaba” as they approach the entrance. Decorations from a recent holiday still hang amid toys and kid-size chairs. The principal’s goal: make this the best kindergarten in Adiyaman.

She’s made great progress. “The children needed materials like toys and books,” she says. “With the support of Rotary, they got all of it.” The school is on the city’s outskirts. She says that no one can believe there is such a nice school in the area.

“My first project is taking them to theaters and movies,” she says, explaining that many students have never been. “Then, I want to take them to other cities, because they’ve only seen Adiyaman.”

To Atlı, this school is a family. “The teachers also have trauma; some are still living in containers,” she says. “We support each other as a family. We don’t use the word colleague. I’m not the principal here. I’m the big sister.”

Atlı says the kids are in a much better place than a year ago. Every morning, they hug their teachers, who have become their role models. Most of the children, she says, want to become teachers someday.

Opposite (top): Baysan, Öztürk, and Binzet visit with a teacher and his class in Adiyaman; their classroom, provided by a Rotary Foundation disaster relief grant, was made by merging two shipping containers. Bottom: Principal Zeliha Özlem Atlı at a new school built with contributions from Rotary members in Japan.

Top: Students work to return to normalcy. Bottom: Binzet cares for one of his cats. He and his wife continue to feed the stray cats near their old home as a way to deal with the trauma.

ELIMINATION ROUND

By Sam Worley
Photography by Charity Rachelle

Cervical cancer can be stopped,
and **Isabel Scarinci** intends to deliver
the knockout blow in Alabama



LILY MAYNER IS ABOUT TO TAKE THE STAGE,

and she's nervous: "I am so stressed out right now," she says, practically humming with energy. A chatty 17-year-old wearing torn jeans and a nose ring, Mayner is slated to speak at the Back to School Bash, an annual event in LaFayette, a small town near Alabama's border with Georgia. It's late July, hot and overcast; kids and their parents wander between a bouncy house and a hot dog stand. Mayner's phone is nearly dead — a problem, since that's where her speech is stored. But she transfers the text to somebody else's device, and the show goes on.

"Good afternoon, everyone," Mayner says to a distracted crowd. "Today we're spreading awareness about a virus that is very prevalent in our community. This virus is called human papillomavirus. We know that this can be a very difficult topic to broach, but today it's very important for us to talk about it to prevent illness."

HPV is a highly common sexually transmitted infection that can cause six kinds of cancer, including cervical cancer. The reason Mayner is talking about it is that Chambers County, where LaFayette is located, has the highest rate of cervical cancer in Alabama, which itself is near the top nationally in both incidence of and mortality from the disease. A high school senior who hopes to become a psychiatrist, Mayner has been part of a health sciences class that's worked to reverse these numbers, one cog in a larger machine devoted to stopping cervical cancer in Alabama.

Caught early, cervical cancer is treatable. But more than that, it's preventable. In 2006, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first HPV vaccine, which could be administered starting at age 9. Since HPV causes virtually all cervical cancer cases, this means people can basically immunize themselves against a cancer — and that, in theory, there's no reason cervical cancer should persist as a deadly illness. "We really can eliminate a cancer," says Nancy Wright, director of the Cancer Prevention and Control Division of the Alabama Department of Public Health, which has set up a booth at the Back to School Bash. "It's a miracle."

This hopeful prospect means Alabama can stake its claim to another superlative, far sunnier than high mortality rates: It's the first state in the nation to devise a comprehensive plan for the elimination of cervical

cancer. Launched statewide in 2023, Operation Wipe Out is a collaborative effort between the Alabama Public Health Department, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and various partners, including the Rotary clubs of Birmingham and LaFayette.

The face of the initiative is Isabel Scarinci, a behavioral psychologist and the vice chair of the Global and Rural Health Program in UAB's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Sixty-two years old and a member of the Rotary Club of Birmingham, Scarinci has deep expertise in cancer prevention; she was recently tapped by the American Cancer Society to lead a task force developing a nationwide cervical cancer strategy. And she has deep personal experience that dramatizes the stakes of vaccination: As an infant in the early 1960s, Scarinci contracted polio when an epidemic struck the small Brazilian town where she grew up. When she was older, her mother took Scarinci — who, due to the infection, walks with a limp — door to door, exhorting her neighbors to immunize their children against the disease.

Now it's Scarinci who's spreading the word, with Operation Wipe Out aimed at multiple audiences. Young people and their parents, she insists, need to learn about vaccination, an effort Mayner's high school class has embraced with aplomb. (Mayner's speech, by the way, goes great. "I honestly did not need the script even a little bit," she says afterward. "I think it messed me up way more to have it.")

Before Operation Wipe Out went statewide, Scarinci coordinated an early version in Chambers County that boosted the full HPV vaccination rate among county school district students to 60 percent in 2024,

At age 6, Isabel Scarinci participates in a fashion show in her native Brazil.



PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF ISABEL SCARINCI

CERVICAL CANCER BY THE NUMBERS

U.S. projections for 2024

Estimated new cases:

13,820

Estimated deaths:

4,360

Source: National Cancer Institute

Cervical cancer disparity in Alabama

Incidence rate: Alabama: 9.2
per 100,000 females U.S.: 7.4

Mortality rate: Alabama: 3.3
per 100,000 females U.S.: 2.2



In Alabama alone

Incidence rate by race
per 100,000 females

Black 9.8

White 9.1

Mortality rate by race
per 100,000 females

Black 4.8

White 2.9

Source: Alabama Cancer Statistics 2023, Alabama Department of Public Health



including 82 percent at one of two high schools. The broader county vaccination rate in 2023 for all eligible young people was much lower: Only about 30 percent of those ages 9 to 18 completed their HPV shots.

Adult women, meanwhile, need regular testing to identify cell changes before they become lethal. At the Back to School Bash, Scarinci, wearing a blue Operation Wipe Out T-shirt, is stationed at the La-Fayette Rotary club's tent, trying to sign up women for screening appointments at an upcoming mobile clinic event. "When was your last cervical cancer screening?" she asks one woman who stops by, a funnel cake in one hand, a fan in the other. Scarinci is a loquacious presence with a wide smile. She gives the woman the rundown. "Oh, girl, let me tell you," she says. "It's the only cancer we can truly prevent." Another woman, towing a couple of kids, has what appear to be needle marks on her arms. She has survived cervical cancer, she tells Scarinci, who offers to connect her to a cancer survivors support group.

It's slow going, with only a few sign-ups over the course of the day, and no guarantee they will actually show up for the screening. But even if there's only one.

Scarinci has been doing this kind of work in underserved Alabama communities for decades. Another program she spearheaded has connected thousands of Latina women with cancer screenings. Sitting be-

neath the tent, Scarinci remembers one of the first Spanish-language events she organized. Half the people with screening appointments never came. Her husband said to her: "Why are you killing yourself? They're not interested."

But the next morning she got a call: One of the few who made the appointment had been diagnosed with cancer — early-stage, totally treatable. A wry look spreads across Scarinci's face, "And I said, OK, God, I got the message."

A few days later, in her office in Birmingham, Scarinci is still thinking about the woman with needle marks on her arm. Most cervical cancer is a "disease of poverty," she says. It's preventable if people have access to vaccination and to reliable medical care. That's part of the reason Alabama, a poor, rural state with a tattered social safety net, has been hit so hard. For Scarinci, though, Operation Wipe Out began not in Chambers County but across the globe in Sri Lanka, where she became involved in a similar project sponsored by the Rotary Club of Birmingham.

In the past 75 years, the medical understanding of cervical cancer and its prognosis have changed seismically. "Pre-World War II, more women in this country died from cervical [and uterine] cancer than

Friends in the fight against cervical cancer: (from left) Warner Huh, a gynecological oncologist who chairs the OB-GYN department at the University of Alabama at Birmingham; Nancy Wright, director of the Cancer Prevention and Control Division of the Alabama Department of Public Health; Scarinci; and Bruce Rogers, president of the Rotary Club of Birmingham.

from breast cancer,” says Warner Huh, a gynecological oncologist who leads UAB’s OB-GYN department. The 1940s saw the widespread adoption of the Pap smear, a test developed by a Greek immigrant named George Papanicolaou that collects cells from the cervix, the lower end of the uterus, to detect potentially cancerous ones. But it wasn’t until around the turn of the 21st century that physicians came to a deeper understanding of the relationship between HPV and cervical cancer — and then, with the HPV vaccine, the means to sever that link. “People in the 2000s started making the connection,” Huh says. “If we screened well, with a better test, and vaccinated, there’s very little reason why any woman should develop cervical cancer.”

In 2018, the World Health Organization launched a global initiative to eradicate cervical cancer. That same year, before Scarinci had joined Rotary, she and a colleague, oncologist Edward E. Partridge, who belonged to the Rotary Club of Birmingham, began talking with his fellow club members about teaming up with counterparts in Sri Lanka on their own project. Sri Lanka is a small island and its people are relatively well-educated, the two reasoned. “We said, This is an opportunity,” Scarinci recalls. “This is a country that can eliminate cervical cancer.” She and Partridge suggested that the country’s Ministry of Health boost childhood vaccination and revise its screening guidelines, using not just Pap smears but also tests for HPV infection.

But they didn’t communicate this directly. “I think a lot of governments will resent the United States’ influence,” Scarinci says. Instead, she emphasizes a holistic approach to public health. Doctors and gov-

ernments alone can’t heal society; they need buy-in from the people who make up that society, and from the institutions that can foment social bonds, like the local Rotary club. Public health relies on trust and — a word Scarinci favors — credibility. Scarinci could offer “evidence-based strategies”; it would be up to the Sri Lankans to take that information to their government.

Vaccination campaigns are nothing new to Rotary. As Scarinci likes to observe, the WHO introduced a global immunization program in 1974 that targeted six childhood vaccine-preventable diseases, including polio. But a decade after that, polio was still paralyzing a thousand children a day worldwide. The technology was there to combat the disease, but governments needed civil society to strengthen access to, and build trust in, the vaccine. Launched in 1988, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative included governmental and nongovernmental bodies, chief among them Rotary International. According to the GPEI, global polio rates have declined 99.9 percent since the project’s beginnings.

The world today is in a similar position with cervical cancer: The technology is there; the disease can be eliminated. But Scarinci poses the question that must first be answered before all that can happen: “How do we get these tools in the hands of those that need them the most?”

It was because of Sri Lanka that Scarinci — who, as a young person in Brazil, had been a member of Rotaract — ended up joining the Rotary Club of Birmingham. Still, despite her success in the South Asian country, something was bothering her. In 2019 she approached Philippe Lathrop, her club’s president at the time. “I said, I feel like an imposter,” she recalls. “Here we are working in Sri Lanka, patting ourselves on the back, when we have a problem right here.”

OK, he said, what do you want to do? Remembering the exchange, Scarinci laughs. She didn’t actually have a plan. “But give me time,” she told him. “I’ll come up with something.” That something would become the whole state of Alabama, starting in Chambers County.

As a Rotaractor in Brazil, Scarinci, a polio survivor, administers the polio vaccine in 1985.



PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF ISABEL SCARINCI

Rural poverty isn’t merely a subject of academic interest for Scarinci. She was born in 1962 in Cambará, a small Brazilian town about 200 miles west of São Paulo. Her parents grew up “dirt poor,” she says. By the time Scarinci and her siblings were born, the family was “low middle class,” her father an accountant and her mother a math teacher. Her family has told Scarinci that she takes after her mother, who was strong-willed and service-oriented. “That woman,” Scarinci says. “She knew how to do things.”

When she was 8 months old, Scarinci contracted polio. She had received the first vaccine dose of a two-part series but was under the weather when the time came to get a second dose. Don’t worry about it, the doctor told her mother; it can wait another

month. But in the interim, a polio epidemic struck, and Scarinci was among its victims. When she was older, her mother took her door to door with a cooler filled with vaccines. Scarinci would deliver a speech about her condition, and then her mother would say, “You don’t want this to happen to your child.”

Scarinci skipped first grade and graduated from high school when she was 16. She knew from a young age that she wanted to be a psychologist. She saw it as a way to help others, and she has an easy gift for conversation. After finishing college and working in a charity hospital in Brazil, Scarinci received a scholarship to study for a year in the United States. She ended up pursuing a PhD at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, where she met her husband. She planned on going back to Brazil but first wanted one more notch in her belt: “I know it’s very shallow,” she said. “I want a Harvard diploma on the wall.”

She landed a one-year clinical residency at the Ivy League school, finding the training beneficial but the social aspect “very dry.” At a party for new residents, she chatted with an older psychiatrist wearing a bow tie. Southerners, he told her, don’t do very well at Harvard. Oh? she asked. How many Southerners have you had? “He said, We had two that didn’t finish,” she recalls, a little gleam in her eye. “I took my beer and I toasted and I said, When you increase your sample size, we’ll talk.”

She was getting a taste of the chauvinism sometimes directed at the South, where Scarinci returned, settling in Birmingham and ultimately staying in the United States for good. Alabama’s status, in particular, as a kind of national punch line came up more than once in interviews with Scarinci and others, who said that even the compliments they received for their plans — again, it’s the first state to set a goal

these institutions and the diffuse constellation of rural health care providers and vulnerable communities that need their help.

Plus one particularly energetic public health advocate. “Like most things, if you don’t ask, then nothing happens,” as Warner Huh puts it. “What Isabel did was, she made the ask.”

Turning her attention from Sri Lanka to Alabama, Scarinci decided to start in Chambers County, where the need was greatest — and where she knew not a soul. Rotary provided the necessary introductions. In 2021, giving a talk to the club in LaFayette, she met Butch Busby, who had recently retired as the town’s only dentist. A past club president, Busby agreed to coordinate the campaign locally. While those efforts got underway, the Alabama Department of Public Health’s Nancy Wright had already been working to increase her own division’s focus on cervical cancer. She approached Huh and Scarinci; together the group decided to convene a summit, with the Birmingham Rotary club and other community partners joining the campaign.

Held in fall 2022 in Birmingham, the summit marked the statewide beginnings of Operation Wipe Out. It wasn’t a situation where a bunch of doctors traveled in to listen to lectures. Scarinci and Huh knew the conversation needed to be led by those on the front lines. “One of the life lessons I learned from that summit is, you cannot assume what people and providers and patients are going through,” Huh says. “You have to understand what those challenges are and then create strategy, not create strategy and then force it on people.” They heard that rural providers felt overlooked, that they lacked access to resources, that their patients had no local hospitals to go to in the event of abnormal screening results.

Poor health care access is a problem that pervades the state. In LaFayette, KFF Health News reported last year that the only two primary care doctors were planning to retire. “There are no OB-GYNs here in LaFayette,” Busby says. “Most OB-GYNs are in Auburn-Opelika,” two towns about 25 miles away from LaFayette. “Now for me, that’s just a ride down the road. But I know two people right now: They go to church with me; they’re elderly. They’re on a very small fixed income. They don’t have vehicles.”

The Wipe Out strategy that emerged from the summit has three prongs: vaccination, screening, and follow-up care. Like much of Scarinci’s career, the strategy involves both increasing access to medical care — through schools, county health departments, mobile clinics, and the like — and engaging trusted institutions in rural communities to help spread the word. “There’s no money on the table — real money,” Scarinci says. “The beauty of this is that it’s a mobilization of people who believe in the mission.” In this sense, Scarinci hopes to prove a model that can be replicated by states, public health advocates, and Rotary clubs elsewhere. Operation Wipe Out doesn’t

“Isabel lives and breathes her service stuff. You can’t stop her. She’s a moving force.”

to eliminate cervical cancer — were often tinged with condescension: *If Alabama can do it ...*

Still, there’s a legitimate question here: Why Alabama, and not one of the other 49 states? The answer seems to be simply that Alabama happened to have the right combination of experts and enthusiasts, in the right places: UAB’s world-class medical center. A supportive state public health apparatus. The Rotary Club of Birmingham and other community partners that have stepped up to forge connections between



At an Operation Wipe Out event in Alabama's Chambers County, Scarinci is joined by (from top) high school student Lily Mayner, Nancy Wright, and Butch Busby, of the Rotary Club of LaFayette.



need a billion-dollar investment; it just needs to spread the word and make sure systems are in place for patients needing care.

Hence the efforts in places like LaFayette, however challenging they may be. “I mean, you saw all that work,” Scarinci says in Birmingham, glancing at the sign-up sheets on her desk. “One, two, three ... five women. That’s frustrating. Five, in a county with that kind of incidence? That’s what keeps me up at night. I mean, if it takes door to door ...”

But this was a challenge Operation Wipe Out was prepared to face: Everybody’s learning as they go, changing tacks based on successes and failures. In a way, the approach feels like a culmination of the know-how Scarinci has developed over her career and the philosophy that undergirds it, characterized by humility and responsiveness — and, above all, a confidence that things can change. “She makes you believe it’s possible,” Wright says. “And she does believe it’s possible. I have two children and a husband and, when I get off at 4:30, I go home. Isabel doesn’t do that. Isabel lives and breathes her service stuff. You can’t stop her. She’s a moving force.”

“This has been the most rewarding thing I’ve ever done,” Scarinci says. The plan sets 2033 as a target date, but it will take longer to see results: Kids who get vaccinated now won’t be at risk for cervical cancer for another couple of decades. And in the very short term, increased screenings may mean a rise in reported cases. Alabama won’t eliminate cervical cancer inside of a decade, but the timeline, Scarinci says, was meant to galvanize momentum, to demonstrate that something big, and worth paying attention to and participating in, was underway. “If we need to mobilize society,” she says, “we need to give a message of hope.”

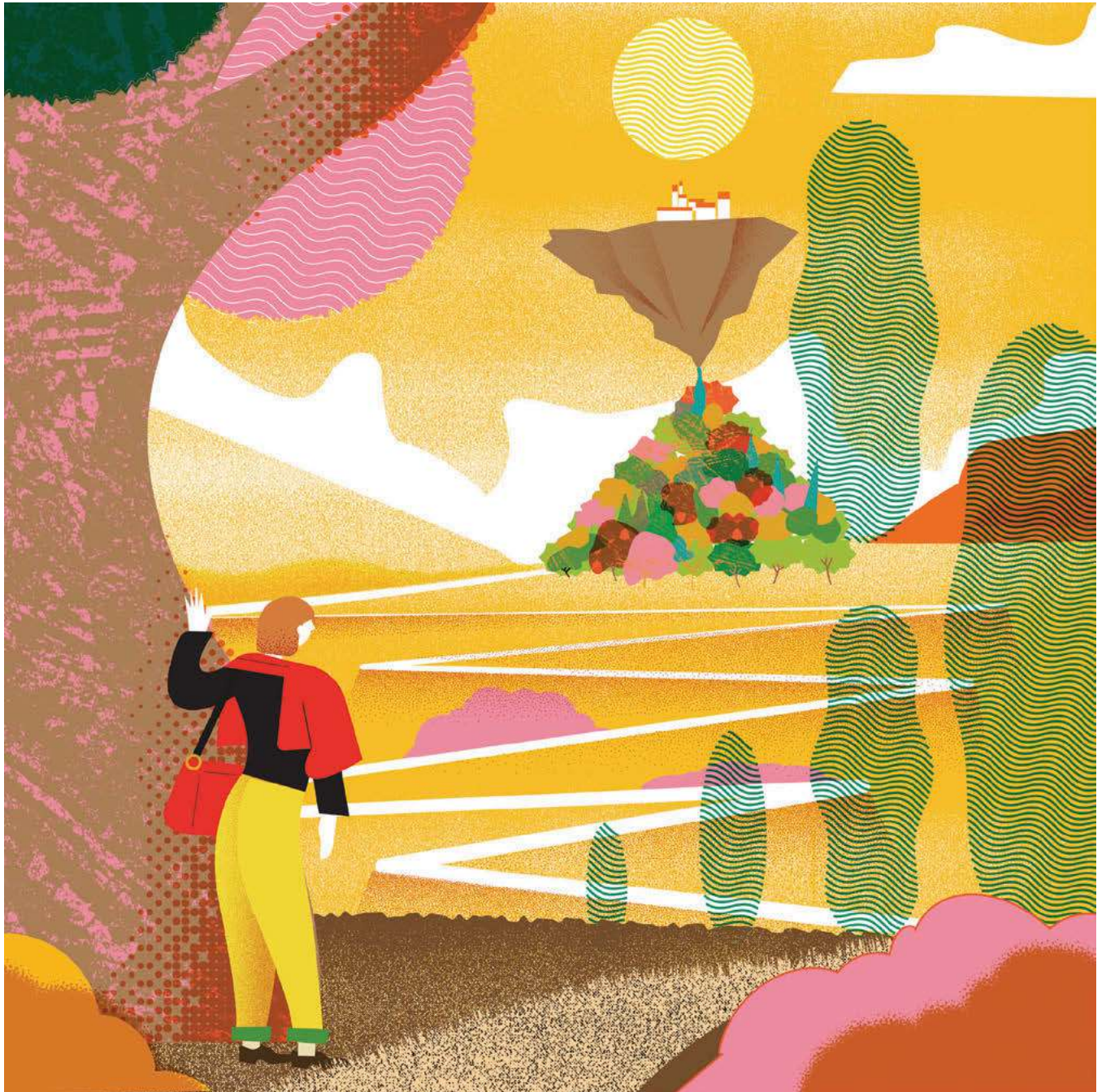
Still, victory isn’t pie-in-the-sky. It’s fully achievable. Scarinci has seen one human disease, smallpox, eradicated in her lifetime and others, like polio, achieve near-eradication. She wants to continue that progress, a way of honoring her mother’s legacy. “I asked her before she died: Did you ever think we would eliminate polio?” Scarinci recalls. “She said, ‘Not at the time. But I was doing my part.’ She saw the end of it, almost, before she died. That’s pretty cool. To say, ‘I made a contribution to that.’ Not many people can do it.” But there are those who definitely do. ■

ESSAY

The long and winding road

As was the case with Paul Harris, people find their way to Rotary by a variety of different routes

By Calodagh McCumiskey



The autobiography of Paul Harris is entitled *My Road to Rotary*. As the book explains, that road extended from Racine, Wisconsin, to Wallingford, Vermont, and on to Princeton, New Jersey, and Des Moines, Iowa — whence, after earning a law degree, the book's author, as he put it, “made a fool of himself for five years” while roving across the United States and in “foreign lands,” before finally settling (permanently, although still preserving aspects of his vagabond life) in Chicago, where he founded Rotary in 1905.

I began my journey toward Rotary nearly 30 years ago, far from home. I'd been doing aid work overseas after finishing my studies at University College Dublin, which was situated in the city where I was born and grew up. My first posting was in Angola from 1995 to 1999. I was working with an Irish agency called Trócaire that placed me with Catholic Relief Services, a U.S.-based nongovernmental organization with which Trócaire had established a global partnership.

Angola was emerging — temporarily, it turned out — from a protracted civil war, and it was in the middle of a demobilization and a lot of different peace initiatives. My time there was a fascinating and intense experience. Among other things, my work included helping with a program that distributed food and some nonfood items to warring parts of the country. It was well organized and relatively safe if you followed the security protocols. But land mines were a threat, and sadly, I did lose a couple of friends.

I ended up staying with Catholic Relief Services and was given the opportunity to go to East Timor, now named Timor-Leste. I worked there for about a year. It had been very closed off for years, but now the country was separating from Indonesia, and the United Nations was administering a transitional government. Suddenly many people from the international community had arrived, and there was a lot happening in a short period of time. We were rebuilding houses, distributing food, and establishing a big justice and peacebuilding program. It was another challenging time because the people who lived there were emerging from difficult circumstances.

My next stop was Ethiopia, where I worked from 2000 to 2004. USAID had a

long-established food program there, and we were the lead agency in distributing food to different places. The Ethiopians I met were wonderfully warm people. Just as I had seen in Angola and East Timor, I was struck by how large-hearted people could be, even when they found themselves facing tough circumstances.

I first encountered Rotary during my four years working in India. Catholic Relief Services had 12 offices there, and I managed six of them. India is such a big country that you have everything under the sun there. All your senses are awakened, and everything is heightened. It's like living life with the volume turned up.

Catholic Relief Services was part of India's national polio eradication program, which in 2005 was in its 10th year. We were working with the government and with different community mobilizers, and I was amazed at the incredible partnerships that Rotary facilitated. I saw right away that Rotary was a very intelligent organization. Its members seemed to know instinctively how to get to the source of a problem. They saw what needed to be done and brought together all the relevant stakeholders to ensure that it was done properly. They were very strategic and very practical, but they were also very human. All that left an indelible impression on me.

After 14 years, which concluded with four months in AIDS-ravaged Swaziland (now Eswatini), I came home to Ireland, expecting to stay only six months. I wanted to spend some time with my mother, who was sick. Since I had been overseas, my parents had moved from Dublin to Wexford, and after a while, I decided to remain there and reinvent my-

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self. What's more, I had seen the Rotary sign in town and thought to myself, OK, I want to join that.

Today I pursue a variety of vocations. I consult with companies on corporate well-being programs, helping their employees to be less stressed, more focused, and more engaged. I also work with individuals as a life coach and meditation teacher, helping them to build resilience and achieve peace, balance, and success at work and in their personal lives. In addition, I work with organizations that send people overseas to work in stressful environments; I support the well-being of their staff before, during, and after their deployment. And for more than seven years now, I have been a proud member of the Rotary Club of Wexford.

It's remarkable how so many aspects of Rotary align with the different things to which I've devoted my life. The similarities between the projects I was involved in overseas and Rotary's many great accomplishments around the world are self-evident. But even my work in promoting personal well-being and the methods I recommend to achieve it have their parallels in Rotary.

It may seem terribly obvious, but problems get solved when people get along, and they don't when they don't. That's one of the things I appreciate about Rotary, the emphasis placed on friendship and fellowship. That underpins everything. It can transcend differences between people and differences between cultures. What Rotary does is make everybody part of the human family — once again, extremely simple, yet very, very powerful.

And it's not just the friendship and fellowship within Rotary clubs. Because of the way Rotary members design their projects, everybody working on those projects comes together by following the tenets of The Four-Way Test. It's amazing how asking and honestly answering a couple of simple questions — Is it true? Is it fair to all concerned? — can unite people on a very constructive basis. And that's why Rotary is so successful, because everybody does come together.

Those methods are not merely strategic, but large-hearted and smart. It's genius on so many levels, the way The Four-Way Test was conceived and designed and the way that it works. Which brings me to my current focus



on people’s well-being. A huge part of our well-being is based on having good relationships, not just with our family and our friends, but with society at large. That means not only the people we know, but the people we don’t know: the people whom we bump into on the road, in the restaurant, the airport. It’s important that you have good relationships in those situations as well, and adhering to the principles behind Rotary can really bring that alive for us in our daily lives.

That desire for good relationships and the values that sustain them are universal. I see them in action every time I engage with a member of Rotary, be it here in Wexford or in my travels around the world. Rotary sustains my well-being, even as it is good for society’s well-being.

Here’s another obvious fact: If you do things that make you feel good, do things every day that energize you, those acts help you to feel good about yourself. And every impulse in Rotary is toward doing good, be it in small club projects within our local communities or the large global endeavors in one of Rotary’s areas of focus, led by the signature initiative to eradicate polio around the world. Talk about moments that can help people feel good about themselves.

It’s important to remember that trying can be as important as succeeding. Without the attempt, there is no success. Granted, not every attempt is going to succeed, or succeed in the way we had hoped or planned. That prompts me to offer a little advice — which, after all, is what I do.

A lot of people, the very conscientious among us, want everything to be perfect. And when things aren’t perfect, they focus on what’s not perfect. Focusing too much on what is not “perfect” only adds to their stress, which can deal a severe blow to their well-being and their happiness. That’s no good for anybody. You end up seeing only the problem. That negative concentration is a stressor, and you can end up being merely a worrier.

They say that anxiety comes from an unhealthy focus on the future, and depression from an unhealthy focus on the past. That is why meditation can be so valuable: It connects you to the here, to the now, to the moment. Obviously when you’re in the moment, you have better quality relationships and become more productive. Once you get a little bit of momentum, you feel excited and happy. And that leads to accomplishing your most ambitious goals.

Difficulty comes into everybody’s life. None of us is immune to the storms. But learning to weather those tough times leaves us better equipped for what lies ahead. Straight roads don’t make good drivers. They leave us poorly prepared for the more challenging highways we’ll inevitably encounter.

The same holds true if you are going to successfully navigate life’s switchbacks, bends, and curves. The problems Paul Harris experienced and confronted as a child and young adult helped him create Rotary and transform his small Chicago club into a great international force for good. And the things I encountered in my travels and in my work abroad help me be a more fulfilled and engaged person today.

In his autobiography, Paul Harris revealed his road to Rotary. Now you know mine — and you know why, now that I have found my way to Rotary, I intend to stay there and thrive. ■

A member of the Rotary Club of Wexford, Ireland, and an assistant governor of District 1160, Calodagh McCumiskey is the CEO of Spiritual Earth, which promotes personal and professional growth through well-being.



TRUSTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

In our hearts and hands

There are as many reasons to join Rotary as there are members. Most join for experiences — new friendships, expanding professional circles, or putting Service Above Self into action to create impact.

Rotary delivers on all of these, often simultaneously. Through our Rotary Foundation, Rotary also has a knack for offering unexpected experiences and new opportunities that open doors and change lives.

I learned this firsthand at age 30 when I served as president of the Rotary Club of Decatur, Alabama. That year, my wife and I sought out the chance to try something new: attending the 1985 Rotary International Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. There, we witnessed the dawn of PolioPlus and met members from different backgrounds, realizing we were part of a global family.

Later that year, I learned that a Rotary Group Study Exchange team from Nigeria was scheduled to visit Alabama, but Decatur was not on the agenda. After making a few calls, we soon welcomed the Nigerian team into our home. It was an incredible and unexpected experience.

Before the group departed, the team leader recommended me to lead the six-member team from Alabama that would visit Nigeria the following year, which I did. There, I met people whose lives had been impacted by polio, including

several family members of our hosts. I learned that polio reaches its victims across borders, economies, and religions.

That Foundation program — Group Study Exchange — opened my eyes to what Rotary is and what it can do. Taking part in the exchange set me on a path for new friendships and opportunities to serve on multiple continents.

Just as The Rotary Foundation has enriched my Rotary life, it can do the same for you. This month, during Rotary Foundation Month, I invite you to explore new Foundation experiences.

Look for ways you and your club can support Foundation-led efforts like polio eradication, disaster response, or the Rotary Peace Centers. Get involved in global grant or district grant projects. And if you have never had the experience of giving to our Foundation, I invite you to join other Rotary members as a Foundation donor. Your support will mean the world to both Rotary members who want to help and to the individuals and communities who need it.

The Rotary Foundation is not a place or a building. It is an experience, one that lives in our hearts and hands as we do good in the world. The Rotary Foundation is all of us.

MARK DANIEL MALONEY
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.

Stage

right



Michael Sheldrick co-founded Global Citizen to pair pop culture with eradicating poverty

In 2012, over 60,000 people gathered on the Great Lawn in New York City's Central Park for a music festival featuring performances from Neil Young and the Foo Fighters. But this festival was a bit different from most. People didn't secure tickets with money, but with their actions aimed at ending extreme poverty worldwide. The festival was organized by Global Citizen.

Known for its Pop Meets Policy campaign strategy, Global Citizen uses big names in popular culture to engage audiences of all ages in defending the planet, defeating poverty, and demanding equity. The organization was co-founded by Michael, or Mick, Sheldrick.

As a university student, Sheldrick pondered how to make a difference.

Raised in the coastal city of Perth, Australia, he started in his home country. He helped organize The End of Polio Concert in Perth featuring John Legend. It was held on the first day of the 2011 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting to urge the attending world leaders to commit to polio eradication. The concert's efforts helped lead the heads of government to pledge \$118 million in new funds toward ending polio.

Now, Sheldrick is the co-founder and chief policy, impact, and government relations officer at Global Citizen. He has helped raise over \$43 billion to end extreme poverty. Since the first Global Citizen Festival in 2012, countless influential artists have graced the stage.

The festival serves as a platform for influential figures, including business executives and political leaders, to pledge significant financial commitments toward eradicating poverty and addressing other critical global issues. In 2022, Rotary's then-President Jennifer Jones took the stage to commit an additional \$150 million to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative on behalf of Rotary International.

In May, Jones sat down with Sheldrick to discuss his story, recount the transformative work of Global Citizen, and give a glimpse into his new book, *From Ideas to Impact: A Playbook for Influencing and Implementing Change in a Divided World*.

Tell me about growing up in Australia and some of the people who shaped who you are today. I know that one of the people who influenced you was a Rotary member.

I was born in Perth, Western Australia, which has the luxury of being paradise on earth. At university, I was involved in advocating for Australia to step up and fulfill its international obligations to help end extreme poverty.

One of the first mentors I ever met with was a Rotarian. We met for coffee by the beautiful Swan River, which is this sparkling river that runs through the city of Perth. He pitched to me why polio eradication should be the very first campaign that Global Citizen — although we weren't called Global Citizen at the time — should get involved in.

David Goldstone was this gentleman's name. He was probably one of the best storytellers I have ever met. He had

founded the Rotary Club of Crawley, and part of the reason I had met him is he had given scholarships to university students like me so we could get involved in Rotary. We sit down and he says to me, "I want to tell you a story about my friend John."

John was this healthy guy in Sydney in the 1950s. He was 21 years old and suddenly found he was paralyzed from the waist down. At a hospital, the chief medical officer told him, You will never walk again.

David recounted to me how John responded with those immortal words: Yes, I will. And I know, Jennifer, you've met many polio survivors around the world, and you would have heard all their stories. But one of the things that struck me about this one in particular was the resilience. Because John, over many weeks, turning into months, turning into years, slowly recovered the use of his legs and was able to eventually — still with a limp — regain the ability to walk, ended up being a successful businessman, and dedicated himself to eradicating polio.

And at the end of this conversation, I said to David, "Wow, I'd love to meet with him and hear his story firsthand." And I remember he pulled the chair out next to me, put his leg on it, and he lifted his trouser leg. He was wearing a caliper to help

David Goldstone (left), a longtime Australian Rotary member before he died, encouraged Michael Sheldrick (right) in Global Citizen's formative years to make polio eradication the first cause his organization got involved in.



The evolution of Global Citizen

2011

Inspired by Sheldrick's meeting with Rotarian David Goldstone, the organization that would become Global Citizen puts on The End of Polio Concert in Perth, Australia, on the first day of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, urging attending leaders to pledge funding to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative.

2012

The Global Citizen Festival kicks off on the Great Lawn of Central Park in New York City, featuring performances from Neil Young and the Foo Fighters. Sixty thousand people attend this inaugural festival aimed at ending extreme poverty, and \$1.3 billion in new funding for anti-poverty initiatives is announced.

Rotary had a turn on the stage during the 2022 Global Citizen Festival in New York City, when then-President Jennifer Jones committed funding for polio eradication efforts on the organization's behalf.

2015

Coldplay singer Chris Martin joins Global Citizen as its festival curator. He would go on to help bring Global Citizen festivals everywhere from India to Germany to South Africa. Martin has pledged to curate live concerts for Global Citizen until 2030 and help advance the 17 Sustainable Development Goals put forward by the United Nations.

2020

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Global Citizen organizes One World: Together at Home, a televised benefit concert, with support of the World Health Organization. It features various artists performing from their homes and is curated by Lady Gaga.



2022

Global Citizen introduces Global Citizen Now, an idea-sharing summit in New York City. The inaugural event brings together more than 200 speakers including Bill Nye, Justin Trudeau, and Gloria Steinem. This same year, Rotary President Jennifer Jones commits an additional \$150 million to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative on behalf of Rotary International.

2024

Since its start, Global Citizen has inspired 34 million actions that have had an impact on 1.29 billion lives. Over \$43.6 billion in funds have been distributed.

him walk. And he said to me, “It wasn’t ‘John’ all those years ago; it was me. And I don’t need anyone’s pity or shame. I just want to get on and damn well eradicate this disease once and for all.”

It played a formative role not just in my story but, I would argue, in the founding of Global Citizen.

Describe what Global Citizen does.

The founding of Global Citizen was really built on the recognition that issues like poverty, and even eradicating polio, are systemic challenges. A disease like polio has lots of reasons why it spreads. You have a lack of public investment; you have poor sanitation; you have poverty. It was our recognition that systemic challenges require systemic solutions. Throughout history, we’ve seen the power of social movements to make change.

In this day and age, how do we build a social movement to end extreme poverty? We were university students, and it was just after Facebook had launched. It was really combining the power of social media with popular culture and musicians to mainstream these issues, but also give people a way to take action and create impact. We often say that the idea of Pop Meets Policy is fundamental to our core DNA at Global Citizen. We prioritize impact over ideology, action taken over awareness raising.

Getting a musician on board for the first concert that you had in Central Park began as a bit of a dicey proposition. It was the Foo Fighters who started the domino effect. Tell me about that.

We will always be indebted to Dave Grohl of the Foo Fighters because he was the first one to say yes. That was in 2012. We said after the very first festival, OK, that’s it. We won’t do this again. A few days later, we get a call from Stevie Wonder’s management saying he’s always wanted to perform on the Great Lawn of Central Park, and if you do this again next year, he’s in. So I was like, I guess we’re doing it again next year. And that’s where the movement grew. Chris Martin, the lead singer of Coldplay, agreed to be our

This interview was adapted from an episode of *Rotary Voices*, the podcast of *Rotary* magazine. Listen at on.rotary.org/podcast.



When Dave Grohl and the Foo Fighters agreed to perform at Global Citizen’s first concert in Central Park, it encouraged other artists to join in the fight to eradicate global poverty.

creative director in 2015 and work with us to take it to different cities around the world from Mumbai, India, to Johannesburg, South Africa, to Hamburg, Germany. The rest is history.

When someone attends a Global Citizen Festival, they actually have to perform an act of service in order to get a ticket, right? They don’t simply buy a ticket?

That’s right. We say action is our currency. We’re after your voice. We’re after you to take action, whether that’s calling on your elected official or business leaders to contribute not just to polio eradication — it could be sanitation; it could be access to education.

And as I write about in the book, if you ask for help and you’re very clear in the impact you want to create, the universe has a way of connecting you with inter-

esting people around the globe. It was this Californian filmmaker, Ryan Gall, who said something to the effect of: You know what you should do? You should reward people for taking action. Get them to sign a petition, call on Commonwealth leaders to eradicate polio. And in return, they go in the drawing to earn a ticket to your concert with John Legend.

We had 25,000 signatures for 5,000 tickets. And nine months after that, we had the attention of people around the world. We were standing on the Great Lawn of Central Park for the very first Global Citizen Festival. That was 60,000 people. And more than a decade later, Global Citizen, with the help of our tremendous partners, is now the largest action-taking platform in the world.

We’ve catalyzed and mobilized more than 30 million citizen actions that have helped lead to more than \$40 billion being distributed to a range of causes, including polio eradication. That’s helped in some way touch the lives of over a billion people. ■

THE SEARCH FOR
**THE MOST
OUTSTANDING
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROJECTS**
2024-2025

Philippine
Rotary
Media Foundation



Objectives

Rotary International has adopted as its Area of Focus: **Protecting the Environment**. Clubs and districts are now encouraged to apply for global grants to support environment focused activities.

The Rotary Foundation supports activities that strengthen the conservation and protection of natural resources, advance environmental sustainability, and foster harmony between people and the environment. It encourages interventions that have a positive, measurable, and sustainable impact.

Project pathways are envisioned to fulfill the following objectives:

- 1. Conserve nature and biodiversity**, from species to landscape-scale protection.
- 2. Mitigate climate change** by reducing or avoiding greenhouse gas emissions or ensuring that they are absorbed or stored in natural carbon sinks.
- 3. Facilitate sustainable and adaptable livelihood** with smaller ecological footprints that maintain people's social well-being in harmony with flourishing natural systems.
- 4. Strengthen environmental equity** by addressing socio-environmental issues that disproportionately affect marginalized communities.

Search

Rotary Clubs in each of the ten (10) Rotary districts in the Philippines are invited to present and nominate projects and programs that create and foster a sustainable environment through the foregoing pathways. These projects must involve partnership with communities, including public and private institutions, or local government units (LGUs), or national government agencies.

Such projects must be in consonance with Rotary's mission, goals, core values and principles. The projects must have been actively implemented for at least one year prior to the conferment of awards.

Criteria: I-M-P-A-C-T

Innovative (15%) The project should be characterized by an out-of-the-box approach both in terms of understanding the problem and in providing solutions.

Multiplicative (15%) The project should be replicable in other communities, while ensuring that the local context is sufficiently adapted in the project design.

Problem-Solution Fit (15%) Solutions should emanate from clearly-identified social-ecological needs. These should be demonstrably responsive to the problems identified and assessed needs.

Able To Be Sustained (20%) Interventions have a long-term view both in terms of continuity and impact.

Co-Production (15%) The project should be co-designed with the community that is engaged in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating it.

Transformative (20%) Verifiable and positive changes in social behavior and in the environment should be demonstrated. Project objectives are met satisfactorily. Safeguards are in place to deal with unintended consequences that could threaten project viability

Selection & Awards

Each District shall select the Most Outstanding Project from among those submitted by the Clubs. The Most Outstanding Project shall receive a cash prize of Fifty Thousand Pesos (₱50,000) and a Certificate of Recognition.

PRMFI shall form and constitute a Board of Judges that shall select the Top Three Most Outstanding Projects.

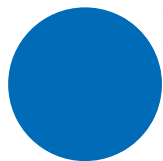
Cash prizes and appropriate tokens of recognition will be given as follows: Gold Prize, ₱300,000; Silver Prize, ₱200,000; Bronze Prize, ₱150,000.





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