



## The Rotary Theme for February is Peace Building and Conflict Prevention

Today, over 70 million people are displaced as a result of conflict, violence, persecution, and human rights violations. Half of them are children.

We refuse to accept conflict as a way of life. Rotary projects provide training that fosters understanding and provides communities with the skills to resolve conflicts.

Rotary creates environments of peace

As a humanitarian organization, peace is a cornerstone of our mission. We believe when people work to create peace in their communities, that change can have a global effect.

By carrying out service projects and supporting peace fellowships and scholarships, our members take action to address the underlying causes of conflict, including poverty, discrimination, ethnic tension, lack of access to education, and unequal distribution of resources.

Our commitment to peacebuilding today answers new challenges: how we can make the greatest possible impact and how we can achieve our vision of lasting change. We are approaching the concept of peace with greater cohesion and inclusivity, broadening the scope of what we mean by peacebuilding, and finding more using for approaching the matrix.

scope of what we mean by peacebuilding, and finding more ways for people to get involved. Rotary creates environments where peace can happen.

Rotary was present at the start of the United Nations in 1945. Rotary International was one of 42 organizations invited to serve as consultants to the U.S. delegation to the United Nations Conference on International Organization in San Francisco, California, (commonly called the UN charter conference). Additionally, many Rotary members and honorary members from around the world attended the conference as members of and consultants to their nations' delegations. Rotary and the United Nations remain committed to creating lasting change that enhances international relationships, improves lives and communities, and creates a more peaceful world.

At various times, Rotary members had proposed creating a university to promote peace, but the concept never seemed feasible. In the 1990s, Rotary leaders were inspired by the 50th anniversary of Harris' death to consider an alternate approach.

The idea was simple, but the impact would be tremendous: Rotary would encourage people already engaged in peacebuilding as a career to apply for graduate-level study in the field, and The Rotary Foundation would provide scholarships to peace fellows that would allow them to enroll in established peace programs at existing universities. Rotary approved the creation of Rotary Peace Centers program in 1999, and the inaugural class of Rotary Peace Fellows began their studies in 2002.

To raise awareness about issues that cause conflict and activities that promote peace, Rotary created Peace Forums as a three-year pilot program. Rotary leaders and invited guests explored topics such as "Nongovernmental Organizations and the Search for Peace" at the first Peace Forum held in 1988 in Evanston, Illinois. In 1990, the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation broadened the program and changed the name to Rotary Peace Programs.

Rotary Peace Centers, located at universities around the world, develop leaders who become catalysts for peace in local communities and on the global stage. They study the causes of conflict and build practical skills exploring innovative solutions to real-world problems in areas such as human rights, international relations, and global health and development.

Rotary is not a university and yet it has an educational task to perform, and that task is to divert the world mind to thoughts of friendly cooperation. — Arch Klumph, father of The Rotary Foundation, in a speech to the 1921 convention

Rotary's goal today is to create environments where peace can be built and maintained through sustainable and measurable activities in communities worldwide. Peacebuilding remains a cornerstone of our mission as a humanitarian service organization.

