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For Members Only

ROTARY AND POLIO

Since 1988, Rotary International and its partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) – the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – have worked to wipe polio from the face of the earth. A volunteer service organization of 1.2 million men and women, Rotary began immunizing children against polio in 1985 and became a spearheading partner in the GPEI three years later.

Rotary's main responsibilities are fundraising, advocacy, and volunteer recruitment. To date, Rotary has contributed more than US\$900 million to the polio eradication effort.

With over 33,000 clubs in more than 200 countries and geographical areas, Rotary is able to reach out to national governments worldwide to generate crucial financial and technical support for polio eradication. Since 1995, the advocacy efforts of Rotary and its partners have helped raise more than \$8 billion from donor governments.

Rotary clubs also provide "sweat equity" on the ground in polio-affected communities, which helps ensure that leaders at all levels remain focused on the eradication goal. Rotary club members have volunteered their time and personal resources to reach more than two billion children in 122 countries with the oral polio vaccine.

Thanks to Rotary and its partners, the world has seen polio cases plummet by more than 99 percent, preventing five million instances of child paralysis and 250,000 deaths. When Rotary began its eradication work, polio infected more than 350,000 children annually. In 2009, fewer than 1,700 cases were reported worldwide.

But the polio cases represented by that final 1 percent are the most difficult and expensive to prevent. Challenges include geographic isolation, worker fatigue, armed conflict, and cultural barriers.

That's why it's so important to generate the funding needed to End Polio Now. To fail is to invite a polio resurgence that would condemn millions of children to lifelong paralysis in the years ahead.

The bottom line is this: As long as polio threatens even one child anywhere in the world, all children – wherever they live – remain at risk.

RI President's Message

December 2022

While sitting with a group of Rotary leaders outside of Lusaka, Zambia, I ask a question: "How many of you have ever had malaria?" Every hand in the room goes up. They even begin to tell me about the first, second, or third time they experienced the disease, one of the main causes of death and sickness in many developing countries.

They are fortunate. They have access to medical treatment and lifesaving medicines. For the people of rural Zambia, their story is very different.

On a wooden bench in a small village, I sit with Timothy and his young son Nathan. With a camera crew capturing our conversation, he tells me of the time Nathan showed signs of malaria. He brought the boy to the nearby home of a community health worker, where Nathan quickly received medicines that in all likelihood saved his life.

Calmly, Timothy tells me about his other son's bout with the disease a few years earlier. He had to race that son to a medical clinic more than 5 miles away. Riding a bike and carrying his child on his back, he tells me, he could feel his son's legs turn cold and then his little body go limp. As he finally entered the clinic, he screamed for help, but it was too late. The camera stops rolling, and we sit in silence. He begins to weep, and I hold him tightly. "I lost my son, I lost my son," he says.

This story is all too familiar for the families we meet over the next few days. And yet there is hope. Partners for a Malaria-Free Zambia is Rotary's first Programs of Scale grant recipient, and it is saving lives. Across two provinces of Zambia, 2,500 volunteer health workers have been selected by their communities. They are trained to bring medical care closer to those who need it, and they are able to diagnose and treat malaria and other ailments. Rotary partnerships create lasting change.

Jennifer Jones

President 2022-23

EXCELLENCE

A German once visited a temple under construction where he saw a sculptor making an idol of God. Suddenly he noticed a similar idol lying nearby. Surprised, he asked the sculptor, "Do you need two statues of the same idol?" "No," said the sculptor without looking up, "We need only one, but the first one got damaged at the last stage." The gentleman examined the idol and found no apparent damage. "Where is the damage?" he asked. "There is a scratch on the nose of the idol." said the sculptor, still busy with his work. "Where are you going to install the idol?"

The sculptor replied that it would be installed on a pillar twenty feet high. "If the idol is that far, who is going to know that there is a scratch on the nose?" the gentleman asked. The sculptor stopped his work, looked up at the gentleman, smiled and said, "I will know it."

The desire to excel is exclusive of the fact whether someone else appreciates it or not. "Excellence" is a drive from inside, not outside. Excellence is not for someone else to notice but for your own satisfaction and efficiency.

History of The Rotary Foundation

In 1917, RI President Arch C. Klumph proposed that an endowment be set up "for the purpose of doing good in the world." In 1928, when the endowment fund had grown to more than US\$5,000, it was renamed The Rotary Foundation, and it became a distinct entity within Rotary International.

Five Trustees, including Klumph, were appointed to "hold, invest, manage, and administer all of its property . . . as a single trust, for the furtherance of the purposes of RI."

Two years later, the Foundation made its first grant of \$500 to the International Society for Crippled Children. The organization, created by Rotarian Edgar F. "Daddy" Allen, later grew into the Easter Seals.

The Great Depression and World War II both impeded the Foundation's growth, but the need for lasting world peace generated great postwar interest in its development. After Rotary's founder, Paul P. Harris, died in 1947, contributions began pouring into Rotary International, and the Paul Harris Memorial Fund was created to build the Foundation.

That year, the first Foundation program – the forerunner of Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarships – was established. In 1965-66, three new programs were launched: Group Study Exchange, Awards for Technical Training, and Grants for Activities in Keeping with the Objective of The Rotary Foundation, which was later called Matching Grants.

The Health, Hunger and Humanity (3-H) Grants program was launched in 1978, and Rotary Volunteers was created as a part of that program in 1980. PolioPlus was announced in 1984-85, and the next year brought Rotary Grants for University Teachers. The first peace forums were held in 1987-88, leading to the Foundation's peace and conflict studies programs.

Throughout this time, support of the Foundation grew tremendously. Since the first donation of \$26.50 in 1917, it has received contributions totaling more than \$1 billion. More than \$70 million was donated in 2003-04 alone. To date, more than one million individuals have been recognized as Paul Harris Fellows – people who have given \$1,000 to the Annual Programs Fund or have had that amount contributed in their name.

Such strong support, along with Rotarian involvement worldwide, ensures a secure future for The Rotary Foundation as it continues its vital work for international understanding and world peace.

Source : www.rotary.org

Invite your friends and relatives to attend our regular weekly meeting.