

History and Interesting Facts about the Rotary Foundation at 100 years

“We should not live for ourselves alone, but for the joy in doing good for others.”

Arch Klumph, founder of The Rotary Foundation

“It seems eminently proper that we should accept endowments for the purpose of doing good in the world.”

Arch Klumph, June, 1917

The Rotary Foundation's motto is “Doing Good in the World”

Rotary President (1916-1917) Arch Klumph’s idea for an endowment fund dedicated to “doing good in the world” planted the seed of The Rotary Foundation in 1917 at the Rotary Convention in Atlanta, Georgia. Thanks to his vision and staunch advocacy, and the extraordinary generosity of Rotary members worldwide, that fund has become one of the world’s leading humanitarian foundations.

The Rotary Club of Kansas City, Missouri made the first contribution to the Rotary Foundation in 1917 - \$26.50.

At the 1928 Rotary Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Rotary Foundation was named and a Board of Trustees created. *(Before that the RI Board of Directors had oversight of the funds.)*

In 1930, the Foundation awarded \$500 to the International Society of Crippled Children, which later became known as Easter Seals. *(The International Society of Crippled Children was founded by Rotarian Edgar Allen, who worked closely with Paul Harris and other Rotarians to aid children with disabilities.)*

In 1936, Institutes for International Understanding were formed to illuminate global issues and to inform communities of global issues of the day.

In 1947, Rotary members contributed 1.3 million dollars in memory of Paul Harris.

In 1957, Paul Harris Fellow recognition began – the first form of donor recognition, expressing appreciation of eligible contributions of \$1000. *(In 2006, the number of Paul Harris Fellows reached 1 million.)*

In 1965, the Matching Grants Program was established, allowing the Foundation to fund club and district projects. Group Study Exchanges began, connecting people across countries and cultures.

In 1978, the 3-H program (Health, Hunger, and Humanity) expanded service efforts. The program was developed to improve health, alleviate hunger, and enhance human and social development. Rotary members use the grants to create access to clean drinking water, support literacy programs, provide medical care, and more.

In 1979, Rotary began immunizing 6 million children in the Philippines against polio; in 1980, Rotary committed to eliminating polio through immunization.

In 1981, the Foundation established the Endowment Fund, specifically for investing certain

contributions in perpetuity, with the earnings going to support the Foundation's future ability to do good.

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In 1985, the Polio Plus program was launched - the “plus” initially referred to the additional vaccines administered along with the polio vaccine. Today, it also reflects the fact that the infrastructure, fundraising, and advocacy methods developed for the polio eradication campaign also support efforts to fight other infectious diseases.

In 1988, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), originally composed of Rotary, the World Health Organization, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and UNICEF, was created to coordinate polio eradication work.

In 1995, the Polio Plus Partners program was created to support National Immunization Days.

In 1999, Rotary Peace Centers were founded. The Rotary Peace Centers program develops leaders who become catalysts for peace and conflict prevention and resolution in their communities and around the globe. Each year, up to 100 Rotary Peace Fellows are chosen to participate in a master’s degree or certificate program at one of the Rotary centers at universities around the world. Members of the inaugural class of Rotary Peace Fellows begin studies in the fall of 2002.

In 2004, the Every Rotarian Every Year initiative was created. The initiative encourages every Rotary member to give every year to the Foundation, with the **goal of \$100 in per capita contributions to the Annual Fund**. After 10 years of the initiative, Annual Fund total contributions reached \$116 million.

In 2004, the Arch Klumph Society recognizes contributions of \$250,000 or more to the Foundation.

In 2007, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation issued the \$1 million challenge. The grant challenged Rotary to raise \$100 million, which the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation matched. Two years later, the Gates Foundation pledged an additional \$255 million and increases the amount Rotary must raise to \$200 million. Rotary's partnership with the Gates Foundation helps both organizations improve lives around the world.

In 2009, Rotary and USAID launched the International H₂O Collaboration – improving drinking water, sanitation and hygiene in four countries.

In 2013, the Simplified Grant Model went into effect, introducing two new grant types: global and district, and phasing out 3-H, Matching and District Simplified Grants, Ambassadorial Scholarships, and the Group Study Exchange Program. Global grants enables Rotary members to plan and sustain larger projects by meeting with community leaders to assess needs and create a plan for ongoing management.

In 2015, the number of polio-endemic countries dropped to two. Polio cases worldwide are down 99.9% since 1988 when the Global Polio Eradication Initiative was launched.

July 1, 2016 – The Rotary Foundation began the celebration of it's centennial year! The Rotary

Foundation is about to mark a century of doing good in the world through humanitarian projects, scholarships, professional training and exchanges, and its remarkable campaign for a polio-free world.

The Rotary Foundation has spent over \$3 billion on programs and projects to support humanitarian efforts and scholarships throughout its 100 year history.