

14 JULY 2026

Meet our 2026-27 Rotary International President Olayinka Hakeem Babalola

Born in the city of Ibadan, Nigeria, Olayinka H. Babalola received his engineering degree in 1988. He worked for 25 years in the oil and gas industry, holding senior positions at Shell PLC. He is the founder of two companies: an oil and gas infrastructure delivery company and an executive coaching and organizational performance advisory group.

His first experience of Rotary was through a decade of service in Rotaract. Babalola was the charter president of his university Rotaract club and participated in cultural exchanges and twinning with clubs in Japan and Côte d'Ivoire. During his Rotaract days, he also organized extramural classes for disabled children at a Cheshire Home supported by local clubs.

Babalola joined the Rotary Club of Trans Amadi in 1994. He went on to serve on committees including the End Polio Now: Countdown to History Campaign Committee and the Nigeria PolioPlus Committee prior to joining the RI Board as a director and later as vice president.

In the early 2000s, Babalola helped launch the Safe Blood Africa project to improve the availability of safe blood in hospitals in Nigeria and across Africa. The initiative has installed blood banks and donated bloodmobiles that are still operating today.

Babalola provided local Rotary leadership for polio eradication in Nigeria's conflict-affected northeast. Through unannounced site visits with local officials that ensured accountability in vaccine distribution, Babalola made his own contribution to helping eradicate polio in Nigeria, and by extension in Africa, in 2020.

As RI president, Babalola wants to help restore members' emotional connection to the organization and their sense of belonging. "We do things for others, but Rotary is also our own," he says. "When something is your own, you want to fight for it. 'It is my duty to help it thrive.' When you see how Rotary has made a lasting impact on your life, then you can tell that story."

Babalola enjoys golf, swimming, forest walking, and photographing cloud formations. He hopes to someday exhibit his photos or publish them in a book.

Babalola and his wife, Precy, a Rotary member, live in Port Harcourt. They support The Rotary Foundation through a named endowment and as Arch Klumph Society members.



Rotary has a way of surprising you. It surprises you when a stranger across the table becomes a lifelong friend. It surprises you when a small project in one neighborhood ripples outward in ways you never imagined. And it may surprise you when you realize that the person Rotary has changed most ... is you. That is why this year, we are called to harness the change within ourselves, to look to the future, and to **Create Lasting Impact.**

Now, I want to be clear about what those words mean. Change is only the beginning. Impact is what endures. We must think of the long-term impact of every project. The more you change your community and the world, the more you will change. Don't just tell people about the projects you have run or the funds you have raised. Tell them how Rotary has shaped who you are. Those personal stories open doors, inspire new members, and remind all of us why we are here.

Sit down with your club and look back over your accomplishments in the last few years. Find your best year. Once you find that year, I challenge you to do better than your best.

In these ways and more, we will Create Lasting Impact across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.



INTERNATIONAL TOAST

Rotary Club of Barbados, District 7030

President Hugh shared the history of the club, and how it aligned with the start of Rotary. The development of the Tourist Industry and Manufacturing in Barbados during the early sixties can be considered as the main reason for the birth of a Rotary Club.

At that time, among the many visitors and business executives who visited, were Rotarians who were members of various clubs especially in the United States and they often queried whether there were any Rotary Clubs on the island at which they could attend in order to keep up their attendance and maintain their membership in their respective clubs. It was in July 1961, that Paul Foster, the then manager of the Barbados Tourist Board (now the Barbados Tourism Authority) and Canadian, Tom McLaughlin, Manager of the Barbados Development Board, now Barbados Industrial Development Corporation (BIDC) both shared offices on the top floor of Cavan House on Lower Broad Street, The City. It was an ordinary day in the lives of both men when McLaughlin walked into Foster's office and asked the question: "Why don't we start a Rotary Club in Barbados?"

On September 22, 1961, an initial meeting was held and received with such enthusiasm that another meeting was called only six days later for further discussion aimed at finalizing action for the formation of a club and to appoint officers. Records show that by January 18, 1962, plans were being made for the first official meeting of the club and there was a total of 23 paid up members. The Charter was presented on March 7, 1962 and the Rotary Club of Barbados came into being with eminent Barrister-at-Law, J.E. Theodore Brancker, one of the founder members as the Charter President. The club achieved a significant milestone on January 13, 2005 with the induction of its first female member. On July 9, 2011 another significant milestone was achieved when the Club's first female President, Brenda Pope, was installed.

The Current President is Jamella Forde
The Club currently has forty members
The Club meets at 12.30pm on Thursdays at the Hilton Barbados

The Rotary Club of Barbados is very active in respect to local community projects especially in respect to youth projects, senior citizens and the local environment.

They conduct an annual pride of workmanship project involving local businesses. They are also great supporters of the Rotary Foundation especially in respect to Polio eradication

UPCOMING MEETINGS

28 JULY 2026

Host Chair: Peter Richardson

Speaker: Zena Ferguson - Dementia Australia

International Toast: Ros McLernon (C)

11 AUGUST 2026

Host Chair: Kerry Smith

Speaker:

International Toast: Gerry McLernon (D)

25 AUGUST 2026

Host Chair: Jodie Sparks

Speaker: Julia Spark - ROMAC

International Toast: Dianne Reed (E)

8 SEPTEMBER 2026

Host Chair: Ron Alexander

Speaker:

International Toast: Peter Richardson (F)

Can't make a meeting?

Send apologies to Attendance Officer Mike Bermann prior to the meeting to record your apologies

UPCOMING EVENTS

WA Pedal Prix

When: 26 July 2026 (Race starts 10am)

Where: Perth Motorplex - Cnr Anketell Road & Rockingham Rd, Kwinana Beach

4 Way Test Speaking Competition

When: 6pm, 4 August 2026

Where: APIWA Cannington

Daffodil Day

When: 15-16 August 2026

Where: Bunnings Belmont

Bricktober

When: 10-11 October 2026

Where: Curtin Stadium

Jacaranda Festival

When: 15 November 2026

Where: Ardross St Applecross

FROM THE PODIUM

PRESIDENT HUGH



- Annual Projects will continue as normal
- It is important that the 'second in charge' for each of the portfolios be copied in on emails and included - everyone in the club has a part to play
- We need to concentrate on new members as a priority - if we don't have members we don't have a club
- New members also bring new ideas
- Lets not forget about Friends of Rotary and volunteers to help out and be involved in what we do
- We need to be smart about how we do things
- The club needs a second/back-up fundriaser to Bricktober.....to add to/top up our funds. It could be a smaller event, and let's think about what we could do. Can we partner with another organisation?

How lovely to receive thanks for Wirrabirra Primary for the donation towards winter clothes for their students



15-16 August 2026
Bunnings Belmont Belmont

Saturday: 9am - 4pm
Sunday 9.30am - 1pm

What we need to do on the day:

- Dress in all things yellow and have fun!
- Set up the stall.
- Sell bunches of daffodils and pins
- Accept donations.

Look for details of the roster in your email :)