

Rotary Scholarship helps change lives



GRANT RUMLEY, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Marysville, MI used his 2012-13 Ambassadorial Scholarship to pursue a Master's degree in Middle East Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Grant is currently living in Jerusalem, completing the MA begun during his scholarship year.

Below, read about Grant's Rotary scholarship year.

The Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship was nothing short of a life-changer for me. While still a junior at Michigan State University, I was approached by my neighbor –a Rotarian- to apply for the scholarship, but I shied away for fear of translating my essays into Arabic. The next year he approached me again, resolutely, and after spending a few months in Egypt my confidence (or, rather, foolhardy-senior-ego) was sufficient enough to apply. It turned out to be the best decision of my young career.

I interviewed via Skype the day I graduated from university, and was notified later that day that I had been selected. A tumultuous day to say the least. However, I still had a year to wait, and I spent that year working as a consultant for US government agencies in Washington DC, where I learned just how much I wanted to get back into the field. In accepting a Rotary Ambassadorial scholarship, I understood I was taking on the mantle of Rotary's guiding principles, and I chose a region and university that would most allow me to make a positive impact. A year after I graduated from university, I found myself in Jerusalem at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The epicenter of the most intractable conflict in the modern-era certainly didn't feel very modern. In the centuries, and even millennia, old streets of Jerusalem I found a city reeling from generations of ethnic,

religious, national, economic, and societal tensions. I entered my Rotary year with a single, if not complicated, goal in mind: to reflect Rotary's core values on a professional and personal level, in addition to my duties as a student. At the professional level, I signed on as a visiting fellow at Mitvim – The Israeli Institute for Regional Foreign Policies. Founded by my soon to be professor, and comprising mostly Israeli and Arab academics, Mitvim's guiding goal is to advocate a two-state solution, a solution predicated on a comprehensive peace agreement. In this light, I conducted interviews with dozens of Palestinian, Israeli, European and American officials in and around Jerusalem and the West Bank. These interviews culminated in a report I released titled: *Back to Basics: The Evolution of the Palestinian UN Campaign*, a report which was circulated in both Israeli and Palestinian circles, and received positive praise from both communities. On the personal level, I volunteered each week at a center for handicapped children in Jerusalem: St Vincent's Ein Kerem. At St Vincent's, I worked with kids with limited mobility, taking them into a pool and stretching and stimulating their muscles. To this end I found a community of harmony within Jerusalem; Muslims, Jews and Christians all working together for the sake of the children. There are very few things in my life I have ever done with as much fulfillment as working at St Vincent's.

As I write this, I am a few weeks out from returning to Jerusalem to finish my Master's in Middle East Studies at the Hebrew University. From there, I am hoping to enter a PhD program in Political Science in the US or Europe and teach at the professorial level. I've learned a lot in my time in Jerusalem, and I'd like to impart some of that knowledge and experience onto the next generation of thinkers and doers. The Rotary Ambassadorial scholarship was the conduit for that dream. I am eternally grateful to everyone at Rotary International, and the Rotarians in Marysville, Michigan, and London, Ontario, and the entire district 6330.

In July 2013, Ambassadorial Scholarships were replaced by GLOBAL GRANT Scholarships. Please refer potential candidates to the district website to determine eligibility and contact information.