



My Fellow Rotarians:

It is an honor and privilege to serve as the District Governor for one of the leading Rotary Districts in the world. Last year was one of the most challenging years in Rotary due to the Covid pandemic. As we start a new Rotary Year, there is a great deal of hope and optimism in our Rotary Clubs as we are returning to live meetings to welcome back the in-person fun and fellowship, to network, to lead, to grow personally, and to serve locally and globally. Coming out of the pandemic, our Rotary Clubs also have learned how to adapt, innovate, and be flexible by meeting virtually to retain members and to recruit new members to join the oldest and largest service organization in the world.

Despite coming out of the pandemic, our challenge remains great. Our Rotary Clubs need to continue to provide the value of membership to our members and to enhance their engagement in Rotary. We need to increase our ability to adapt and innovate to meet their needs and to retain their membership. Because of our Rotary International President Shekhar Mehta's initiative of Each One Bring One, Rotary leaders will need to motivate and inspire each Rotarian to commit to introduce at least one person to Rotary and to bring a guest to our club meetings. We can do so by telling people the benefits of joining Rotary as outlined by our own District Past Rotary International President Richard D. King in his 20 Reasons To Join Rotary.

We join Rotary to serve and give back to our community and the world. Rotary leaders have the duty and responsibility of asking each member to commit to taking part in the club's fundraiser and to commit to participating in a club service project. Coming out of the pandemic, the clubs can return to in-person fundraising. Learning from the pandemic, the clubs can also have virtual and/or hybrid fundraising. It is only with fundraising efforts that the club can do service projects in its community, give back, make, and increase our impact and expand our reach.

Finally, we ask each Rotarian in our District to contribute to the Rotary Foundation because we are in the business of service to help those who are less fortunate and underserved. Albert Schweitzer, a Nobel Peace Prize-winning theologian and humanitarian once said, "I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve. Even if it's a little thing, do something for those who have need of one's help, something for which you get no pay but the privilege of doing it. For, remember, you don't live in a world all your own. Your brothers and sister are here too." By contributing to the Rotary Foundation, we together will not only Serve To Change The Lives of Others, but we will also Change Our Own Lives.

Richard Flanders

Rotary District 5170 Governor

