Nina Kolenc
Maribor, Slovenia

Eight years ago when she was 21, Nina's heart stopped suddenly due to fibrillation that caused cardiac arrest. No blood could be pumped to her body. She was declared clinically dead. She recovered but she says that:

"I did not forget that life is short and that humans are mortal. For me, the life blood is the symbol. When someone donates blood he or she is giving life to someone else and helping the blood to circulate."

In 2004, as a member of the Rotaract club, a Rotary-sponsored service club for young men and women ages 18 to 30, Nina, healthy and vibrant, is now a high school teacher in Maribor, Slovenia, helped initiate a blood donation project in her community which, in turn, influenced similar projects in many countries across numbers of continents. Nina said

"We wanted to take a small step towards a big difference."

The project has been very successful. It moved quickly from local to global.
Not long after, a similar blood drive was organized in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Soon the Rotaract Club of Mella, Ethiopia, organized a Blood Drive. The most recent count showed that the model has spread to many countries over five continents. This project has united more than 1000 members of Rotary International who are blood donors and their friends.

Through this simple beginning, blood is being donated in Brazil, Egypt, Ethiopia, Hungary, Nepal, Samoa, Slovenia, Ukraine, Tanzania, Turkey, Uruguay and spreading each year.