

Ambassadorial Scholarships

In 1947, 18 graduate students from 7 countries left their homelands to study in 10 other countries and serve as ambassadors of goodwill. They were the first "Rotary Fellows."

Today, the Ambassadorial Scholarships Program of The Rotary Foundation is the world's largest privately-funded international scholarships program. For 1999-2000, nearly 1,300 scholarships have been awarded. Through grants totaling approximately US\$23.1 million, recipients from 67 countries will study in 75 different nations.

A benefit not found in other scholarship programs is the scholar's association with Rotary clubs and Rotarians. Each scholar is assigned both a sponsor and a host Rotarian counselor who provide orientation, advice and assistance.

History

When Rotary International's founder, Paul P. Harris, died in 1947, Rotarians and others across the globe paid homage to his memory with generous gifts to The Rotary Foundation. In the wake of World War II, a program that Harris had envisioned was initiated -- the creation of international graduate scholarships to enhance relations between the world's citizens. As contributions to the Foundation increased, more scholarships were offered. In 1952-53, five years after the program began, 109 awards were given. By the 1980-81 academic year, the number of scholarships exceeded 1,000 annually.

Rotary Centers for International Studies

In 1999 Rotary International announced the establishment of seven international studies centers where scholars can learn diplomacy and skills to resolve conflict and promote international understanding.

The Rotary Centers for International Studies are located at prestigious universities around the world. The first seventy scholars, 10 students at each center, will be selected to participate in two-year graduate programs related to peace and conflict resolution beginning in the 2002 academic year.

The universities selected to host the Rotary Centers for International Studies were: Duke University and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA (jointly-hosted center); University of California-Berkeley, California, USA; Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris, Paris, France; University of Bradford, West Yorkshire, England; University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia; International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan; and, Universidad del Salvador, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Ambassadors of Goodwill

The purpose of the Ambassadorial Scholarships Program is to further international understanding and friendly relations among people of different countries. Today, the program sponsors several types of scholarships both for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as qualified professionals pursuing vocational studies. While abroad, scholars serve as ambassadors of goodwill to the people of the host

country and give presentations about their homelands to Rotary clubs and other groups. Upon returning home, scholars share with local Rotarians and others the experiences that led to greater understanding of their host countries.

Types of Scholarships

Academic-Year Ambassadorial Scholarships are for one academic year abroad and provide funding for round-trip transportation, tuition and fees, room, board, necessary educational supplies, and language training (if necessary) up to a maximum award of US\$22,000 or its equivalent.

Multi-Year Ambassadorial Scholarships are flat grants of US\$11,000 per year for two years toward the cost of a degree program in another country.

Cultural Ambassadorial Scholarships provide funding for three or six months of intensive language study in another country, including homestay with a local family, up to a maximum of US\$10,000 and US\$17,000 respectively.

Individuals who have completed two years of college or university coursework or equivalent professional experience are eligible for Rotary Foundation scholarships. Scholarships may not be awarded to Rotarians, Rotary employees, spouses, parents, or descendants of Rotarians.

Scholarship statistics

- Total scholarships awarded (1947 through 1999-2000): over 30,000
- Total amount spent on scholarships (through 1999-2000): US\$377 million
- Countries which have hosted the most scholars: USA, England and France
- Countries which have sponsored the most scholars: USA, Japan and Korea
- Average Academic-Year Scholarship awarded in 1947-48: US\$2,200
- Average Academic-Year Scholarship award in 1999-2000: approximately US\$18,100
- Total number of institutions attended by Rotary scholars: approximately 3,500
- First year women participated in the program: 1949-50
- Percentage of districts that have participated in the program since 1947: 99 percent

Prominent Alumni

Many former scholars serve important posts with their governments; others are highly respected in their fields. Examples of outstanding Rotary alumni include: Bill Moyers, a prominent U.S. journalist, Sadako Ogata, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, Paul Volcker, former chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Carlos Alberto Da Mota Pinto, former Prime Minister of Portugal, Otto Borch, Danish Ambassador to the U.S., and Roger Ebert, a popular U.S. film critic.