



## ROTARY FOUNDATION TRUSTEE CHAIR'S SPEECH TO THE 2016 ROTARY CONVENTION

Ray Klinginsmith

Korea

31 May 2016

When I was the Rotary president, I encouraged our clubs to become Bigger, Better, and Bolder. We didn't achieve the desired membership growth, but we did focus more attention on our clubs. And the slogan became even more popular than my official theme for the year, because Rotarians like to do things in a big way. As a result, I truly believe that the phrase *Bigger, Better, Bolder*, is very descriptive of Rotary around the world!

Today I want to tell you how much The Rotary Foundation has grown in the last 40 years — from the faraway time when I was a district governor in 1975-76. Wait a minute! It wasn't that far back! I also want to tell you how much the Foundation has changed since then to achieve its current level of success, and why we should be immensely proud of our Foundation!

The Foundation had only three programs in 1975-76, which were International Scholarships, Group Study Exchange teams, and Matching Grants. The Foundation proudly received total contributions of \$8.4 million that year, which was a new and impressive record. But last year, the Foundation received total contributions of \$269 million, about 32 times the total amount received 40 years ago. Even if we convert the value of 1976 dollars to the current time, the 1976 contributions adjusted for inflation would be worth about \$35 million, which still would be only 14 percent of the total amount the Foundation received last year.

In 1975-76, the Foundation expended a grand total of \$5.7 million on its three then-existing programs. And it is interesting to note that 86 percent of the funds were spent on International Scholarships, with only 13 percent on Group Study Exchange and 1 percent on Matching Grants. Wow! What a change has occurred in response to the preferences of Rotarians, as shown by their usage of DDF, thru the last 40 years!

We now have added the PolioPlus program, which has placed Rotary on the world stage with our stunning progress in the eradication of polio. We also have added the Rotary Peace Centers program, which is extremely popular with Rotarians around the world. But even more striking, we have eliminated all three of the programs that were in place when I was a district governor, and we have replaced them with district grants and global grants, which include global grant scholarships and vocational training teams.

You may be wondering why did we make the change, and the answer is simple. The world changed — and Rotarians changed! Stop and think for a moment. The first International Scholarships started in 1948, when ships were still the primary mode of international travel, and the Group Study Exchange teams were initiated in 1965, just as the jet age was starting. Both programs were focused on the travel of students and young professional people to distant lands to increase international understanding at a time when international travel was infrequent and slow. But the jet age changed all of that, and trips abroad have become fast and frequent. As a result, our Rotary districts started using their Designated District Funds, commonly known as DDF, to shift their emphasis from scholarships to humanitarian grants.

Another important factor in the change was the development of television and other forms of communication, including the Internet and email, that made the transfer of information incredibly faster and clearer. And much more personal! Thereby, Rotarians in developed countries became more interested in helping less fortunate people in developing countries, and the vast Rotary network made it possible for Rotarians in both developed and developing countries to work together for that purpose.

And with the advent of the Future Vision plan, Rotarians are now undertaking larger and more sustainable projects to make the world a better place through the six areas of focus. Very few organizations would have been able to make such a significant shift in their programs. Particularly organizations almost 100 years old at the time! But The Rotary Foundation, with the assistance of Rotarians around the world, did it — and did it well!

Due to the foregoing changes, I am pleased to tell you that The Rotary Foundation has never been stronger than it is today, as we begin the celebration for its 100th anniversary next year. Just last year, the CNBC television network listed The Rotary Foundation in its list of Top 10 Organizations Changing the World in 2015. What an achievement! In fact, our Foundation was actually ranked No. 5 in the Top 10. Isn't it clear that our Foundation is truly Bigger, Better, and Bolder than ever before?

Last year, the Foundation received total contributions of \$269 million to continue our outstanding programs. And next year, we want you to know that in order to celebrate the centennial of the Foundation in a big way, our goal is a whopping \$300 million! Wow! It is a stretch goal, but we can do it — if more Rotarians fully realize the value of our programs in all six areas of focus, which are made possible by the amazing Rotary network around the world.

This year marks the 55th anniversary of my arrival in Cape Town to study as a Rotary Foundation scholar. The intervening years have been an incredible adventure in Rotary service for me, and I have seen countless projects and activities in which Rotarians are truly improving the lives of so many people — with the assistance of The Rotary Foundation. And as Rotarians, we can take great pride in the fact that in making the world a better place, through voluntary efforts, Rotary does it better than any other organization in the world!

And we can take even more pride in the fact that our Foundation, as we enter its 100th year, is Bigger, Better, and Bolder than anyone could ever have imagined! So let's think big for a moment! Next year we are asking Foundation alumni, at their own expense, to

attend a presidential conference on the day before the Atlanta convention to show appreciation and support for the Foundation. I think we will be pleasantly surprised by the show of alumni support!

Now I ask you, how many of you are willing to attend the Atlanta convention to show your appreciation and support for The Rotary Foundation? If you are, hold up your hands! And how many of you are willing to be sure that your clubs actively celebrate the 100th anniversary of our Foundation by hosting birthday parties and undertaking centennial projects? If you are, stand up to show your support for The Rotary Foundation.

Now let us applaud Arch Klumph for starting the biggest — the best — the boldest thing that has ever happened in Rotary — The Rotary Foundation!