

AMBASSADORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS

DISTRICT 5300 ASSEMBLY

APRIL 4, 2009

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Table of Contents

What is the Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship Program?	1
Program Objectives	2
Timeline	3
The Ideal Candidate and Eligibility Requirements	4-5
Where to Find Candidates	6
Sample Press Release	7-8
Sponsoring a Candidate	9
Candidate Selection Process	10
Orientation Program	11
Hosting a Scholar	12
Resources	13

WHAT IS THE ROTARY AMBASSADORIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM?

The Ambassadorial Scholarship program is the world's largest privately funded international scholarship program. Since its founding in 1947 nearly 38,000 men and women from about 100 nations have studied abroad under its auspices.

The purpose of the Ambassadorial Scholarships program is to further international understanding and friendly relations among people of different countries and geographical areas. The program sponsors scholarships for students pursuing graduate studies.

While abroad scholars serve as goodwill ambassadors to the host country and give presentations about their homelands to Rotary clubs and other groups. Upon returning home, scholars share with Rotarians and others the experiences that led to a greater understanding of their host country.

In District 5300, we sponsor several Academic Year Scholarships for post-graduate study in another country. The award provides a flat grant amount of \$25,000 to cover costs associated with round-trip transportation, one month of intensive language training, if needed, required fees for a normal course load, room and board, and some educational supplies. Applicants who request and are assigned to an institution where costs exceed the grant amount must pay all additional costs. Candidates are also required to attend an orientation session prior to beginning their scholarship year.

The Rotary Foundation Trustees encourage districts to select candidates whose study fields will have a **strong humanitarian impact**. For example (but not limited to):

- Food Production and Distribution; Nutrition
- Medicine/Health Care; Mental Health
- Population Development; Youth/Family Values
- Urban Studies/Planning; Environmental Studies

Candidates interviewed in Spring 2010 will begin their scholarship year between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012. Final selection of candidates and assignment of their study institution is made by the Rotary Foundation Trustees between October 1 and December 15, 2010.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Ambassadorial Scholarship program supports the Rotary Foundation's ultimate goal of world understanding and peace by:

- Increasing awareness of and respect for cultural differences by sending ambassadors of goodwill to study in another country.
- Instilling in scholars the Rotary ideal of Service Above Self through active participation in Rotary service projects.
- Encouraging scholars to dedicate their personal and professional lives to improving the quality of life for the people of their home community and country.
- Developing leaders who can address the humanitarian needs of the world community.
- Impacting all areas of the world through a balanced geographical distribution of scholars.
- Encouraging Rotarians worldwide to increase the educational opportunities for scholars from low-income countries.
- Fostering a lifelong association between Rotary and its scholars.

TIMELINE

Based on applicants to be interviewed April 2010 for Scholarship Year beginning July 1, 2011

November 2009:

RI updates application information on website.

December 2009:

Rotary clubs begin to publicize the program and recruit candidates.

February- March 2010:

Individual club deadline to receive candidate applications, interview candidates, prepare candidate materials to submit to District Committee Chair.

March 26, 2010:

Probable deadline for receipt of applications by District Committee Chair.

April 23-24, 2010:

Probable date for candidate interviews.

April 25-May 14, 2010:

Candidates are notified by the District Committee Chair of the results of the interviews and recommended applications are submitted to Rotary Foundation. NOTE: The deadline for submission of applications to RF is October 1, but early submission can be helpful in getting candidates their preferred choice of institution.

October 1 – December 15, 2010:

Rotary Foundation Trustees review applications, make final determinations and notify scholars, district committee chairs, and district governors by December 15.

February 2010:

Scholars and sponsor Rotarians or club chairs attend regional Orientation program.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The Rotary Foundation has identified the following traits that should be considered standard for any Rotary ambassador of goodwill.

- Possesses excellent leadership skills and potential
- Understands his/her award obligations, especially speeches to Rotary and non-Rotary groups.
- Has a proven record of success in his/her academics and/or vocation.
- Is articulate and proficient in the study country's language.
- Is well-groomed and has a professional appearance.
- Has demonstrated a personal commitment to community service.
- Is interested in participating in and possibly identifying Rotary service projects while abroad.
- Has well-defined and realistic goals.
- Possesses maturity and seriousness of purpose.
- Is an excellent public speaker, skilled in presentations to both small and large audiences.
- Knows the history, culture, and politics of both his/her home community and study country.
- Is diplomatic and articulate when discussing world affairs and sensitive topics.
- Has concrete ideas on how he/she will improve world understanding and peace.
- Has thoroughly researched his/her preferred study institution, including alternative locations.
- Is willing to study in a country that typically does not host Ambassadorial Scholars.
- Is interested in a study field that has a direct impact on the world's humanitarian needs.
- Intends to apply the ideals of Rotary to his/her personal and professional life.
- Is flexible and possesses a good sense of humor.
- Is sincere about maintaining a lifelong relationship with Rotary after the scholarship period.

Eligibility:

All Ambassadorial Scholarship candidates must meet the following requirements.

- Completed at least two years of university or college course work with good academic success and be expecting to complete their baccalaureate degree by July 1 of their scholarship year.
- Candidates cannot be Rotarians, honorary Rotarians, or employees of a club, district, or other Rotary entity. Spouses, lineal descendants (adopted or not adopted), spouses of lineal descendants, and ancestors of persons listed above are also ineligible. Rotarians and their relatives remain ineligible for scholarship awards for 36 months after a Rotarian has discontinued club membership.
- Application must be made through a local Rotary club in the applicant's legal or permanent residence or place of full-time study or employment.
- Study or training must be undertaken in another country where there are Rotary clubs, but not in the sponsor Rotary country or district.
- There are no age or gender restrictions on Ambassadorial Scholarships
- Rotaractors are eligible and encouraged to apply, provided they meet all other eligibility criteria.

- Persons with disabilities are eligible for Foundation awards. If otherwise qualified for the scholarship, such applicants should not be overlooked. With the support of Rotarians in the sponsor and host districts, students with disabilities have served as successful Ambassadorial Scholars in the past.
- Scholars will not be assigned to a country where they have already lived or studied for 12 months or longer. Exceptions may be made in unusual circumstances such as: candidate lived/studied in the area before the age of 10; the candidate's language interest or abilities restrict assignment to a particular geographic area. (For example a student who speaks Danish wishes to return to Denmark; a student who speaks Tagalog wants to return to the Philippines.)

NOTE: While completion of two years of college is the minimum required for candidates, students are encouraged to apply at a later point in their education or career. Candidates with more maturity and experience are often the best candidates.

WHERE TO FIND CANDIDATES

The Claremont, Claremont Sunrise, Rancho Cucamonga, and Upland clubs do an excellent job of recruiting candidates at local area colleges. They work as a group to recruit and select the best candidates in their area. You can get a copy of a power point presentation prepared by Adnan Aswad and their “Information Handbook on Ambassadorial Scholarships” at the Claremont Rotary Club’s website (see Resources, page 13).

But what if your club doesn’t have a four-year college in the area? Probably one of the most overlooked sources of potential candidates is young professionals a year or two out of college. There is no rule that Ambassadorial Scholars have to begin their scholarship year right after they graduate from college. In fact, candidates with some work experience and greater maturity often make the best ambassadors.

These candidates might be reached through press releases in local newspapers, professional contacts, or businesses that use interns. Our own club’s first Ambassadorial Scholar was a 25-year-old intern working at the Lake Mead National Recreation Area who also had some previous teaching experience.

Are there specialized schools other than 4-year liberal arts colleges and universities in your area? Consider language schools, business schools, private schools, or other specialized trade schools. Are there any students from your community attending military academies?

Rotaract clubs and RYLA programs can also be excellent places to get the word out about the Ambassadorial Scholarship program. Even if the students aren’t ready to apply yet, it can’t hurt to make them aware of the potential for the future.

A press release to local papers can be an excellent way to reach the families of students from your area that are attending schools elsewhere.

And don’t forget to put the information on your club’s website!

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 4, 2010

Rotary Club of Boulder City

Contact: Christine Carroll, 702-524-3314

ROTARY AMBASSADORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

The Rotary Club of Boulder City is seeking applicants for Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarships. This Rotary Foundation scholarship program awards \$25,000 to study for one academic year abroad in a graduate degree program. Applicants must have completed at least two years of college or university studies at the time of application and have an expected graduation date prior to July 1, 2011. Candidates who have already completed their baccalaureate degree programs are also encouraged to apply. The scholarship will be awarded for the academic year between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012. Complete applications must be received by the Rotary Club of Boulder City by Friday, March 5, 2010.

The purpose of the Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship program is to further international understanding and friendly relations among people of different countries and geographical areas. While abroad, scholars serve as goodwill ambassadors for Rotary International and give presentations about their homeland to Rotary clubs and other groups. Candidates whose study fields will have a strong humanitarian impact are encouraged to apply. Examples of potential studies include: food production and distribution, nutrition, medicine/health care, mental health, population development, youth/family values, urban studies and planning, and environmental studies.

Interested candidates should contact Chris Carroll of the Rotary Club of Boulder City at carroll.chris8@gmail.com or by phone at 702-524-3314. Additional information on the Ambassadorial Scholarship program is available on the Rotary International website at www.rotary.org.

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Many community newspapers are willing to print these kinds of announcements at no charge. Just be sure to change the name and contact information before you use it. Obviously, this is only an example. You may be much better at writing a press release for your own area, but this format is generally preferred for newspapers. Using their preferred format increases your chances of getting it published. Also, you may want to ask if they will run the story in more than one issue.

It isn't necessary to provide all the details in your press release. Your goal is really just to catch the attention of potential candidates or people who may know of potential candidates. A shorter press release has a better chance of getting space. The details can come later through direct contact with potential candidates or from the Rotary website.

SPONSORING A CANDIDATE

All Ambassadorial Scholarship applicants must be sponsored by a Rotary club within the district. You as a Rotary club are responsible for recruiting applicants, reviewing the application materials for suitability and completeness, and forwarding the required number of copies of the application materials to the District Committee Chair within the deadline. Sorry, there is no district budget available to cover the cost of making all the required copies.

The District 5300 website has excellent information on the required application materials and how they are to be submitted. Note especially, that our district requires that candidates include a one-page budget sheet with their materials. You can find all this information at [http://www.district5300.org/scholars/ambassadorial.html#Additional Materials and Information](http://www.district5300.org/scholars/ambassadorial.html#Additional_Materials_and_Information).

One of the unique features of this program is the role of the sponsor counselor. This is a Rotarian, appointed by the sponsor club, who will act as an information resource and mentor to the outbound scholar. The sponsor counselor is expected to assist the scholar in various ways. These include:

- Introducing the scholar to Rotary and assisting with preparation for district interviews.
- Discussing Rotary's ideals and establishing ambassadorial goals.
- Helping the scholar gather information about his/her home community, region, and country for use in presentations in the host country.
- Reviewing the *Ambassadorial Scholar's Handbook* (133-EN) with the scholar; familiarizing the scholar with the financial aspects of the particular scholarship type to be awarded.
- Working closely with the scholar to ensure all pre-departure requirements are met.

A critical role of the sponsor is to help the candidate become more familiar with Rotary and the sponsoring club. Good ways to get the candidate involved include inviting them to meetings, asking them to help with club projects, and helping them to arrange to do presentations at your own and other area clubs. You may want to do mock interviews with them to help them prepare for the selection interview. Examples of questions are in the *Program Guide for Rotarians* available on the Rotary International website.

If you have multiple applicants, you will need to complete a preliminary selection/interview process to narrow it down to your best candidates. A club may not sponsor more than two candidates in any year. If you have more than two well-qualified candidates you may want to refer the additional candidates to another club in your area for possible sponsorship.

Clubs are not required to pay any of their candidate's expenses but some do help with ancillary expenses for candidates prior to receipt of scholarship money if they feel it is warranted and the club can afford it. This is solely at the discretion of the sponsoring club.

CANDIDATE SELECTION PROCESS

There are essentially three stages in the selection process.

1. The sponsoring club evaluates applicants and submits one or two qualified candidates to the district committee.
2. The district committee reviews all submitted applications and invites the most qualified for an interview. Depending on the number of applications received and the qualifications of the applicants some candidates may or may not be rejected prior to the interviews. Usually approximately 12-15 candidates will be interviewed. The district committee will select the candidates to be submitted to Rotary Foundation based on the number of scholarships available in that year. Usually the district is able to fund 3-5 Ambassadorial Scholarships. Two alternates will also be selected in case a scholar relinquishes their scholarship before February 1 of the same calendar year as when the scholarship program year starts.
3. Foundation Trustees make the final decision on scholarship awards. Immediately following Trustee approval, study institution assignment notifications are sent to scholars, with copies sent to district scholarship committee chairs and district governors. **Clubs and districts should not publicize endorsed candidates until they receive Trustee approval.**

To be considered for the scholarship, the CANDIDATE MUST ATTEND THE DISTRICT INTERVIEW. In extremely exceptional situations, it may be possible to do the interview by videoconference, but this is not recommended and the committee cannot guarantee that this option will be available. Videoconference was used in 2008 for two candidates who were out of the country, but it is not as effective as an in-person interview. Also, the availability of required resources depends on the interview facility and staff. If you have a well-qualified candidate who absolutely cannot attend the interview, you may wish to recommend that they apply in the following year. Candidates routinely fly in from other parts of the country for interviews, so being out of the area is not generally considered an acceptable reason for requesting a videoconference interview.

Remember that the committee is looking for “ambassadors” not just “scholars.” Factors that weigh heavily in favor of a candidate include:

- Commitment to Rotary and the ideal of Service Above Self that extends beyond their scholarship requirements.
- An “ambassadorial” personality—enthusiasm, sense of humor, tact, ability and willingness to represent Rotary and our district without religious or political proselytizing.
- An interest in the scholarship for the cultural opportunity it represents, not just as one of many requests for funds.
- Interest in studying in unusual or newer areas of the Rotary world.

ORIENTATION PROGRAM

It is mandatory for scholars to attend an outbound orientation seminar. Scholars who do not attend orientation seminars available to them may forfeit their awards. A scholar orientation program provides a forum for bringing outbound scholars together in a friendly setting where they can learn what is expected of them, and sets the stage for a lifelong commitment to Rotary. Sponsor counselors also play an important role in the scholar's preparation.

District 5300 is part of a regional orientation program. The two-day orientation program is usually held in January or February in San Jose. This is the largest such program in the U.S. and is supported with a grant from the Rotary Foundation. The registration cost in 2009 was \$30 per participant. This included all program materials and speakers, dinner on Friday evening, breakfast and lunch on Saturday. The only other individual costs were transportation and hotel room if needed.

In addition to general sessions for everyone's benefit, there are breakout sessions targeted to special interests of sponsors as well as the scholars. This orientation program is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR SCHOLARS, SPONSORS, CLUB AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBERS**. However, if your candidate is unable to attend this orientation session, there are other seminars offered in other parts of the country.

Orientation Objectives:

1. To promote the purpose of The Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarships program—which is the furthering of understanding and friendly relations among peoples of different nations.
2. To provide outbound scholars with an understanding of the history, goals, and ideals of Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation.
3. To emphasize the ambassadorial role scholars must play before, during, and after their terms of study abroad.
4. To provide scholars with training on how to develop and make speeches and presentations.
5. To prepare scholars for the cultural differences they may encounter during their study terms.
6. To create an atmosphere of fellowship among scholars, alumni, and sponsoring Rotarians.
7. To prepare scholars on how to handle sexual harassment and inappropriate behavior.
8. To establish and reinforce an ongoing relationship between the scholar and Rotary.
9. To orient Rotarian sponsor counselors to the Scholarships program and impress upon them the vital role they play in assuring the program's long-term impact.

HOSTING A SCHOLAR

In April of each year, The Rotary Foundation Scholarships staff requests that district governors-elect appoint a host club and a host Rotarian counselor in that club for all scholars who will study in their districts during their year as district governors. The information sent to the governors-elect includes a list of all inbound scholars, their assigned study institutions, and biographical information.

Like sponsor counselors, host counselors act as important resources for scholars. The host counselor is expected to assist the scholar in many ways, including:

- Arranging to meet the scholar upon arrival welcoming him/her to the host district.
- Helping the scholar to settle in and locate appropriate housing, if necessary.
- In some cases, receiving the scholar's first award payment before his/her arrival and presenting it to the scholar.
- Explaining issues such as medical facilities, laws, banking arrangements, and budget considerations.
- Helping the scholar to fulfill ambassadorial obligations by scheduling required speeches and inviting the scholar to participate in club and district service projects.
- Providing assistance and contact information to secure invitations to make speeches and presentations.
- Serving as the liaison between the scholar and the Foundation, monitoring progress through frequent meetings and bringing serious problems or questions to the attention of the scholar's coordinator at RI World Headquarters in Evanston.
- Involving the scholar in community and family life.
- Ensuring the scholar submits his/her final report one month before the scholarship period ends.

NOTE: The host counselor is not required to have the scholar reside with them, but there does need to be a close, ongoing relationship during the study year. The Rotarian host counselor's role begins before the scholar even leaves for the study country. It is important for the host counselor to contact the scholar, answer any questions, and arrange a meeting to alleviate the anxiety about arriving in a new country. Host counselors are asked to report to The Rotary Foundation on their activities as host counselors and on the performance of their scholars.

RESOURCES

For information on District 5300 application requirements, committee members, current outbound and inbound scholars:

http://www.district5300.org/scholars/ambassadorial.html#District_5300_and_the_Ambassadorial_Scholarship_Program

For The Rotary Foundation information on the program, "Program Guide for Rotarians," and application forms and materials:

<http://www.rotary.org/en/StudentsAndYouth/EducationalPrograms/AmbassadorialScholarships/Pages/ridefault.aspx>

For information on the Far West Regional Orientation program:

<http://westcoastregionalriambassadorialscholarorientation.org>

For information on the Claremont area group's candidate recruitment procedures and power point presentation:

www.claremontrotary.org

District 5300 Ambassadorial Scholarship Committee Chair for 2009-2010:

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