

**PROFILE**

A Brief History of the Rotary Centres for International Studies Program*

Dick Hazlehurst

Rotarians have long dreamed of creating a Rotary-sponsored academy to promote world understanding and peace. Over the past 25 years, a variety of initiatives have been proposed to make this dream a reality. In 1996, consideration was given to the concept of an educational centre, institute or university dedicated to Paul Harris, as a way of commemorating the 50th anniversary of his death in 1947. The outcome of much deliberation was the creation of Paul Harris Centres for International Studies at several universities worldwide. At these centres, fellows would obtain a graduate degree focusing on issues related to international relations, conflict resolution, and peace studies. The Trustees of the Rotary Foundation adopted this proposal in principle and, in 1999, approved the plan to partner with universities to establish the Rotary Centres for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution. The centres were so named to increase public awareness of Rotary's commitment to peace and because Paul Harris's name is not well known outside the Rotary world.

The Rotary Centres Committee considered more than 100 universities and based their final recommendations to the Trustees on such specific criteria as geographic diversity, the university's willingness to work with The Rotary Foundation, superior faculty, and an established degree programme with a core curriculum in international relations, peace, and conflict resolution. Rotary Peace Fellows began travelling abroad to pursue a master's degree at the Rotary Centres for International Studies in 2002.

In 2006, a short-term peace studies pilot programme was launched that would serve as an alternative to the Rotary Centres for International Studies programme. The programme would enhance Rotary's existing work to support international peace studies. This second peace studies programme would attract middle- to upper-level professionals who could arrange to be away from their employment for just a few months. It would also provide a lower-cost option to The Rotary Foundation and more immediate returns on Rotary's investment in world understanding and peace.

In 2008, The Rotary Foundation Trustees approved the short-term option, at The Rotary Centre at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand, as a permanent offering within the Rotary Centre for International Studies programme, thereby providing interested applicants with a variety of courses and durations.

PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAMME

The Rotary Centres for International Studies programme supports the mission of The Rotary Foundation for improving health, supporting education and alleviating poverty by

- Supporting and advancing research, teaching, publishing, and practical field experience on issues of peace, goodwill, causes of conflict, and world understanding,
- Inspiring people to work for a culture of peace and tolerance while enhancing their capacity, knowledge and skill, by generating interaction between practitioners and academics,

* The content of this article has been taken from the website of Rotary International (www.rotary.org). The author does not in any way claim credit for the information in the article.



- Providing advanced international educational opportunities in the area of peace and conflict resolution,
- Providing a means for The Rotary Foundation and Rotarians to increase their effectiveness in promoting greater tolerance and cooperation among peoples, leading to world understanding and peace.

Up to 50 Rotary Peace Fellowships for master's degree study and up to 50 Rotary Peace Fellowships for professional development certificate study are offered annually, on a world-competitive basis for study at the six Rotary Centres. Rotary Peace Fellows obtain a master's degree in international relations, peace studies, conflict resolution and related areas, or a professional development certificate in peace and conflict studies. Through their unique and diverse interdisciplinary programmes, the six Rotary Centres provide academic and practical training to better equip peace fellows for leadership roles in solving the many problems that contribute to conflict around the world.

THE ROTARY CENTRES UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

Six Rotary Centres for International Studies operate in partnership with seven universities. Each Rotary Centre university partner has a unique curriculum focusing on various aspects of international studies related to peace and conflict resolution. Programmes vary by university and include peace studies, conflict resolution, international relations, international development policy, journalism, environmental studies, public health, education and public administration, among others. The programmes are designed to provide Rotary Peace Fellows with a broad range of academic experiences.

Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

Up to 25 mid-career professionals in fields related to conflict resolution and peace-building participate in an intensive three-month certificate course, held twice annually at Chulalongkorn University, and earn a professional development certificate in peace and conflict studies. Led by experts in the field, the programme balances theoretical and practical learning while capitalising on the diverse experiences of both lecturers and participants. The customised curriculum helps promising leaders expand their global outlook, strengthen their negotiation abilities, and ultimately work toward making a positive impact on future peace and conflict resolution efforts worldwide.

Duke University and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA (Both universities jointly host one Rotary Centre.)

Rotary Peace Fellows at Duke University study International Development Policy - an interdisciplinary training programme in policy analysis and sustainable development, emphasising conflict prevention through poverty reduction, improved governance, human rights, environmental management and cooperative processes.

Rotary Peace Fellows at UNC can access a wide range of two-year master's programmes, including (but not limited to) Anthropology, City and Regional Planning, Education, Geography, History, Journalism, Political Science, Public Health and Social Work. Fellows take required courses in the department to which they are admitted and link their specialised studies to the objective of peace and conflict resolution.

Fellows at both UNC and Duke can also obtain the Centre for Global Initiatives (CGI) Graduate Certificate in International Development and the CGI Graduate Certificate in Peace and Conflict Resolution.



International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan

The Rotary Centre programme at ICU resembles an interdepartmental major, drawing from course work in the graduate school divisions of Public Administration, Education and Comparative Culture. Fellows enrol in the Division of Public Administration and pursue a Master of Arts. Applicants must have sufficient competence in English to carry on academic work and understand lectures. However, Japanese proficiency is an advantage, as it allows fellows to access a full range of course offerings at ICU.

Universidad del Salvador, Buenos Aires, Argentina

The Rotary Peace programme at USAL introduces the most important theoretical, empirical, and methodological developments in international politics, with an emphasis on Latin America and an orientation in International Security, Conflict and Peace, or International Economics, Cooperation and Development.

University of Bradford, West Yorkshire, England

Rotary Peace Fellows at the University of Bradford are enrolled in the Master of Arts programme in the Department of Peace Studies. The department offers master's courses in Peace Studies, Conflict Resolution, African Peace and Conflict Studies, International Politics and Security Studies, and Conflict Security and Development studies. Bradford's staff and research students work in three broad areas: the International Security Group, Politics and Social Change Group and the Centre for Conflict Resolution.

University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Rotary Peace Fellows at the University of Queensland are enrolled in the Master of International Studies (Peace and Conflict Resolution) programme in the School of Political Science and International Studies. In addition to international relations and conflict resolution, Rotary Fellows have the opportunity to pursue a wide range of topics including human rights, ethics and world politics, arms control, peace-keeping and global women's issues.

Because the universities, their admissions requirements and their curricula vary, applicants are expected to research their university preferences thoroughly before completing the *Rotary Peace Fellowship Application*.

For detailed information on each university partner and its Rotary Peace Fellow curriculum, go to the Rotary Centers Web page at <http://www.rotary.org/en/StudentsAndYouth/EducationalPrograms/Rotary-CentersForInternationalStudies/Pages/ridefault.aspx>

AVAILABILITY OF ROTARY PEACE FELLOWSHIPS

Rotary Peace Fellowships are offered on a world-competitive basis. All Rotary Districts are encouraged to recruit qualified applicants for the fellowship and nominate candidate(s) for the annual world competition. ■



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