



ROTARY FOUNDATION CHAIR'S REMARKS

Mark Daniel Maloney
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Good morning, Rotary members — and good morning, Calgary!

My mother, Doreen, was born right here in Calgary! Because of my Canadian roots, I am a citizen of Canada as well as the United States. And, because of Rotary, I am a global citizen connecting with the world through the magic of The Rotary Foundation!

I first witnessed the magic of The Rotary Foundation 40 years ago, when, at the young age of 30 and with a head full of black hair, I served as president of the Rotary Club of Decatur, Alabama [in the United States]. During that year, a Rotary Foundation-sponsored Group Study Exchange team from District 911 in western Nigeria visited our District 686 in North Alabama. As a result of the warm welcome the team received in Decatur, I was given the opportunity to lead the return team to Nigeria the next year.

From that experience until now, my leadership journey in Rotary has been through The Rotary Foundation, working first at the club level, then the district level, then the zone level, then as a trustee of The Rotary Foundation in the mid-2000s.

So for me, as a Rotary Foundation enthusiast, to have the privilege to serve as chair of The Rotary Foundation for this magical year of Rotary has been the highlight of my lifetime of service for Rotary. My wife, Gay, and I have had the opportunity to witness firsthand Rotary members at their best, Doing Good in the World.

While visiting Nigeria on behalf of the Foundation in January of this year, we observed the success of Together for Healthy Families in Nigeria, the 2022 Programs of Scale grant recipient.

This Together for Healthy Families project is working to reduce the maternal and neonatal mortality rate in targeted areas of Nigeria. Gay and I participated in a community meeting in which trained health care workers provided families with the tools and knowledge to improve the quality of health care for pregnant women, mothers, and newborns in Nigeria. The community and its elders, represented by three tribal chiefs, welcomed us with dancing and drums!

Together for Healthy Families in Nigeria began as a Programs of Scale grant, for which The Rotary Foundation awards a US\$2 million grant from among many project proposals meeting the grant requirements. Because of program savings, we were able to make the most of our grant and add 14 more health care facilities across the country.

Impressed with the results, the government of Nigeria is assuming the responsibilities for key activities well before the program ends, ensuring its sustainability. In Abuja, we had the opportunity to meet with the vice president and the federal minister of health, who, along with others, expressed their deep appreciation for the program.

Finally, thanks to the generous commitment of Nigerian Rotarian Sir Emeka Offor, this program will not only continue beyond the Programs of Scale grant, but also it will expand into additional areas, further reducing maternal and neonatal mortality rates!

By working with community members to develop great programs and by measuring and sharing the positive results of our service, we can make dreams come true. Together, we are positively shaping our communities and inspiring confidence in our approach to philanthropy.

Our original Programs of Scale awardee, Partners for a Malaria-Free Zambia, achieved such great outcomes that it inspired an enhanced program called the Rotary Healthy Communities Challenge, growing from a US\$6 million project to a US\$30 million program backed by our partners, the Gates Foundation and World Vision.

United to End Cervical Cancer in Egypt, our 2023 Programs of Scale recipient, is increasing awareness about this fully preventable disease and is encouraging the use of the HPV vaccine and screenings among Cairo residents. The results we are attaining will help us design and implement cervical cancer prevention efforts — like the ones Isabel Scarinci spoke of just a few moments ago — in more locations and more countries.

And last year's Programs of Scale recipient, Partners for Water Access and Better Harvests in India, promises to assist sustainable farming and demonstrates how Rotary can help the world adapt to the growing impacts of climate change, as you heard Katharine Hayhoe discuss from the mainstage yesterday. I had the privilege of meeting with the Rotarians in India spearheading this project.

And recently, the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation selected the next Programs of Scale grant recipient! Rotarians, Rotaractors, and members of the family of Rotary, I am honored to announce the 2025 Programs of Scale selection: Pathways to Peace and Prosperity in Colombia! This program partners with the United Nations World Food Programme to strengthen conflict resolution capacity, expand access to economic opportunities, and expand access to social service programs in conflict-affected areas. The long-term goal of the program is to break the cycle of violence, poverty, and food insecurity for conflict victims to achieve sustained peace.

Pathways to Peace and Prosperity in Colombia showcases the joint efforts of Rotary Peace Fellows, peace activators, Cadre members, Districts 4271 and 4281, and the sponsoring Rotary Club of San José de Cúcuta [in Norte de Santander]. Congratulations to all Rotary members in Colombia!

Now, I wish to say a few words about Rotary's top priority — the promise we made to the children of the world to eradicate polio.

In 1988, when we partnered with the World Health Organization to form the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, there were about 350,000 new polio cases occurring annually across 125 countries. And as you heard Bill Gates mention earlier, we have reduced wild poliovirus cases by more than 99.9%.

But this remarkable progress obscures the challenges throughout this long journey. We have faced government and population resistance to vaccines. We have dealt with wars, disasters, and pandemics. We have seen numbers stubbornly rise and confidence wane.

But we confronted every challenge, and along the way, we built trust. In fact, it would be accurate to call the polio campaign the greatest trust-building operation in modern history — one community at a time, one drop at a time.

And today, we continue to face resistance and new challenges.

In Afghanistan, vaccinators are now prohibited from conducting house-to-house immunization campaigns, while in Pakistan, conflict, terrorism, and migration hinder access to children in certain regions.

Additionally, key sources of government funding and international collaboration have been disrupted, creating new challenges for global health initiatives. These developments present obstacles for our polio eradication efforts.

But we will not back down, because we have progress on our side and we have truth on our side. We have come too far to be deterred.

Rotary continues to work behind the scenes, actively collaborating with governments, international agencies, and partners to address challenges, manage disruptions, and explore alternative funding. As a nonpolitical organization, we remain focused on operational solutions while serving communities and protecting public health.

And our efforts are producing positive results.

In Afghanistan, we continue to adapt, evolve, and innovate to build trust with parents and communities. To reach as many children as possible in an environment where house-to-house vaccination has been halted, the Afghanistan program has developed a site-to-site strategy whereby mini-immunization posts are set up at approximately every five houses, and families are encouraged to bring their children out for vaccination. In some parts of the country, vaccination coverage rates are similar to those achieved with the house-to-house strategy.

In Pakistan, political commitment is as strong as ever, which is translating into improved performance. For example, in the April national polio immunization campaign, over 95% of the 45.5 million children under the age of five were reached with the polio vaccine, demonstrating an extraordinarily high level of campaign quality. The job now is to sustain that level of quality to end poliovirus transmission for good.

The winds of change may shift, but with your help, hope, and unwavering resolve — *and*

your financial support — Rotary's commitment to eradicating polio will stand strong until our mission is complete. *Together we end polio!*

To fund this work and achieve these goals, this year the Trustees of The Rotary Foundation set some very ambitious fundraising goals. I introduced Mark's Magical Markers, challenging donors to take additional fundraising steps, such as increasing the number of contributors through Rotary Direct and the number of Paul Harris Society members. And through *The Magic of Rotary*, I am happy to announce both numbers have increased!

Indeed, donations have also increased this year, allowing us to be within reach of our US\$500 million goal. Year-end contributions made by you and your clubs can get us over the top!

As president of Rotary International and as the chair of The Rotary Foundation, Gay and I have experienced the true treasures of the world: dedicated Rotary members — Rotarians, Rotaractors, and members of the family of Rotary. Every day, every moment, all around the earth, we dedicated Rotary members are Doing Good in the World, working with both local and international Rotary partners.

In Karachi, Pakistan, we dedicated Rotary members are supporting life-changing health care for low-income individuals, who now have access to dialysis treatments with machines funded by The Rotary Foundation.

In Ecatepec, Mexico, we dedicated Rotary members are supporting access to clean water for more than 350,000 schoolchildren with the cleaning of contaminated systems, funded by The Rotary Foundation.

In Accra, Ghana, we dedicated Rotary members participated in a cleft surgery mission to the physicians transforming the smiles of those born with cleft lips and palates, funded by The Rotary Foundation.

In Taichung, Taiwan, we dedicated Rotary members are developing remote learning opportunities for children in distant areas, funded by The Rotary Foundation.

In Delhi, India, we dedicated Rotary members provided a bloodmobile and medical equipment supporting the gift of life, funded by The Rotary Foundation.

In Ogallala, Nebraska, USA, we dedicated Rotary members provided the vision, manpower, and financial support for a playground for all children, funded by The Rotary Foundation.

We dedicated Rotary members provide food; we provide clean water; we provide health care; we provide access to literacy; we provide tools for peace.

We dedicated Rotary members see a world not as it is, but as we know it can be. And we take action to connect the world — through the magic of The Rotary Foundation.

I have one more thing to talk about this morning. Something truly magical.

A big success of this year has been our collective commitment to The Rotary Foundation's Endowment. Indeed, this has been called the "Endowment Year"!

In 2016, the Trustees announced a goal of building net assets to the Endowment to US\$2.025 billion by 30 June 2025.

And so today, you see behind me a line of this year's Board of Trustees. To truly represent the teamwork necessary to accomplish this goal, it would be an even longer line with everyone who has served on the Trustees over the last 10 years. Indeed, many past trustees are in the room today to celebrate.

If we formed a line of all who contributed or committed to the Endowment, it would run through every row of seats in the Saddledome and out into the streets of Calgary!

Now, friends, I have been thinking about how to celebrate this moment since October of 2022, when I was selected to serve as chair of the Trustees for a Rotary year I knew would end with the goal of doubling the size and power of our Endowment.

In one vision, I make a grand entrance from the back of the hall, accompanied by a full orchestra.

My wife, Gay, said no.

In another, I drive the Rotary dream car right onto the stage. Tech said no.

And, in yet another, I arrive at the Saddledome driving a team of horses pulling a Calgary Stampede chuckwagon!

Everyone said no!

So I will focus on what is most important. In each vision, *we all* celebrate what a strong Endowment means to the future of our Foundation. The Endowment we have built — together — will ensure we continue to spread *The Magic of Rotary* for generations.

With the help of our magic Foundation wands, I would like my fellow Trustees to help illustrate what this means to the people we serve.

In 2015, the Trustees saw that dedicated Rotarians met an important benchmark by reaching US\$1 billion in investments and commitments.

Now, 1 billion is rather good, but they knew the power of dedicated Rotary members. So, the US\$2.025 goal was set to *double* the Endowment in less than 10 years! A larger Endowment would provide for more global grants, which were starting to make a lasting impact around the world.

The new goal was officially launched at the 2017 Atlanta convention, where we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Foundation, and just two years later, we had met 25% of the goal. Dedicated Rotarians and Rotaractors responded!

A larger Endowment means larger global grants, and increasing numbers of Rotary Peace Fellows working to reduce conflict around the world.

You might think that a global pandemic would have reduced or eliminated our progress towards the goal, but no, dedicated Rotarians and Rotaractors persevered, and we reached the halfway mark in 2021.

These dedicated Rotarians and Rotaractors knew that every contribution to the Endowment was a contribution to the Rotary communities in which we live — from Ghana to Mexico, from Taiwan to India, from Canada to Japan, Brazil to Ukraine. Every contribution can:

- Save mothers and children.
- Support local communities.
- Provide a life-changing education.
- Develop entrepreneurs.
- Protect our planet.
- Prevent and treat disease.
- Ensure clean water and sanitation.
- And build peace.

And equally, your gifts, commitments, and dedication matter not just today, not just this year, but for future generations of Rotary members to come. This is why the goal of reaching 2025 by 2025 was set — not just as a number, but to deliver on the promise of Rotary for our communities.

And today we are proud to announce that, with only six days left to reach the 2025 by 2025 goal, dedicated Rotarians, Rotaractors, and members of the family of Rotary — like all of you in this room — responded, and we have indeed doubled the size of the Endowment. So let's celebrate!

Yahooooooooo!