



ROTARY CONNECTS THE WORLD

Rotary is built on connection. When Paul Harris came to Chicago as a young lawyer, he formed Rotary for one compelling reason: to help him connect to others in a new city. More than a century later, we have at our disposal countless ways to form friendships and networks, most of which Paul Harris never dreamed. Yet Rotary's ability to connect us remains unique — and unrivaled.

Through its distinct mission and structure, Rotary International provides a way to connect to our communities, to network professionally, and to build strong and lasting relationships. Our membership connects us to a global community through our countless projects and programs, our leadership in polio eradication, and our work with and through the United Nations. Our service connects us to people who share our values, who want to take action for a better world; it connects us to people we would never otherwise meet, who are more like us than we could have imagined; and it connects us to people who need our help, allowing us to change lives in communities around the world.

As a new decade begins, we are shaping Rotary's future. In 2019-2020, Rotary will implement its new strategic plan, respond to the innovation of the Council on Legislation, and serve in our revitalized areas of focus. But the real work of shaping Rotary's future lies in our clubs, where our organization must do the most to adapt to today's changing realities.

While the club remains the core of the Rotary experience, we are now far more creative and flexible in deciding what a club can be, how it can meet, and even what can be considered a Rotary meeting. We need to be organized, strategic, and innovative in how we approach membership, forging wider and deeper connections to our communities and forming new club models to attract and engage more — and more diverse — members.

Rotary is indeed a family. Yet too often, the structure of membership or the demands of leadership seem to place Rotary out of reach for today's younger professionals. Rotary can and should be an experience that complements our families instead of competing with them. When our Rotary clubs are warm, welcoming places where service and family go hand in hand, we give family-oriented young professionals the opportunity to embrace Rotary service and model positive civic engagement. And when we make the expectations of Rotary offices realistic and manageable for busy professionals, we develop the skills and networks of a new generation of Rotarians — who will become Rotary leaders.

In 2019-2020, it will be our challenge to strengthen the many ways that Rotary Connects the World, building the connections that allow talented, thoughtful, and generous people to unite and take meaningful action through Rotary service.

A handwritten signature in white ink on a blue background. The signature is cursive and reads "Mark Daniel Maloney".

Mark Daniel Maloney
President, Rotary International, 2019-2020