

Bradford R. Howard

Rotary International, Director 2015-17 • Zones 25 & 26



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February 1, 2015

Dear Rotarians,

Rotary International recognizes that “one out of six people in the world do not have dependable safe drinking water,” (The Big Thirst, p136, Charles Fishman) That means that the basic needs of more than 1.1 billion are unmet. We also recognize that the 2014 World Health Organization Glaas Report indicates that the number of children dying from diarrhea and each year is just above 600,000. While this number is vastly improved from 15 years ago, very little reduction has taken place in the rural towns, farms and villages where millions in the third world reside. A daily death toll of over 1600 children is outrageous, but it is one of the most fixable issues we face in our new century.

To help address this critical need, The Rotary Foundation has established water and sanitation as one of our highest corporate priorities. We believe Rotary is uniquely poised to help address this terrible inequity. We are present in over 200 countries and geographical regions, with over 34,000 clubs and more than 1.2 million members. We are both local and global and, as such, are uniquely positioned to be effective in this area.

The Rotary Club of Santa Cruz is one of the clubs making a difference. Working with Rotary’s Water and Sanitation Action Group, they reviewed the Sunspring Water Purification technology as one way to address this need. As a result, they applied to Rotary for a District Grant to fund and complete a rural Guatemala Water Purification Project. It was so successful they are now expanding their effort and are applying for a larger Global Grant.

The successful deployment of their District Grant project in 2014 is resulting not only in significant health benefits for the indigenous Mayan community at San Lucas Toliman, but it has also galvanized the Rotary Club participants in that project in a unique and wonderful way. They have become “Rotary Water Warriors,” and their service binds them in a way that may be a model for Rotary Clubs to emulate as we continue to search for member sustaining methodology that is rooted in relevant service projects.

Rotary clubs, in partnership with the Rotary Foundation, are making a difference in providing clean water and sanitation to communities all over the world. In doing so, their members are empowered to do things they never would have done, to people that they may never meet, in a way that can be done nowhere else.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bradford R. Howard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bradford R. Howard
Director

BRH/ms