

## Rotary to help future leaders become agents of peace and address the root causes of conflict and war

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Humanitarian service organization announces 2010-12 class of 90 World Peace Fellows

EVANSTON, IL., USA – As the world celebrates the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War, Rotary International - a humanitarian service organization dedicated to world peace and understanding – is helping the next generation of world leaders learn the skills to prevent future war and conflict.

“Deeper issues related to the root causes of conflict such as political violence, social injustice, poverty, hunger, illiteracy, and environmental degradation all point to the need for more sustainable forms of peace,” said Glenn E. Estess, Sr., chair of the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International. “That’s why it’s so important to train the next generation of leaders to recognize the signs and symptoms of conflict in order to prevent it from happening.”

Launched in 2002, Rotary’s World Peace Fellowship program provides academic and practical training to prepare scholars for leadership roles in solving conflicts around the world. Up to 100 fellows are selected every year in a globally competitive process based on personal, academic, and professional achievements. Fellows embark on one to two years of study to earn a master’s-level degree or a professional certificate in peace and conflict studies at one of six Rotary Peace Centers at leading universities in Argentina, Australia, England, Japan, the United States and Thailand.

Like the members of the classes preceding them, the new Rotary World Peace Fellows are a diverse group, representing 42 countries and an array of professional and cultural backgrounds. Their interests and areas of expertise include public health, education, international law, economic development, journalism, and social justice.

The new class of 40 fellows enrolling in the Rotary Peace Center at Chulalongkorn University, in Bangkok, in 2010, which offers a three-month certificate program for mid-level professionals, includes:

Ramin Shahriari, 28, Afghanistan, who grew up in a land of internal war and conflict. He is making a direct impact in peace, stability, and conflict resolution in western Afghanistan with his work in the United Nation's New Beginning Program. Shahriari is a teacher at the Institute for Leadership for Development and also volunteers as an instructor of English and literature at Herat University.

Suhail Memom, 40, Pakistan, a journalist, author, and peace advocate who has more than 20 years experience in human rights issues. Currently, he is a freelance journalist and columnist for the Daily Kawish newspaper, a reporter for Sindhi News Magazine, and a radio host for Radio Pakistan.

Olivera Ivanovic, 34, Serbia, an educator who has worked to help refugees from Kosovo. Currently, she teaches at a high school in Belgrade where she develops mediation and conflict resolutions courses for teachers and foster-home and special needs children.

The 50 fellows selected for the 2010-12 graduate program include:

Pantea Beigi, 27, Iran, who fled her homeland at age 13 during the Iranian revolution. The loss of her home, father and best friend at an early age motivated her to devote her life to peace. Beigi has worked for the PeaceJam Foundation to address conditions of social and economic injustice faced by underprivileged young people. She also assisted Nobel Peace Laureate Shirin Ebadi, an Iranian lawyer and human rights advocate, in her work on behalf of Iranian citizens. Beigi will attend the Rotary Center, at the University of Queensland.

Peter Oyata, 37, Uganda, who works as advocate for Catholic Relief Services Uganda. After his sister was diagnosed with HIV, he made it a priority to help HIV/AIDS victims by volunteering at the AIDS Support Organization (TASO) and the United Nations Population Fund. Oyata will attend the Rotary Center at the University of Bradford, England.

Rosalvina Cortes, 32, Colombia, who works as an assistant law professor at the Universidad Libre and the Externado University focusing on economics and conflict in Colombia. Cortes has also been instrumental in public policy decisions as advisor to the president of the National Commission on Reparation and Reconciliation. She will attend the Rotary Center at the Universidad del Salvador, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Currently, 454 Rotary Peace Center alumni are making a difference in jobs within United Nations agencies, the World Bank, and leading non-governmental organizations. "It is this growing network of peacemakers worldwide that makes us believe that peace is possible," said Estess.

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Rotary – an organization of business and professional leaders united worldwide in humanitarian service - has more than 1.2 million members in more than 33,000 clubs in over 200 countries and geographic regions. For more information, visit [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org).

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