



The Rotary Club of Potomac-Bethesda
“service above self” PB-Rotary.org

August 7, 2008

Dear Potential Ambassadorial Scholar,

Thank you for your interest in Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarships.

Detailed information on the Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship program, including materials to download, may be found at the Rotary International website, www.rotary.org. Click on “Students and Youth” (one of the blue tabs near the top), then click on “Education Programs” (also at the top), then click on “Ambassadorial Scholarships” (at the upper left side). Or go directly to this website:

<http://www.rotary.org/en/StudentsAndYouth/EducationalPrograms/AmbassadorialScholarships>.

Note that three types of Ambassadorial Scholarships are discussed on the website: (1) the **Academic-Year** Ambassadorial Scholarship (for one academic year), (2) the **Multi-Year** Ambassadorial Scholarship (for two academic years), and (3) the **Cultural** Ambassadorial Scholarship (for three months or six months). Rotary District 7620 (Washington, D.C., and a part of central Maryland including Baltimore, Annapolis, Frederick, and over 60 smaller localities) supports the **Academic-Year Scholarship** but *not* the Multi-Year Scholarship *nor* the Cultural Scholarship.

The Academic-Year Ambassadorial Scholarship currently provides a grant of \$23,000 for the one academic year of graduate studies in another country. Please note that candidates must have obtained a Bachelor’s degree or the equivalent before they begin their studies abroad.

The information presently showing on the website is for the **2009** selection process, to select Rotary Ambassadorial Scholars who will begin their studies in **September or October of 2010** (for study institutions in the Northern Hemisphere, where the school year is typically September/October through May/June) or in **February or March of 2011** (for study institutions in the Southern Hemisphere, where the school year is typically February/March through November/December). *It is too late to apply for a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship for studies beginning in the fall of 2009.*

The deadline for submission of an application through Rotary Clubs in our Rotary District for the 2009 selection will be **March 15, 2009**. Since the preparation of a suitable application requires a lot of reflection and research, it is not too early to begin working on it.

The application form is available at on the website at the left, under “Related Documents”: http://www.rotary.org/RIdocuments/en_pdf/139en.pdf. In addition to filling in the application form, you need to write **two essays** (a brief autobiography and a detailed statement of intent) and you

need to identify **five suitable study institutions** in five different cities in at least three foreign countries which have Rotary Clubs. Both requirements are explained in detail on the application form. You *must* be willing to study at any of the five different study institutions you list on your application form. You may indicate your order of preference, but if you win a Rotary Scholarship, Rotary International will decide to which of the five you will be sent. Please make sure that your application is complete before you submit it to a Rotary Club, as incomplete applications will not be considered further. In particular, please be sure that you have listed five study institutions.

When you are reviewing the information on the first page of the application form, note that studies in certain *countries* are encouraged, notably Japan, Korea, Scandinavia, and developing nations in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and South America. If you are willing to list study institutions in these countries, your chances of being selected as a Rotary Scholar are enhanced.

Similarly, certain *fields of study* are encouraged, notably study fields that will help address the humanitarian needs of the world community, such as health care, children at risk, concern for the aging, literacy and numeracy, population issues, urban concerns, disabled persons, international understanding and goodwill, poverty and hunger, PolioPlus (Rotary International's program for eradicating polio), or environmental awareness. If you are willing to pursue studies in these fields, your chances of being selected as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar are enhanced.

One may apply through a Rotary Club in the place of one's permanent residence (home town), or where one presently lives, or where one studies, or where one works, which might theoretically be four different places).

If your application is the only one received by a given Rotary Club, or if it is particularly strong in comparison with others received by a given Rotary Club, that club will normally invite you to an interview, probably on a weekend, probably some time in **late March or early April**. The club's interviewing committee is composed of Rotarians who are members of the club, all of whom volunteer to serve on the committee. Finding a time when an interviewing committee of several busy professionals can meet to interview candidates isn't easy. If you are invited for an interview, you *must* appear in person on the date scheduled for the interview or your application will not be considered further, so it is best not to schedule any travel on weekends during that period.

On the day of the interview, if the club has more than one candidate, the club's interviewing committee normally chooses the best candidate from among those interviewed and forwards that candidate's application on to our Rotary District's selection committee, which I chair. The Rotary District's selection committee typically receives seven to fifteen applications a year from the various Rotary Clubs in our District. If your application is forwarded on to the Rotary District's selection committee, and if the District Committee finds your application particularly strong in comparison with the applications it receives from other Rotary Clubs in our Rotary District, it will invite you to an interview. The interviews in 2009 will take place in **May of 2009**, probably on a weekend. At the Rotary District level, the rule is the same as at the club level: if you are invited for an interview, you *must* appear in person for the interview on the date

scheduled or your application will not be considered further, so it is best not to schedule any long-distance travel on weekends during May.

Of the candidates interviewed at the District level, our Rotary District normally selects two candidates to propose to Rotary International, the umbrella organization representing all the Rotary Clubs of the world, which decides whether or not to endorse the candidates chosen by the Rotary District. Unless something is seriously wrong with or missing from the application, the endorsement by Rotary International is normally a formality.

In recent years, the Rotary Ambassadorial Scholars selected by our Rotary District have typically had a 4.0 grade point average as undergraduates. They have had broad, wide-ranging knowledge; outstanding writing skills (as evidenced in the essays included with their applications); glowing letters of recommendation; personal qualities of kindness, generosity, warmth, and humility; altruism as evidenced by a good record of volunteer activities and service to the community; and charisma, which comes across during the personal interviews. I include this paragraph not to discourage you from applying but rather to demonstrate that the competition is very fierce.

If you decide to apply in 2009, and if you are one of the two candidates selected by our Rotary District, you should know by August or September of 2009 whether Rotary International has approved our Rotary District's selections and to which institution overseas you will be sent. Remember that the 2009 process is to select Rotary Ambassadorial Scholars who will begin their Rotary year abroad in late 2010 or early 2011.

Our Rotary District and its Clubs also support the **Rotary World Peace Fellowship**, discussed under the heading "Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution" at this website: <http://www.rotary.org/StudentsAndYouth/EducationalPrograms/RotaryCentersForInternationalStudies>. You may qualify for this fellowship if your studies are concerned with *conflict resolution, peace studies, and international relations, and related areas*. To qualify for this fellowship, you must already have had *three years* of experience working in one or more of these areas. This fellowship also differs from the Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship in that it is for *two academic years* and in that you cannot choose *any* reputable institution of higher education in any country that has Rotary Clubs but must choose among *seven* pre-identified study institutions listed on the website. Our Rotary District may select one candidate each year for the Rotary World Peace Fellowship.

In our Rotary District, the deadlines for the Rotary World Peace Fellowship will be the same as those for the Ambassadorial Scholarship, i.e., **March 15, 2009**, for submission of applications to local Rotary Clubs, **late March or early April 2009** for interviews by club selection committees, and **May 2009** for interviews by the Rotary District's selection committee.

Most Rotary Clubs in our Rotary District do not have any funding for scholarship assistance other than their logistical support (i.e., review of applications and interviewing of candidates) for the Ambassadorial and Peace Scholarship programs, but you should nevertheless inquire. Scholarship assistance given at the club level, if any, is likely to be nominal and in any case

would probably not pay for an enter year or two of graduate studies abroad, as do the Ambassadorial Scholarship and the World Peace Fellowship, respectively.

After you have thoroughly reviewed the information available at the Rotary website, please feel free to get back to me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

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Cochair, Ambassadorial Scholarships

Potomac-Bethesda Rotary Club

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