



Brief Overview of Rotary International And the Rotary Club of Long Beach

Founded in 1905, Rotary International (RI) was started by an attorney, Paul Harris, who was new to Chicago. During a lunch, he became acquainted with another businessman. They agreed to meet once a week for lunch and invite others to join them. Because they would “rotate” from each place of business, they adopted the name “Rotary”.

Later, a visiting business man from San Francisco was invited to join them for lunch. The visitor loved the concept so much, he, with the Chicago club’s blessing, started the 2nd Rotary Club in San Francisco., From there, Rotary clubs sprung up in communities, cities and countries worldwide. Today there are 1.4 million members in 46,000 clubs throughout 200 countries, making Rotary International (RI) by far the largest service organization in the world.

The mission of RI is to “provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through {its} fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders. The Rotary Foundation “helps Rotary members to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace by improving health, providing quality education, improving the environment, and alleviating poverty.”

In 1917, Rotary Club of Long Beach (RCLB) became the 334th Rotary club and is distinguished as one of the 50 largest Rotary clubs in the world. The Club is the hub of Long Beach with civic servant leaders, working professionals and retirees from all walks of life as members.

RCLB continues to make a tremendous positive difference in Long Beach. For starters, RCLB has established a scholarship foundation of over \$12 million in assets that generates over \$350K/year in scholarships for Long Beach Community College and Long Beach State University. Secondly, RCLB through its charitable foundation has raised almost \$1 million to purchase over 500,000 books for childhood literacy. Another major Club project is “Camp Enterprise” that has over the years sent over 1,000 high school students to learn team building and how to start a business. Indeed, all these efforts plus more projects have been a game changer for our community in Long Beach and beyond.