



Dear fellow Rotarians,

In 1912, Rotary founder Paul Harris wrote: “It is the Rotarian idea that a man’s business is the best and truest expression of the man. The character of the membership of Rotary clubs must be kept high because from the membership of Rotary clubs come your friends and mine.”

Those words are just as pertinent today as they were when written nearly 100 years ago. Vocational service is a hallmark of our organization that sets it apart from all other service groups. From the beginning, Rotarians have advocated fair business practices and high ethical standards. As business owners, they wanted to earn the public’s trust and offer the best products and services that were available. They had pride in what they did

and in their employees.

As we commemorate Vocational Service Month in October, I encourage Rotarians to contribute to their communities through their businesses or professions. One of the greatest assets of Rotary is its diverse membership. Rotarians can use their vocational expertise in medicine, technology, education, agriculture, and other professions to help people locally or abroad. Club members can serve as mentors to youth, promote functional literacy in the workplace, sponsor microenterprise projects, and provide jobs to young people and those with disabilities.

The Rotary Foundation of RI sponsors hundreds of projects that help develop vocational skills so that people can learn a trade and become self-sufficient. You can also put your talents to work as a Rotary Volunteer or have some fun by joining a Rotary Fellowship that focuses on a particular occupation.

During an era of corporate scandals and questionable business practices, it is essential that Rotarians maintain high ethical standards. When I visit a commercial establishment, I am always pleased when I see a Four-Way Test plaque on the wall. It tells me that the manager or owner is a Rotarian who cares about his customers. I feel a sense of trust that the job will get done – and get done well.

The centennial year is an ideal time to recognize business leaders who act with integrity and social responsibility. This year, we have established the Rotary Centennial Service Award for Professional Excellence to recognize non-Rotarians for exceptional professional achievement consistent with the ideals of Rotary. We are looking to recognize those community leaders who have demonstrated high ethical standards, achieved professional distinction and trained or mentored others in their field.

As we enter a new century of service, let us Celebrate Rotary through vocational service. As past RI President Raymond Havens observed in 1922: “As a harbinger of business ethics, Rotary sends its message around the world that true service means personal responsibility for ‘peace on earth and goodwill toward men.’ ” It’s a message that’s still relevant today.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Glenn E. Estess Sr." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Glenn E. Estess Sr.  
President, Rotary International

