

# Trustee Handbook

## Georgia Rotary Student Program

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*P***PROMOTE** PEACE THROUGH UNDERSTANDING.

*E***NCOURAGE** THE EXCHANGE OF CULTURAL AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCES.

*A***DVANCE** THE IDEALS OF ROTARY.

*C***REATE** OPPORTUNITIES FOR FRIENDSHIP.

*E***NVISION** A WORLD WHERE PEACE IS REALTY.



## **Introduction**

“This is the story of a vibrant, living and compelling desire to further the Rotary ideal of international service through the bonds of friendship and understanding; a story of a small group of men, Georgia Rotarians, dedicated to a humanitarian ideal, which led an entire state into an adventure of international service. It is a story which we Georgia Rotarians believe should be told, not in the spirit of boastful pride, but as offering an example of international service which has not only encompassed the world, but in return has given us Rotarians of Georgia the deep satisfactions achieved through an unselfish application of service above self.” This was taken from an earlier Handbook created for trustees. In 1946, when GRSP was founded, Rotary was a male only organization and only the eminent leaders of a community were invited to become Rotarians. This almost exclusivity of Rotary provided the platform of financial support and personal service from which GRSP was launched. These same men provided the financial and time-consuming support to carry this organization through some very lean years. Past Chairman Emeritus Hue Thomas ran the program from his business in Savannah for many years and no one will ever know how much of the program he funded from his own pocket during that period. That kind of dedication is our legacy.

## **Background**

It was in 1946 that the world began to see, for the first time in many years, the light of peace and yet, at the same time, it saw desolation, ruin, and despair in too many war-torn countries throughout the world. In this same light, a Georgia Rotarian, William A. Watt of Thomasville, saw the need for a practical application of the Rotary ideal of international service; one which must look to the future of world peace and at the same time one which could give courage to those living in despair of the present. It was only logical that this application of international service be centered on the youth of the world, in whose hands would rest the future of world peace.

So was born Will Watt's idea. As a past District Governor of Rotary, he advanced this idea to the Rotarians of former District 165, which at that time included the entire State of Georgia. The 1945-1946 District Governor Irwin Ingram strongly supported the proposal. The sum of \$4000. was provided, one dollar per Rotarian. The first class consisted of three young men and one young woman, 1946-1947, from European countries became the first Rotary sponsored students to attend schools in Georgia. A small committee with PDG Theodore T. Molnar as its Chair administrated the program. Thus was begun a project that later became the Georgia Rotary Student Program organization.

Through the years the interest of Georgia Rotarians in this program grew in intensity; the per capita contribution by Rotarians and the special club donations increased, permitting a steady increase in the number of scholarships granted. The State University System, as well as privately operated institutions, early recognized the value of the program and by waiving out-of-state registration fees materially aided in the reduction of the cost of scholarships. In the years since the inception of the program its Rotarians have brought thousands of young men and women from around the world to the campuses of Georgia.

## **Purpose**

The Rotarians of the State of Georgia, USA, operate the program by granting scholarships to students to study in the colleges and universities in Georgia. By using the means of scholarships we are trying to promote international good will through the bonds of friendship and understanding with one another.

The Rotarians in Georgia believe that this program can only strengthen the bonds of international friendship with Rotarians in other counties. There is no obligation in return to accept any student from the United States.

## **The Scholarship**

The scholarship covers one scholastic year beginning in the late summer or fall for study only in the colleges and universities located in the State of Georgia, USA. The school to be attended in Georgia will be selected by the sponsoring Rotary Club(s) and processed for administration by the GRSP office. The school will be suitable for the student to follow their proposed course of study. In the event that the school determines that the student does not meet their admission standards, the scholarship will be withdrawn.

The scholarship pays all the scholastic costs including tuition, fees, necessary books, as well as school provided room and board. It does not include transportation, insurance, or any applicable taxes. The applicants must be 18 years old by August 1 of the beginning school year and have not reached 25 by that same time. Students cannot be married nor have not previously studied or lived in the USA for a period exceeding 4 months.

## **Funding**

The funding for GRSP comes from several sources. The basic administration costs comes from the per capita contributions from all Rotarians in Georgia. This began in 1946 with one dollar per Rotarian for an initial capitalization of four thousand dollars. The per capita fee is now seven dollars and has been as high as eight dollars. The sponsoring Rotary Clubs pay a portion of the total scholarship cost. The Atlanta Rotary Foundation was an early leader in providing additional funds and when the Endowment Fund was established this support was combined into the Endowment Fund. For this reason the student sponsored by the Atlanta Rotary Club is known as The Kendall Weisiger Scholar. Rotarian Weisiger was an early leader in this and other related programs. There have been several significant contributions from Rotarians and their

families. The Endowment Fund was established in the mid-1970s with Marshall Weaver as the first Endowment Chairman and now has a significant corpus of funds. The interest from the Fund is used to offset the club cost of sponsoring students. In years of high yield, the offset has been as high as thirty percent. Each year the leadership reviews the income and determines the offset for the next class of students.

## **Endowment Fund**

Due to the rising cost of college tuition, there was a concern in the late 1970's, that the program needed a strong financial base to help the Rotary clubs offset the cost of hosting a student. As a result, the GRSP Endowment Fund was founded. Contributions to this permanent fund are invested, and only the earnings from those investments are used in support of the program. The goal is to continue to grow the fund so that it will provide a substantial portion of the cost of the program.

## **How GRSP Works**

The program is incorporated in the State of Georgia and is managed by a Board of Trustees. A copy of the By-Laws is available on the website and not included in this publication. The following is a synopsis of the organizational structure:

The Board of Trustees is divided into several categories, each with specific duties. The backbone of the organization is the Trustee. This person is a Georgia Rotarian who has been nominated by the leadership of GRSP and appointed by the District Governor. From each of the Rotary Districts in Georgia, the trustees elect a District Chair and two Directors. These officers have to meet certain criteria set forth in the By-Laws. The Trustees as a whole elect the Officers with the exception of the District Chairs and the Parliamentarian who is elected by the other officers. The officers elected by the trustees are Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Executive Committee consists of the four elected officers, the District Chairs, and the Parliamentarian. There are additional trustees who are appointed by the Chair who bring certain talents and abilities to assist the leadership. These additional trustees are called Advisory Trustees. Past trustees who have provided outstanding and exemplary leadership are eligible to be named Trustee Emeritus by the Executive Committee.

The paid staff in the corporate office in Savannah provides the day-to-day operation of the program. An Administrator manages this office. This office processes all the student applications. This includes verifying the qualifications of the applicants, completing the school admission requirement, receiving all funds and paying all student related bills. In addition to the things directly related to the students the office maintains the records of Rotarian and Club contributions, alumni, trustees, etc. It has been said that the office does ninety percent of the trustee's work. All that is asked in return is for the Trustee to do their duty and communicate with the office.

## **Trustee Duties**

In this Handbook, we will only look at the duties of the Trustee. As a Trustee may advance into positions of leadership, those additional duties will become evident.

From the beginning, the Trustee must understand that this is a completely voluntary appointment and that the Trustee is responsible for all their time and expenses. No trustee receives compensation for the time spent performing his or her responsibilities or any reimbursement of expenses.

The Trustee is first a Rotarian and must at all times represent the ideals of Rotary as well as those of the program.

Each year there are not more than three meetings of the full Board of Trustees and each trustee is expected to attend all of them. For some reason a meeting must be missed, the Trustee must obtain the consent of the District Chair. Should the Trustee miss more than two meetings in a year, the Trustee will be considered to have resigned his appointment. The meetings are the Student Selection Meeting in Savannah early in the calendar year at which the students for the following fall are selected; the Summer Board Business Meeting, which is the predominant business meeting of the year; and the Student Conclave. The Conclave is where the new students receive their mandatory orientation.

The bottom line is that the Trustee is the primary representative of GRSP to the individual Rotarians and Clubs. Each Trustee is assigned by the District Chair a number of clubs in the Trustee's immediate vicinity. The Trustee is responsible for representing GRSP to those Clubs as well as representing the wishes of those clubs in GRSP. This includes being known by the clubs as "their Trustee". This is done by making up at the different clubs several times a year and maintaining contact with the students sponsored by those clubs. Also, assist the clubs in their selection of students; encourage support of GRSP within the clubs by presenting programs on general knowledge and the Endowment Fund. Monitoring of the club – student relationship is critical. Only by maintaining contact with both can the Trustee know and alleviate small issues that could become troublesome.

## **Student Selection**

Selecting students for the next class is lengthy and detailed; but if handled properly, is also fun and rewarding.

In the early years application forms were distributed to Rotary District Governors around the world and they distributed them to prospective students. The applications with the related supporting documents were returned to the GRSP office where they were vetted for qualifications and completeness. There were only about a dozen trustees in those days, most of whom were past District Governors. The trustees would meet in Savannah and match the qualified applicants to the sponsoring clubs. The staff would then proceed

with getting the students admitted to the schools. The trustee would insure the students were met on arrival and housed until time to report to the school.

Now the full process begins with applications being opened to the world via the website and students can complete the application on line and transmit it to GRSP. They still must mail the supporting documents such as transcripts, insurance papers, guarantee of personal funds, and most important an endorsement from a Rotary Club in their home country.

The office still must review the applications as before and receive all the supporting work. A summary sheet is prepared on each qualified student. This book of summaries is mailed to the Trustee for delivery to the club. At this time with the assistance of the Trustee, the club selects several students that they would like to sponsor. A commitment form is completed by each club listing the club's first choice and at least three alternates as well as designating who will be the club host family, the school the club wishes the student to attend, and the financial commitment to sponsor the student. In late January or early February, all trustees meet in Savannah for the final selection of students.

This final process is referred to as a draft since in some ways resembles a professional sports team drafting future players. In the case of GRSP, if only one club (or one cooperating group of clubs) selects a particularly student as their first choice on the commitment form, that student is deemed to be assigned to that club. However, many students will be the first choice of several clubs. This is where the draft comes into play. Before the opening of the formal draft, the Trustees are given a period of time to review the status of the various students, negotiate with other Trustees, and modify their club's selections. Once the formal draft is begun, the students are reviewed in the same sequence they appeared in the summary book. If the Trustees were able to negotiate such that a student is not the first choice of only one club, then the student is assigned to that club. If the Trustees were not able to resolve multiple first choices of a particular student then the Trustees will draw lots for the student. The losing Trustee must wait until the second round to make an alternate selection. This continues until all clubs have students assigned to them. The process begins about 8:30 a.m. and is usually complete before noon.

After the draft, the staff then notifies the student as to which club they have been appointed and which school they will be attending. At this time the student is asked for a final acceptance of the scholarship. If the student accepts, and most do, the staff then gets the student to complete the school's application for admission and gets the student admitted to the school. This is no small task to get something like eighty students admitted to twenty or more different schools. The school will issue an immigration form known as an "I-20" which allows the student to go to an American Embassy in the student's home country to get a visa to come to Georgia to study. It is not until the I-20 is received by GRSP that the clubs and Trustees are given the students contact information. This is to prevent premature contact that could lead to disappointment should the school decline the student. In recent years, the Embassies in certain countries have been reluctant to grant visas. Trustees should acquaint themselves with these

countries and caution the clubs who want to select student there may be additional difficulties with students from them.

A sample welcome letter is attached. Please contact your students as soon as you receive notification from the office that their I-20 has been processed. Be sure the host family contacts the student and arranges for the student's arrival. In the Host Family Handbook (available on the website), there is reference to the "Rotary Suitcase". Please be sure the host family knows to have ready these items to be provided to the student. This is a good time to re-read the Host Family Handbook to be sure you can answer any questions first time host families may ask.

The students will begin arriving a couple of weeks before classes begin at their particular school. The Trustee must assure that the student will be met at the airport and hosted in a private home prior to the date they are to report to the school dormitory. During this time it is important that the student be given time to become adjusted to time and other changes. This is a good time for both the Trustee and the host families to get acquainted, but should not be totally scheduled with activities. Both the host and the student will require some adjustment time.

At this point the Trustee's duty is to monitor the relationships between the student, the club, and the school. An alert Trustee can keep the process well oiled and make the experience meaningful for all parties.

## **Summary**

Being a Trustee of GRSP is to many of us the most rewarding time we will spend as Rotarians. It is an honor to be selected but the responsibilities must not be taken lightly. We welcome you as a new Trustee and hope your experience is likewise. One of the responsibilities of all present and former Trustees is to mentor new Trustees. To that end, remember that there is no situation that you will experience that someone else has not already dealt with. Ask your District Chair or a past Trustee that you already know. They will get you help.

On behalf of all present and past Trustees, WELCOME.

## **Supporting Material**

Please visit the GRSP website Trustees tab where you can download the By-Laws, Endowment information, the calendar, suggested club presentations and find much more useful information. [www.grsp.org](http://www.grsp.org)

## Check List

Use this as a check to see if you are staying in the loop.

- The Savannah office has my current contact info.
- Check the website under the Trustees tab and scroll down to verify that the posted contact info for me is correct.
- Make reservations for meetings with hotel AND GRSP office as soon as the dates are available
- Post my calendar for all meetings as soon as the dates are available. (Check website Calendar for future dates).
- Open all envelopes from GRSP as soon as they are received and take action as needed
- Check with Students and Host Families at least monthly
- Make up at my assigned clubs once a quarter
- Inform my District Chair and GRSP office of any contacts I have made even if no significant or troublesome thing was discussed. This will help them know who has been where.
- Take immediate action on any issues that could become troublesome. Call for help before you need it. It helps to talk things over with someone else.
- Talk up the Endowment Fund at club visits.
- Contributor to the Endowment Fund and work on achieving the next level contributor. I am now a [ ] Will Watt Fellow [ ] Hue Thomas Fellow
- Talk with my District Chair monthly, if for nothing but to catch up with each other.
- Re-do this Check List on \_\_\_\_\_. Put this date in my calendar.  
(Date)

Can you read the following aloud quickly?

He who knows, and knows not that he knows is asleep, wake him.

He who knows not, and knows that he knows not is a child, teach him.

He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not is a fool, shun him.

He who knows, and knows that he knows is wise, follow him.

(Unknown)

**SAMPLE WELCOME LETTER**  
*(This may be sent via US Mail or Email)*  
**Fill in ALL blank spaces for your personal use!**

Date

Jane Student  
Address  
Country

Dear Jane,

Welcome to the Georgia Rotary Student Program! I join with the other trustees of the program in extending you a warm Georgia welcome. We are honored to sponsor your visit along with your sponsoring Rotary Club in Rotary District 69\_\_ for the year 20\_\_ - 20\_\_.

I am one the Trustees of the Georgia Rotary Student Program, Inc. and I have the responsibility to coordinate your activities with your sponsoring club(s) and host families.

It is also my responsibility to make your stay as enjoyable and educational as possible. I have been in contact with your sponsoring clubs, (*Fill in the names of the clubs*), and will coordinate any of your questions or needs with them.

In the event that you have questions answered regarding the program or if any emergency should occur, please call me night or day. My telephone numbers and addresses are as follows:

HOME: Trustees Name  
Address  
Telephone  
E-Mail

OFFICE: Trustees Office  
Trustees address  
Trustees phone #  
E-mail at your office

You should be prepared to report to (University or college Name) in early (August). Your host family must have the exact date you arrive in Georgia and when you are to report to your school. As I understand your arrival time will be (date, check with host club), this will give you time to rest and recover from your travels, visit other Rotarians, do some sightseeing and prepare for college life.

On the weekend of August (date), we will hold the 20\_\_ GRSP Student Concave in \_\_\_\_\_, Georgia. This is a required meeting at which, you will get to meet the other international students sponsored by the Georgia Rotary Student Program and receive your formal introduction to GRSP. You will also meet many of the Rotarians who support this program.

We look forward to your arrival and know that we will have a wonderful year together.

See you soon,

Trustee's name  
Trustee  
Georgia Rotary Student Program

cc: GRSP