

BACKGROUND OF THE ROTARY FOUNDATION TRUSTEES APRIL 2009 DECISION REGARDING THE ROTARY CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Introduction

The University of California, Berkeley is one of the premier academic institutions in the world. It boasts 7 Nobel Laureates, 28 MacArthur Fellows, and 4 Pulitzer Prize winners among its active faculty. Its research capabilities, library, and facilities are outstanding. It is one of the most competitive undergraduate and graduate universities in the world. Distinguished TRF Ambassadorial Scholar alumni such as Sadako Ogata have conducted graduate studies at UC Berkeley. Three Rotary International Presidents graduated from the university.

In 1999, The Rotary Foundation selected the University of California, Berkeley as one of the host universities for the Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution program due to its stellar academic reputation and in particular, its Peace and Conflict Studies program which is currently an undergraduate program. The original plan included both the option of a Masters Degree and a Certificate Program, the latter being discontinued in 2004. The Rotary Center is housed within the University's International and Area Studies program.

The original proposal stated that placement of Fellows would be in the most relevant fields to the Conceptual Plan including, the Haas School of Business, The Energy and Resources Group, the School of Law, the School of Natural Resources and the School of Public Health. Those Fellows wishing to pursue degrees in the Social Sciences or Humanities would be proposed to an appropriate department for acceptance, and would be required to complete a second master's degree in International and Area Studies. Because most of the degrees within these divisions are PhD tracks, Fellows would then be eligible to continue for a PhD according to the proposal, with funding after the first two years coming from normal department or other external sources. This proved to be an unrealistic expectation as the university did not financially support Fellows for further studies after the Master's Degree.

Development of the Center

During the first few years of the program at Berkeley, there were some growing pains as with many of the Centers. Professor Edwin Epstein, Professor Emeritus at the Haas Business School, replaced a weak Center Director in 2002 three months into the program. Ed Epstein took his role as Center Director seriously and was instrumental in getting many of the early Peace Fellows accepted in some of UC-Berkeley's most competitive programs. Professor Epstein was also sensitive to the non-academic needs of the Fellows and served almost like a father/advisor figure to the first four classes of Peace Fellows. Rotary World Peace Fellows largely were happy with the university, although there were very few actual peace and conflict resolution courses taught at the graduate level. The Masters of Law (LLM) program was particularly attractive to law students from outside the United States.

Departmental Problems

Although the original proposal stated that Peace Fellows could enroll in the social sciences and humanities departments, it became increasingly obvious that the Rotary Fellows in departments such as political science, anthropology, etc., were often viewed as less academically viable since their funding was only guaranteed for the two years. Many fellows stated that they felt like second-class citizens and undervalued. Fellows in the professional schools fared better, but in general, their second year of study in International and Area Studies appears to have been more of a catch-all degree than a focused Masters.

Directorship Change

When Ed Epstein stepped down from the Center Directorship, Michael Watts, a highly respected geographer who studies development in Nigeria, replaced him. Professor Watts was not able to devote sufficient time to his directorship duties due to his own research agenda and teaching responsibilities. Some of the university departments hosting Rotary World Peace Fellows were unhappy with the academic quality of some of the fellows. The fact that the fellows came with full funding did not seem to help matters. It must be recognized that Rotarians struggled to provide the University of California, Berkeley, with fellows that meet their high admissions standards.

Lack of Peace and Conflict Studies Graduate Courses

Despite the fact that there is an apparently strong peace and conflict studies program at the undergraduate level, there are few courses open to Rotary Peace Fellows that would be relevant to their chosen master's degrees. Additionally, Berkeley has not developed very strong Rotary Center courses focusing in this area and most of the Rotary Center core courses have been less academic than organizational. When Professor Watts tried to develop a more academic course, it was not well received by the Fellows. The lack of a Master's Degree program has surely handicapped the integration of our fellows into a cohesive unit despite the efforts of dedicated Rotarian host counselors.

Acceptance Rates Decline

Last year, only 50% of Fellows chosen to go to Berkeley were accepted by the university. It appears this year that the originally admitted five fellows may be joined by two others following strong lobbying by a faculty member close to the program. This is a disturbing trend and one that might be reversed by allowing the university to choose half of the class each year with Rotary's endorsement of those candidates. However, this arrangement could result in less ownership of the program by participants and sponsor districts.

Recent Developments

After a site visit by PRIP Charles Keller and Rotary Centers Department Manager Judy Gibson in April of last year, TRF decided to increase the Centers stipend to include partial funding for an Assistant Director who would work directly with the Fellows on administrative and advising topics and take on some of Michael Watts' duties. Michael Watts has decided to step down as Center Director after two years, starting with the 2009-10 academic year. Professor Jerry Sanders who heads the undergraduate Peace and Conflict Studies program will replace him. In April 2009 a site visit was conducted

by PRIP Charles Keller, PRIP Bill Boyd and an outside consultant, Dr. Craig Zelizer, Georgetown University and their evaluation has been of considerable assistance in developing the recommendation.

Cost Benefit of the UC-Berkeley Rotary Center

The UC-Berkeley Rotary Center is the most expensive Rotary Center out of the seven. The average Fellowship is between US\$80,000-100,000. The university stipend is the highest at US\$135,000.

Conclusion

In view of the information as summarized above, the Trustees agreed:

- in recognition of the fact that the University of California, Berkeley does not offer a graduate level curriculum in peace studies and conflict resolution and the low university admissions rate for its graduate school applicants, agree not to award additional fellowships for new Rotary World Peace Fellows to enroll at University of California, Berkeley effective with the 2010-11 program year (Class IX) and beyond until such time that the university might better meet The Rotary Foundation's program requirements, and request the general secretary to notify University of California, Berkeley accordingly;
- recognizing that a process is in place for selecting new Rotary Center partner universities, request the Rotary Centers for International Studies Committee to continue the process of identifying potential partner universities to host a Rotary Center, for initial review by the Trustees at their April 2010 meeting;
- request that the Rotary Centers for International Studies Committee, in identifying an initial list of potential partner universities, apply the following selection criteria:
 - a. offers a master's degree in peace studies and conflict resolution;
 - b. prepared to admit an appropriate number of Rotary World Peace Fellow applicants annually, and;
 - c. located in a Rotary country.

The Trustee Liaison to the Rotary Centers for International Studies Committee supports the phasing out of the Berkeley Center.