



1.25 million is more than a number

Rotary has always been about people. Not projects. Not numbers. People. Our goal of reaching 1.25 million Rotarians and 125,000 Rotaractors by our 125th anniversary in 2030 is also about people.

I bring up this goal again not because I expect the number itself to move you. Numbers rarely do. I bring it up because I worry that a goal this large can begin to feel abstract, distant from the everyday work of our clubs. I do not want that to happen. So let us talk, once more, about what is truly behind it.

I want to offer your club a simple exercise. Look back over the last five to seven years and find your best year. Maybe it was a year new members arrived and, more meaningfully, stayed. Maybe it was a year your meetings became something members looked forward to, rather than another obligation on a crowded calendar. Find that year. Then I ask you to do better than your best.

This is not a call to outpace the club across town or the district next door. It is never meant to be a competition between Rotary members. It is, instead, an invitation to hold ourselves to our own highest standard — and to rise to meet it again.

Why does this 2030 membership goal matter enough to me that I keep returning to it? Because behind every one of those numbers is a person whose life could be changed by this organization, just as mine and yours have been changed by it. Rotary has given me friendships that have lasted decades, a sense of purpose I did not know I was searching for, and

something that, in time, came to feel like an extension of my family. I suspect many of you understand this in your own lives, in your own way.

That life-changing experience is what we offer when we invite someone to join us. There are people in your communities right now who would find real meaning here if only someone thought to ask them. So tell them your story. Tell them honestly how Rotary changed you, not just about the projects you led or the funds you raised but about the person you became along the way. Those stories have a way of reaching people when little else does.

If we hope to *Create Lasting Impact*, the kind that resounds for generations, we will need more people standing beside us to help carry our work forward. Let us come together, not only this month but every month of every year, to make Rotary stronger, more joyful, and more like the family it has always been to me.

Find your best year. Then let us be better than our best, together.

YINKA

President, Rotary International