

## **Bill Carlson's TIPS for Sponsor and Host Counselors**

Tips and discussion points for Sponsoring Counselors and Host Counselors, with topics covering Inbound and Outbound Scholar issues:

- Contact your Scholar prior to their departure from their homeland, and pick them up at the airport
- Choosing the right candidates (even though they've already been chosen for this year, it would be useful to discuss what types of scholars get the most out of the program. This might positively affect future decisions) -- this is for outbound scholars
- Get to know your Scholar right away
- Invite them to meetings and introduce them to the members of your club before they have to speak
- Help the Scholar put together an interesting presentation for club visits
- Give them banners (outbound) or collect their banners (inbound)
- Print business cards for them with their home and overseas address including the Rotary logo and their photo. Can also include "Sponsored by the ....Club"
- Have them speak to clubs in your area before they depart/as soon as they arrive.
- Try to get local publicity for the Scholar and your club before they depart (Outbound) or when they arrive (Inbound).
- Try to arrange to have the Scholar submit updates or guest columns to the local newspaper while studying overseas.
- Give the Scholar a list of all the members of your club.
- Make sure the Scholar gets accepted to their school early.
- Oversee language training, visas, passports, immunizations, airline tickets, etc. These are the Scholar's responsibility, but you might want to ask them about them and remind them.
- If the Scholar knows his/her travel plans in the region, you might want to copy pages in the RI guide that give the names of club presidents in those cities. But let them know that either you or their Host Counselor should contact these presidents in advance to arrange speeches or visits.
- Think about how this experience will affect the Scholar's outlook on life and guide them gently through the process. This doesn't mean being paternalistic, just thoughtful and empathetic.

- Be a fun counselor. You'll get the best response if you're not serious all the time.
- Be sensitive to culture and diversity issues. Many Rotarians have been accused of sexual discrimination or harassment.
- Prepare your Scholar for the possibility that Rotary will not be helpful overseas (Outbound). You can help alleviate this problem by contacting their Host Counselor before they leave and telling the Counselor how much this person means to your club. You might even consider sending a gift to the Host Counselor along with one to deliver to the Scholar. That would give them a reason to get together early on.
- Prepare the Scholar for possible in country problems (Outbound). One Scholar faced incredible racism. Be helpful but firm in having them face cultural issues. Several times Scholars have gotten on a plane and return home frustrated. We want to avoid that.
- Prepare female Scholars for possible problems with all-male clubs.
- Help the Scholar plan what to do upon arriving at the airport. This is the scariest part of the trip. Very often the Host Counselor will pick up the Scholar. You could help arrange this in advance, but prepare the Scholar for a backup plan just in case.
- Know your Scholar's flight plan and arrival information in case you need to send an urgent message. One Sponsor Counselor called an Outbound Scholar in transit at an interim airport to report that a Rotarian had finally agreed to meet him upon arrival in the host country.
- Call the Scholar on the first day he or she arrives. This is the loneliest day. You might consider giving them a prepaid phone card for \$50 that they could use to call you and call home.
- Help them find the US Embassy in the country they're going to and encourage them to register. For Inbound Scholars, help them connect with their embassy.
- Help the Scholar budget for travel and other expenses.
- Stay in touch with them by e-mail, before, during and after their trip.
- Make sure the Scholar knows to contact you immediately if any big problems occur.

**For those interested  
in becoming a  
Host or Sponsor  
Counselor...**

Due to the new changes to  
The Rotary Foundation and its programs,  
and that each district manages  
those programs differently,  
it is best to contact  
your local District Governor  
and/or Foundation or Scholarship Chair  
for further information.

We thank you for your interest!