

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome so many of you to the 2010 EEMA Conference in Pfaffikon.

For the first time in 58 years, 300 of us gather here in Switzerland to work on improving the youth exchange programs. This massive presence shows both your own personal commitment *to* as well as your belief *in* the YE programs. Also, for the first time, a RI President is showing us his support by joining us personally. We all know how busy a president's schedule is and we are very honored that Ray was able to make time to be here with us.

The unprecedented attendance of all 300 of you as well as that of our RI President proves that YE is expanding, and gaining more and more importance among Rotarians and at the highest levels of RI. It is no surprise that Youth Service has become a fifth Avenue of RI.

Gaining in importance also means bearing more responsibilities. "YOUTH EXCHANGE -WITH HEART AND RESPONSIBILITY " is thus a perfect motto for this conference.

YE fits within the strategic views of Rotary. It is an exciting activity, especially for younger RI members. And YE alumni are a constant source of new members---new members who will continue the RI legacy of service to humanity. YEP is just a stepping stone, it is the face of young Rotarians in the making.

The Swiss organizing committee, Vice-President Erwin and myself have tried our best over several months to put together a conference program that will focus on further improving a quality YE program. We hope this conference will inform you, introduce you to new ideas, stimulate debate amongst you and encourage you to share your experiences. We are also very happy to have the assistance of several workshop leaders, and reporters who have generously agreed to give some of their time and energy to make this conference even better.

Your presence and enthusiastic participation at this important conference cannot help but make it an enormous success. You will catch up with so many old friends and make so many new ones, building and enriching relationships with your exchange partners from all around the world.

I offer you my sincere hope and wish for a highly successful conference here in Switzerland.