

It pleases me to finally be able to embark upon my first official Rotary-gearred communication. Those that have been keeping up-to-date via my website (www.cryboytheman.150m.com) will find that a lot of the information covered in this report has been communicated to you before.

The focus of this document is to bring light to the questions that allow for personal development within each and every Rotary ambassadorial scholar. The following can be viewed as tools used in aiding the scholar to better understand his/her purpose in their respective host countries:

- Descriptions of involvement with the Rotary and other ambassadorial activities.
- Information about my study program, including my adaptation and progress with my studies.
- Observations about my host country and visits to homes, historical places, etc.
- Quality photographs portraying my experiences in ambassadorial or academic situations.

It has been a great pleasure to represent my country and host Rotary family as an Ambassadorial Scholar. Thank you all so much for the continued support and the very much appreciated investment in my future. Please feel free to contact me via email (cryboytheman@yahoo.com) if you have any questions.

Involvement with Rotary and other ambassadorial activities

My host rotary club is named *Club Rotario Metropolitano de Monterrey*. It is considered one of the most effective organizations in Mexico. With a very high project completion rate, this club in particular continues fulfilling the objectives of Rotary International. In the short time I have been in Monterrey, I have attended four meetings. These meetings take place every Monday, starting at 7:30 a.m. and ending at 9 a.m. I have given a presentation providing information about my sponsoring club, my areas of study, and the goals that I will achieve during my time here in Monterrey.

I have also had the opportunity to have dinner with my host counselor, Mario Zambrano, and his lovely wife. We had plenty to talk about at our first dinner, which took place in the most famous restaurant in all of Monterrey. “El Rey del Cabrito” is known by many for its very tasty baby goat. My host counselor and his family are awesome and warmly accepting people. They really do live by the creed that helps in describing what a Rotarian is. I have also had dinner with the other four ambassadorial scholars stationed here in Monterrey. Future meetings have been scheduled so that we can develop a group-oriented servitude project.

Months before making the trip to Mexico, I was extremely excited and motivated. My mind was wrapped around the concept of “Here I am Mexico, Ambassadorial Scholar 2005 at your service.” I had been reviewing the duties and experiences of past scholars in efforts to prepare myself for two semesters of complete servitude. My ambitions were met with noble acceptance by an organization named AMMAC (Alianza de Ministerios de Misericordia A.C.). AMMAC’s mission is to “...connect generosity with necessity,

providing the most basic needs to the less favored population.” AMMAC, with the aid of 120 volunteers, delivers over 160 tons of food and other basic necessities to asylums, orphanages, and families of prisoners every month. AMMAC has succeeded in making confident connections with the organizations that they help throughout the communities in Nuevo Leon. They also partner up with other public assistance programs in efforts to affect the lives of more people. I have pledged to provide math tutoring to a group of orphans that receive a helping hand from AMMAC. I have also agreed to assist AMMAC with any project that requires the volunteerism of many. One such event is a weekend-long medical brigade, which will take place in late October. My main focus during this event will be to help in organizing patients, to provide assistance with completing provisional medical forms, and to facilitate logistical questions.

Information about my study program (including my adaptation and progress with my studies)

I am enrolled in the international studies program at *El Tecnológico de Monterrey*, which allows me to take classes that will contribute to my major in modern foreign language. The four courses that I am taking this semester are *Cultura de México* (Mexican culture), *Destrezas Comunicativas* (Communication Skills), *Fonéticas* (phonetics) and *Introducción a la Literatura* (Introduction to Literature). Thus far, my grades are ranked among the highest in all four classes.

Because I have taken classes before that were taught entirely in Spanish, the language barrier has not been a problem. I am really enjoying the culture course because it not only teaches you the history of such a unique country, but it also teaches why the people of Mexico think in such a complex, religious, and humble manner. The education I receive from this particular class could not be obtained in such a precise way from any other place in the world.

I have taken communication courses in the past, but never in preparation to give speeches in another language. It is one thing to be able to converse in a foreign language, but being able to express thoughts, opinions, and feelings is something that could only be learned through the means of a well-organized learning atmosphere. My literature class has also opened a window in my mind that I really did not know existed. Two of my professors have told me that the ability to write poetry in a second language is a skill that most people will never experience. One professor has suggested that I publish a poem I wrote last month as part of an assignment.

All in all, the course load is about the same as it was in the states. Long nights of studying and preparation are accompanied by group projects and presentations almost too often. Some weeks are harder than others, but I am up for the challenge because I am certain that what I do today will have a profound affect on my future achievements.

Observations about my host country and visits to homes, historical places, etc.

I have found that economic ignorance is an international concept. Based on previous observations in my home country, I have come to notice that as we continue to

climb the ladder of economic success, the education that we provide our kids becomes more and more unbalanced. Common sense starts to become more of an idea that we read about in books and the simplistic things that a society puts forward start to have an overwhelming importance in our lives. This is an unfortunate American characteristic that some Mexicans and their families have ingrained in their everyday lives.

One can observe the lack of common sense that I speak of in a large amount of the student population at *El Tecnológico de Monterrey*. In my opinion, putting forth the effort to understand cultural differences, studying the history of not only your country but that of others, and understanding the issues that your community and others face should always outweigh the information that materialistic venues provide. Investing time in understanding what it means to be and what it takes to become an intellectual should, at some point in a young person's life, take precedence over indulging oneself in gossip or spending countless hours preparing oneself for a night that will more than likely result in making one drunk, sick, or putting the life of a fellow human being in danger.

However, I have found that the older community exhibits the same characteristics that we find in every community and throughout history. Personalities that reflect wisdom, advice, and guidance are very evident throughout the elder population. In one of the updates to my website, I talked about a person that embodied some of these characteristics. During the search for a place to stay, I met an older gentleman that is an interior decorator and a collector of all things antique. The interior of the residence was truly awe-inspiring. Not only did it look like a museum, but it also had an indoor garden. He was quite generous and displayed the attributes that most come to expect of intellectual people.

Another remarkable person that I have had the pleasure to meet is my landlord. He is a man that has enjoyed the riches of life and continues to embrace new experiences. He is not only the owner of an apartment building, but also an entrepreneur, cosmopolitan, an artist, and speaks four languages. Most honorable characteristics about this person are the beliefs and values that only a positive and enriching upbringing could have encouraged. His sense of common sense is well enacted and his respect for others is something that any human being could learn from.

Quality photographs portraying my experiences in ambassadorial or academic situations.

Rotary Scholars 2005	Las Estacas
Mi Familia y Cuernavaca	Basílica y Teotihuacán
La Escuela in Cuernavaca	Guanajuato
Orphanage in Cuernavaca	Juan makes it to Monterrey
AMMAC	