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Ambassadorial Scholar Speaks to Moraga Rotary

Submitted by Gary Irwin



L to R: Moraga Rotary President Nora Avelar and Sophie Dowse, Ambassadorial Scholar after her program at Moraga Rotary, her sponsor. Photo provided

Sophie Dowse, a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar sponsored by Rotary Club of Moraga in 2009, recently spoke to the Club about her experiences at the University of Melbourne (Australia) where she completed work for her Master of Social Work degree. Sophie also related her encouraging experiences to two groups at Campolindo High School, from which she graduated in 2005. She is also a 2009 graduate of Pomona College with a BA in Psychology. Sophie's intent, developed through the work and experiences in the Masters program, is to make her career in Child and Family social work.

Since 1947, Ambassadorial Scholarships from The Rotary Foundation have given more than 41,000 men and women the opportunity to study abroad.

At University of Melbourne, Sophie performed both academic classwork and field work with various agencies. For the latter, she worked at the Adoption and Family Records group in the nearby city of Yarra, where she was involved in ward-of-the-court programs and also dealt with people affected by adoption. Her goals revolved around reuniting families and creating new relationships as well as listening to her clients to acknowledge their past experiences. She also worked with families providing requested services and child protection activities, and she

taught parenting strategies to immigrant families and aboriginal groups.

Sophie described her involvement with several local Rotary Clubs in Australia and highlighted a special 4th of July celebration that was organized for her. She described the other Rotary Ambassadorial Scholars that she met and was amazed at the breadth of study opportunities that were represented in the group. She also showed a picture of the Clifford Dochterman tree planted while Cliff (now a Moraga resident) was the head of Rotary International.

Moraga Rotary is a local service club within Rotary International that meets most Tuesdays at noon at St. Mary's College. For information, please call Gary Irwin of Moraga Rotary at (925) 376-7688.

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