

September 9, 2021

Dear Pathways to our Future Participants,

In December 2019, the Zones 30 and 31 Conference team began planning for **Pathways to our Future** in Chattanooga. This re-imagined, interactive event has been enthusiastically received and supported by all of you - the many past, present and future district and club leaders who have registered. Your spirit and energy have brought out the best in all of us.

Despite our enthusiasm and readiness to see one another again, the realities of an unpredictable global pandemic have affected our plans. In only 60 days, over the months of July and August, the rapid surge in coronavirus cases in Chattanooga has reached the level of cases the city had in December of 2020. According to the Hamilton County Department of Health, the rapid surge is expected to continue to rise and reach its peak at the end of September and early October. The surge carries with it a terrible strain on the city's healthcare system. After weeks of significant and painstaking due diligence, meetings and consultations due to this regrettable development, our planning team has concluded that **Pathways to our Future** must be rescheduled to 2022.

This development is extremely disappointing. Yet we as Rotarians serve to keep people safe and healthy around the world, and that responsibility includes keeping people safe right here in our own zones. Considering Rotary International guidance presented in August 2021, along with CDC guidance, the measures needed to keep everyone safe at the Zones 30 and 31 Conference and deliver the first-class conference experience that was originally planned are not possible under the current conditions.

This decision was not made lightly or unilaterally. Over weeks of in-depth meetings, significant analyses and discussions with venues, suppliers and public health officials, the planning team collectively reached the painful but necessary decision that the safety of our attendees is our priority. Your understanding and support have meant a great deal to us throughout our planning, and especially so through this difficult decision-making process.

Going forward, the planning team will be taking the following actions:

1. We will be processing refunds over the next several weeks, and we appreciate your patience as we undertake this activity.
2. We will define alternative plans for Governor line training, and will be in contact with the Governor line about those plans.
3. The COL Training chair will be in contact with all COL representatives and alternates regarding alternative plans for training.

4. We will identify dates for **Pathways to our Future** in the fall of 2022, and will keep you informed.
5. We will schedule an alternative event, called **Conversations That Matter - Virtual Series** over the September-November 2021 timeframe. We will communicate those dates, times, speakers and topics to you.
6. We will explore the potential for a small-scale, cost-effective and limited attendance regional gathering in each zone, called **Conversations That Matter – Live!** If we are able to conduct these meetings safely, we would consider scheduling them in the April 2022 timeframe. We will keep you informed as we explore this possibility.

We thank you for your understanding, and very much appreciate your support for this innovative conference. Please know that we are committed to offering **Pathways to our Future** in 2022 if it is safe to do so, and that we are determined to make this experience a first-class, innovative, participant-centered and safe event.

With Our Best Wishes for the Future,

The Zones 30 and 31 **Pathways to our Future** Planning Team

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