

## **OAS EDUCATION & EXCHANGE OPPORTUNITIES**

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The Organization of American States (OAS), comprised of 34 active member states in the Western Hemisphere, is characterized by great geographic, cultural, economic and linguistic diversity. The member states stretch from North America through Central America, the Caribbean to Argentina. The four OAS official languages are English, Spanish, Portuguese and French.

The OAS is the world's oldest regional organization, dating back to 1890 when the Pan American Union was formed to promote cooperation among the countries of Latin America and the United States.

Dr. Leo Stanton Rowe was the Director General of the Pan American Union for a quarter of a century, until his sudden death in 1946. He was to be the Secretary General of the Organization of American States; which was founded in 1948. He left an endowment to financially assist Latin American youth in their pursuit of studies in the United States.

For over seventy years of existence, the OAS has sought to prevent conflict and to bring political stability, social inclusion and prosperity to the region through its four pillars: promotion of democracy, hemispheric security, human rights, and integral development.

### **Being somebody's role model**

Dr. Rowe was recognized for his great human values, devotion to his work, simplicity, humor, wisdom in finding solutions to difficult problems and empathy towards others. His life revolved around two main passions: advancing integration, peace and welfare of the Latin American nations and promoting education.

His sincere love for individual students gave him a place in history. Hundreds of students became deeply indebted to him. Not only did he serve as a professor in universities in the United States, Chile and Argentina, but he became a guardian to many international students studying in the United States. His ideas, attitudes, words, and deeds,

inspired those who knew him, including Dr. Gabriel Betancur, the founder of the first student loan program in Latin America (ICETEX in Colombia). I had the opportunity to meet Dr. Betancur in 2001, a year prior to his death. Dr. Betancur told me first hand stories about Dr. Rowe and, how Dr. Rowe had mentored him during his final year of graduate studies at Syracuse University. Dr. Rowe continues to inspire many civil servants who relentlessly and little by little work for the progress of humanity.

## **The OAS strives to improve the lives of everyone in the Hemisphere**

The OAS invests in programs and initiatives that promote ethical governance, such as electoral observer missions, and sanctions anti-corruption and unethical practices at all levels. As part of the goal to afford more rights for more people, the OAS has taken action against discrimination and intolerance in all its forms by acknowledging the rights of afro-descendants, indigenous peoples, and by being a pioneer in recognizing the rights of women and youth.

The OAS has always been committed to investing in youth, particularly through education, empowering and providing tools so that their voices are heard. Now more than ever, young people are an essential part of shaping the future of the world. The Executive Secretariat for Integral Development supports the efforts of member states to increase access to quality education and life-long learning opportunities for youth.

In this sense, the OAS has a number of programs that directly benefit youth, such as:

### *The Rowe Fund Program for studies in the United States*

The Rowe Fund program offers interest-free loans to international students from Latin America and Caribbean countries to help finance their studies at universities in the United States. Prospective applicants must be completing their last two years of undergraduate or graduate studies.  
([www.oas.org/en/rowefund](http://www.oas.org/en/rowefund))

### *The Scholarship Program*

The Scholarship Program offers study opportunities for masters, doctorates, undergraduate, research and training in the

Americas and around the world.  
(<http://www.oas.org/en/scholarships/>).  
The Partnership Scholarship and Training Program (PAEC) program is offered in partnership with governments and universities.

#### *The Educational Portal of the Americas*

The Educational Portal of the Americas is an OAS initiative committed to generating access to quality education in the Americas through the use of information and communication technologies. The Portal offers online courses for professional development training, technical assistance projects, and capacity development initiatives to enable innovation in education.

(<https://portal.portaleducoas.org/>).

#### *The OAS Internship Program*

The OAS Internship program offers a unique opportunity to acquire experience in different areas of expertise in an international and multicultural environment. The OAS internship provides significant knowledge of the OAS, its mission, pillars, structure and projects in the Hemisphere.

(<http://www.oas.org/en/saf/dhr/internships/>)

#### *The Model OAS Program*

The Model OAS program is a simulation exercise of the main political bodies of the Organization of American states: the Permanent Council and the General Assembly. Through their participation in the MOAS, students represent the policies and interests of the 34 active OAS member states and gain valuable experience on the

role of diplomacy, politics and leadership.  
(<http://www.oas.org/en/asg/moas/>)

Through his words and deeds, Dr. Rowe stimulated many of us to help shape the world one-step at a time, thinking collectively rather than individually, and seeing the humanity in everyone we encounter.