

HISTORY OF KIWANIS

1915-2025





1915

Kiwanis International was founded in Detroit, Michigan

BIRTH OF KIWANIS

Kiwanis International, one of the great service organizations of the world, had its origin on January 21, 1915. On this date the State of Michigan issued a charter to a group of business and professional men who organized the first Kiwanis Club on this site in the Griswold Hotel. The club's name, Kiwanis, was an Indian term. The concept and principle which Kiwanis represents is symbolized by the slogan "We build." From its beginning, and within two years, Kiwanis became international in its scope.

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1916

First club outside USA: KC Hamilton, Ontario, Canada



1963



Herzliche Grüße von der Charterfeier des ersten europäischen Kiwanis Clubs am 5. Mai 1963 in Wien / Österreich.



Greetings from the Charter Celebration of the first Kiwanis Club of Europe in Vienna, Austria, on May 5, 1963.



First club in Europe

Vienna, Austria

1983



International Convention



Vienna, Austria

Kiwanis International stages its annual convention outside the US and Canada.

1987

Women are admitted as members



Julie Fletcher of Ridgewood, New Jersey—the woman who challenged Kiwanis’ “male-only” membership in the mid-1980s—listens to delegates debate the “genderless amendment” at the 1987 Washington, D.C., Convention.

1994



Partnership with UNICEF

World initiative to eliminate Iodine Deficiency Disorder (IDD).

IDD





1995

1st European International
President



2005

"Serving the Children of the World" is the new official motto

**SERVING THE CHILDREN
OF THE WORLD.**

kiwanis.org

2010



The Eliminate Project

ELIMINATE
maternal/neonatal tetanus



Partnership with UNICEF

Global campaign to
eliminate maternal and
neonatal tetanus (MNT)

2015

Kiwanis International
celebrates its 100th
anniversary



TODAY - 2025



445,167	{	• Members around the world
7,700,000	{	• Service hours performed each year
106	{	• The average number of kids each Kiwanian reaches
14,147	{	• Adult and youth clubs
85	{	• Nations