



CLEARWATER/NAGANO SISTER CITIES HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

APPLICATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 6, 2017

The City of Clearwater is seeking students interested in spending one week in Nagano, Japan during the summer of 2017 as part of the Sister Cities International Exchange Program. Interested students must file a complete application (front and back), including the following:

- Four letters of recommendation
- A letter from parents or guardian giving permission and support
- A 500-word (two-page) essay explaining your interest in the program.

Complete applications must be received by 5:00pm on January 6, 2017 to be considered. Please send the entire application, including letters of support and personal essay by mail or in person to:

Christopher Hubbard, Cultural Affairs Specialist
Parks & Recreation Department
100 S. Myrtle Avenue
Clearwater, FL 33756

Students will be selected for an interview based on the strength of their applications and eligibility requirements as listed on page 2 of this document. Interviews are conducted in a group format and will be scheduled during the week of January 16 – 20, 2017. For questions or further information, please contact Christopher Hubbard at (727) 562-4837 or Christopher.hubbard@myclearwater.com.

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**CLEARWATER/NAGANO SISTER CITIES
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM
SUMMER 2017**

The City of Clearwater, in partnership with the Pinellas County School Board currently participate in an annual international cultural exchange of teachers and middle and high school-aged students with Clearwater's Sister City of Nagano, Japan. Through this program, many Pinellas County students have had the opportunity to visit Nagano and immerse themselves in the nation's language and culture of Japan. In 2017, four high school students and one chaperone will be selected to visit Nagano for one week. During their stay, the students will reside with homestay families and visit junior and senior high schools. The students will make numerous presentations during these school visits, and actively participate in educational exchanges between Clearwater and Nagano students.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Student **must** be a resident of Clearwater. The student may attend private, charter, or out-of-city schools.
2. Student must have a minimum un-weighted GPA of 3.5 or higher.
3. Student must be presently enrolled in a high school world language class, international business, or comparative cultures or have already completed a sequence of similar study.
4. Student must be currently enrolled in Grade 9, 10, or 11 and anticipate being enrolled in a Pinellas County high school through Grade 12.
5. Student should possess strong communication skills and be willing to make presentations.
6. Student is expected to participate in group performances for Nagano schools that highlight American culture through a variety of interpretive ways such as dance, music, or drama.
7. Student must submit an application with the following components:
 - Four letters of recommendation (two teachers and two others (employer, religious leader, coach, or other similar figure));
 - Parental permission/support letter;
 - Essay titled, "What I hope to gain from an exchange visit to Nagano, Japan" of 500 words (two-pages) typewritten. If selected for an interview, the candidate student will be expected to make a formal, verbal presentation of their essay.
8. **Students taking prohibited medicines must arrange for alternate medication under the supervision of their doctor. Waivers for prohibited medications are not granted by the Japanese government. A full list of medication can be found at:**
<https://japan.usembassy.gov/e/acs/tacs-medimport.html>

9. Student must appear for one group interview with a committee that will include:
 - City of Clearwater representative;
 - Pinellas County Schools World Language Coordinator;
 - Clearwater Sister Cities, Incorporated representative;
 - Clearwater Sister Cities Advisory Board representative;
 - A previous participant in an international cultural exchange;
 - A non-voting City of Clearwater administrator.
10. Student and parents must attend a minimum of 4 orientation sessions and two student-only preparation meetings.
11. Student must be willing to purchase gifts for homestay family members.
12. Student must be willing to obtain small token gifts for students and teachers at the schools they visit.
13. Student must have a demonstrated history of voluntary community service and must dedicate no less than 12 hours of volunteer service through City of Clearwater sponsored programs prior to departing for Nagano.
14. Upon returning from Nagano, the student must agree to be available to present/discuss and share his or her learning experiences with civic groups and other interested citizens.
15. Student's parents must assume all medical/accidental insurance liability.
16. Students will be selected based upon the following rubric/criteria:

Application	=	25 points
Recommendations	=	25 points
Essay	=	25 points
Interview	=	25 points

CITY SCHOLARSHIP:

The City of Clearwater will provide scholarship funds of \$2,000 each for four students and one chaperone. These funds will cover airfare and other event and logistical travel expenses. Students will be responsible for any additional expenses, including individual purchases and meals not covered by the exchange program. While in Nagano, students will stay with host families and will be transported to and from exchange activities. Participating students must be aware that the traditional Japanese diet is predominantly miso-based and supplemented with seafood. Students must be willing to make accommodations in their diet to experience a foreign culture.

CITY VOLUNTEER SERVICE

ALL selected students will be expected to volunteer for no less than 12 hours at City of Clearwater sponsored programs. These include park/beach cleanups; special events; and other Parks & Recreation activities. Students must enroll with the City's Volunteer Coordinator in order to document their volunteer time by contacting Natalie Lamb at (727) 562-4803 or natalie.lamb@myclearwater.com

ADDITIONAL EXPENSES FOR STUDENTS:

Students should plan to spend up to \$500 for personal use, including incidentals such as souvenirs, entertainment or optional activities.

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**STUDENT APPLICATION FOR
CLEARWATER/NAGANO SISTER CITIES
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

GENERAL INFORMATION

Student's Name: _____

Address: _____ Telephone number: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Are you a City of Clearwater resident? _____

Email: _____

Parent or Guardian's Name: _____

Address: _____ Telephone number: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Parent or Guardian's Email: _____

Student's medical information (list general health, allergies, medications, any physical limitations):

The Japanese government has a list of prohibited medicines at <https://japan.usembassy.gov/e/acs/tacs-medimport.html>. Students with prohibited medicines must arrange for alternate medication under the supervision of their doctor. Waivers for prohibited medications are not granted by the Japanese government.

Does the student currently hold a U.S. passport? Yes __ No __

If yes, provide your passport number: _____

Has your family ever served as a host family for an exchange student? Yes __ No __

If yes, provide details of the visit: _____

ACADEMIC DETAILS

Name of current school: _____

Grade 8 9 10 11

What school do you anticipate attending in 2016-17? _____

Focus of studies: _____

Grade Point Average weighted: _____ Un-weighted: _____

List all foreign studies, international business, comparative cultures, or foreign language programs in which you have participated. List course title and number of years enrolled:

List all student organizations, committees, and activities in which you are currently participating:

List any history of community services and organizations served:

List any skills, experiences or talents you have that would benefit presentations or performances:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CODE OF CONDUCT

I hereby acknowledge that all information included in this application is true and accurate. I acknowledge that if I am selected as a participant in the international cultural exchange program that I will be seen as an ambassador representing the City of Clearwater and will be expected to behave in an appropriate manner. Any behavior, actions, or language unbecoming of an ambassador will be appropriately remedied.

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent or Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

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SUMMER 2017**

November 9, 2017	Send out applications/notices
January 6, 2017	Application due date
Week of January 16-20, 2017	Interviews
January 27, 2017	Eligible/non-eligible letters sent out
February 1 – June 7, 2017	Begin and complete 12 service hours
March 1, 2017	Orientation meeting #1 Program overview Passports Travel/Health Insurance Contact information Orientation Schedule
March 22, 2017	Orientation meeting #2 Introduction letters & personal information & photos Your role as Clearwater ambassador Clearwater Information and Resources Packing for the Trip Clothing to bring City shirts
April 2017	City purchases plane tickets
April 5, 2017	Orientation meeting #3 Travel to Nagano Living with a Host Family Home stay etiquette Overview from a past student participant
April 19, 2017	Orientation meeting #4 Gift-giving for your homestay families and souvenirs for schools and others Customs, food, currency, language and more... Overview from a past student participant
May 17, 2017	Presentation preparation & practices (usually only students)
June 7, 2017	Last day of school
June 14, 2017	Final group meeting/ distribution of items for packing
June 27, 2017	Departure for Nagano