



# Rotary District 5010

## YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM

### “What happens next? ”

### A guide from Selection to Departure

There are three critical steps in the acceptance of students to take part in the Rotary Youth Exchange Program, and they are:

- Your written application, an interview (with parents), and approval by your local Rotary Club.
- Receipt of four originals of your fully completed Rotary International Youth Exchange "Long Form" Application by December 1<sup>st</sup> - along with the first of your 'lump sum payments'. (The Lump Sum fee for the 2008-2009 year is \$6,000.) This application includes personal, sponsor club, medical, dental, student/parent essay and other information – and a “Confidential School Reference” form that must be returned directly to the District Youth Exchange Committee by the school. All four applications must be signed in blue ink. The signatures of the parents and student must be witnessed by the Youth Exchange Officer. [An “interactive” version of the application on our Youth Exchange Website can be completed on-line and then printed].
- Only after your RI Long-Form application has been received and approved by both the sponsoring and hosting District Youth Exchange Committees will you be formally accepted as an outbound Rotary Exchange Student candidate. Our goal is to complete this process as soon as possible but this may be delayed if your application has to be returned for corrections, some documents or information are missing, or you do not respond to requests for information in a timely manner.

As you go through the process of Rotary Youth Exchange, your first point of contact is always your local Youth Exchange Officer at the club level. Please keep their contact information available, and direct your communications to s/he. They have a wealth of information at their fingertips and will guide you accordingly. The candidate will be expected to communicate with us via email with a recognizable email address, i.e.: [sally.bishop2008@msn.com](mailto:sally.bishop2008@msn.com). Inappropriate email addresses will not be permitted.

Rotary hosts an Outbound Student Orientation, called Shussout, at the local Rotary Club's expense, near Anchorage in late January. All outbound students are required to attend this weekend orientation. The Committee meets and assigns students to various host countries usually making announcements of country selection during the meeting.

Following Schussout and assignment of countries to students, they are expected to undertake extensive language training with “Rosetta Stone” or some other comparable language training mechanism at their own expense. Any further language training required by host Districts upon student arrivals in the host District will be paid for by D5010 out of the Lump Sum fee.

A Class Counselor will be assigned to the Outbound Students and will follow them thru the three-year YE process, e-mailing them on a regular basis and receiving, at a minimum, quarterly reports of student progress. The Class Counselor will report findings on a regular basis to the sponsoring Youth Exchange Officer and the Outbound Coordinator.

In February, our District Staff will send applications to our partner Rotary Districts in host countries. Those Districts will assign application to individual host Rotary Clubs where the applicants will reside while on exchange. They will complete the “Guarantee Form” and eventually return it to us in the spring. (This Guarantee Form was part of the original Long-Form Application and is completed by the local host club officers, families and school officials.)

In late winter we will have a mandatory parent/student orientation with the Travel Agency. Agency reps usually travel to Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks for an evening meeting. Families in outlying areas are invited to travel, at their own expense, to attend these meetings. We also make this orientation available on a conference call so you can participate by telephone or on the web.

We also will have another mandatory orientation with students and parents via Teleconference in late May to go over the Conditions of Exchange, answer questions and to check on the applicant's progress with language, communication and other matters.

Attendance at these two events by the student and parents are essential for the exchange to continue beyond this point. You'll be contacted with schedule information about these conferences by your Club's YEO.

You'll receive a packet of information and forms from our Travel Agency in early Spring that are required by the Consular office of your Host Country for your Visa. It's important to complete these forms and return them as soon as possible as directed so your visa can be applied for as soon as your Guarantee Form is returned to us from your Host Club.

Some countries require personal interviews before granting a Visa to come there. Each student's 'lump sum fee' includes the cost of the Visa itself and necessary airfare for an interview if required (e.g. travel to Seattle, San Francisco, Vancouver, Toronto, Los Angeles, etc.). These interviews are arranged and chaperoned by our Travel Agency and could happen as little as a week or two before your departure on Exchange.

Also in the packet you receive from the travel agency will be a form for you to complete regarding the airport you will depart from, and return to. At this point you may wish to consider whether or not to request that the student leave the home airport a day or two early to eliminate the possibility of delay in getting to the major airport for the international departure with the other students traveling to the same international destinations. Since Rotary becomes the Guardian of the student upon departure from the home city, students are not permitted to overnight on their own. The Outbound Coordinator must approve of travel arrangements that include extra connection time to protect the student.

The Host Country has not formally accepted you as a Rotary Exchange Student until we receive the completed Host Guarantee Form back from them. It will contain the destination airport information where they want the student to arrive. The form is usually the first confirmation you have of contact information for your YEO, club, school and host families. You should start to immediately communicate with your host family, YEO and others as soon as you receive this information.

Additional payments for the 'lump sum fee' are due on March 15 and June 15 – whether or not you have been accepted as an Exchange Student at that point. Students that are not current with their payments could be dropped from the program and replaced by Alternate students at any time.

Finally, students chosen by D5010 for a future exchange with another Rotary District in the world are expected to begin acting as Rotary Exchange students immediately upon being assigned a country. No student is officially a D5010 Rotary exchange student until they are in the airplane on their way to their host country.