

Rotary Youth Exchange Frequently Asked Questions



Where can I go?

Austria, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Indonesia, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, South Africa, Sweden, and Switzerland are all countries with which Rotary District 5010 exchanges students. All countries are screened and monitored for the safety of our students. This list changes often, so do not focus on the country--focus on the experience!

Will I be able to choose the country?

NO!!! Every country has something to offer, and the receptive student will have a rewarding exchange regardless of the country. **If you are not willing to accept an assignment to any country deemed safe for exchange by Rotary, you should not apply.**

How long will I be gone?

The Rotary exchange is a 11-12 months, but requires a three year commitment. During the first year you are preparing for your exchange. The second year is your exchange year. The third year is your rebound year where you share your experiences with your classmates and your community. Outbound students leave in July or August and return the following year.

How much does it cost?

The cost of the exchange for which the student and parents are responsible is \$9300.00, which includes transportation, insurance, language camps and the blazer and business cards, which identify you as a Rotary exchange student. Your sponsoring Rotary club will expend an additional \$7000 providing this experience for you. Other exchange programs cost up to \$20,000 for similar exchanges. It is an honor to be selected as a Rotary exchange student, and you must view it as a merit scholarship. Once in your host country your Rotary club will provide you with a monthly stipend for your recreation needs. Your host family will provide you with food and lodging. Within the host country there may be side trips available through Rotary, which are optional and would incur additional cost to you. I think it is reasonable to say that you will have to budget at least another \$2500.00 to allow for tours and side trips in which you most certainly will want to participate. The base fee is paid in three installments.

Will I stay with the same family for the entire exchange?

One of the things that sets the Rotary Exchange program apart from others is that generally (but not always) the student will stay with up to 3 families during their exchange. This allows the student to experience the diversity of households within their host country.

What do I have to do to become a Rotary exchange student?

The first step is to complete the application. The link to the application is yehub.net/W01-obapp which gives us some information about you and your family. This includes health and vaccination records. Vaccinations are required to go on exchange. Once received, you will go through a series of interviews. The opportunity to become a Rotary exchange student is awarded after an interview process with the Youth Exchange Committee. Your parents will also be interviewed. Only one student from each club will be awarded the exchange, and another may be selected as an alternate in the event the primary student chooses not to accept the offer. The Rotary Club will expend significant effort and funding to provide this opportunity for each student. It is extremely important that you understand the process, and that you understand the commitment that you are making before you apply.

If I am selected as an outbound student, what happens then?

Once the outbound student position has been awarded, the Rotary district youth exchange committee will be notified. You will then be asked to provide school transcripts, teacher recommendations, birth certificate, passport information and have medical and dental examinations. You will be assigned a country. The day that you receive your country assignment should be a day of joy, however, it may also be accompanied by a bit of disappointment if you haven't truly committed to the concept that you would accept any country assigned to you. You will then receive notification of the names of your first host family. From January departure there will be required monthly meetings for you and your parents to further prepare you for your year abroad. You will be asked to acquire basic language skills. Before you know it your day of departure will be here and you are ready for an experience of a lifetime!!

May my parents visit me while on exchange?

NO! This is a student exchange and will be terminated if parents visit while on exchange. We encourage parents to consider traveling back to your host country with you at some point in the future to visit your host families and friends.

Does my family host a student while I am gone?

Host families are the foundation of our exchange program. Rotary would like your parents to consider hosting a student in your absence or upon your return. This is not a requirement for application. We do require outbound students to assist us by discussing hosting with your friends' parents and recommending three potential host families.

Do I receive school credit for my year abroad?

This **MUST** be addressed by you and your school guidance counselor. It is possible that some credit may be allowed by your school, however, **YOU** must make arrangements before you leave on exchange and return with a transcript of your studies abroad. Rotary encourages students to think of your year abroad as an additional educational experience, not necessarily a replacement for the year you are abroad. College entrance counselors highly regard an exchange year on your resume. **This is totally your responsibility. Rotary does not have any control over what credit (if any) you will be given for study on exchange.**

When I return from my exchange what is my commitment to Rotary?

It is required that all returning (rebound) students give presentations to their host Rotary Club and local schools. It is also required that all rebound students attend a three day reorientation meeting held in August following their return. Rotary considers this program as ambassadorial. You represent your country in a foreign land and upon your return you share your newfound knowledge of your host country and culture with your friends, classmates and family. Your exchange is really never completed, as you will be sharing your experiences with your friends and acquaintances for the rest of your life!!

For more information, email boydwalkerod@gmail.com