

September 2015

Dear Club President:

Every year, Rotary International's **Youth Exchange** program allows 10,000 young people from 66 countries to see the world the way it is best seen - from the inside out. These exchange students have the opportunity to experience another culture on a firsthand basis and to see the world as few people do. This year, District 7390 is sending 15 high school students to spend the year abroad. The students will be ambassadors for our country and Rotary District 7390 as they attend school, live with local host families, and attend Rotary meetings. As anyone who has ever been involved with Youth Exchange or hosted an exchange student will tell you, Youth Exchange is truly one of the most meaningful programs Rotary sponsors.

We welcome high school students who would like to participate in Rotary's 2016-2017 Youth Exchange Program. Applicants must be in the top third of their academic class and be between the ages 15 ½ and 18 ½ as of August 1, 2016. Applicants may be in the sophomore, junior, or senior year of high school. Yes – a student may still participate in youth exchange the year after their high school graduation as long as they will be no older than 18 ½ as of August 2016. And yes – anyone may apply, including the son or daughter of a Rotarian.

The only way that the high school students in your club's service area will know about the opportunity of Youth Exchange is if you tell them. The best way to spread the word about youth exchange is to contact the **guidance office** or language teachers at the high school(s) in your service area. Explain to them the purpose of Rotary and our international orientation. Offer to **visit the high school** to meet with individual students and their parents who express preliminary interest and have questions. The enclosed information will help you as you approach the local high school(s) and interested students.

Students must complete an application and be interviewed and sponsored by your club to be considered by the District for this program. The deadline to submit the four completed applications for District Interviews is **October 16, 2015**. If your club sponsors a student, you will be asked to send a representative from your club to help with the District interviews on **Saturday, November 14, 2015**. The purpose of the District interviews is to identify those students who are most likely to succeed in the program. Successful applicants will be invited to continue in the District's subsequent training program, an experience that the students often find exciting in and of itself. Even unsuccessful applicants gain valuable interviewing experience and are highly praised by the interviewers.

Remember - **Youth Exchange** is one of the easiest and least expensive ways a club can fulfill the International Avenue of Service. The only cost to your club is the ESSEX processing fee for the outgoing youth exchange student if they are selected. **The student's family will pay for all other costs associated with the year abroad.** As a sponsoring club, we only ask that your club get to know your student by providing invitations to Rotary meetings and correspond with your student during the year.

We also ask that the student be assigned a counselor, a member of your club, who will join the student and his/her parents at an orientation meeting on a Saturday next spring. **Depending on the number of candidates, the student's club may not be required to host an incoming student. However, in the event that we have a higher number of candidates, we may require your club to host an inbound student.**

Surely we all know someone – relative, neighbor, friend – who could benefit from this experience of a lifetime. Every high school in the district has at least one student who is just waiting to learn about Rotary's Youth Exchange program.

Now is the time to talk to guidance counselors, principals, teachers, and club advisors about Youth Exchange and find that interested student.

Enclosed is some information you will need to help you find interested students:

- “Mini” application form (Pages 1, 2 and 7 of the full application) for club level interviews. The full application form can be downloaded at <http://www.rotary7390.org/AvenuesofService/YouthExchange.aspx>
- Schedule of important dates
- General information about the program
- Application checklist

Please make sure that this letter and the enclosed information get to your club’s Youth Exchange Chair, International Chair, or any other interested members. ***If you would like assistance in speaking to schools, teachers, or interested students, please let me know.*** We have an energetic and knowledgeable District Executive Committee with over 40 years of collective Youth Exchange experience who would be happy to assist your club in any way that we can. Also, if you have any questions or if any of your club members are interested in getting involved with Youth Exchange on the District level, please have them contact me.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Yours in Service,

Amber Seidel Outbound Chair
(765) 532-1051
ajs49@psu.edu