



Program Announcement

# Tomodachi Exchange Program 2015



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# Tomodachi Exchange Program 2015

The Tomodachi Exchange Program 2015 is part of a two-year exchange program for students and educators from the disaster-affected areas in Japan and from the United States. This exchange program is part of the “TOMODACHI Initiative”, a public-private partnership, led by the U.S. Government and the U.S.-Japan Council and supported by the Japanese Government. The TOMODACHI Initiative supports Japan’s recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake and invests in the next generation of Japanese and Americans in ways that strengthen cultural and economic ties and deepen the friendship between the United States and Japan over the long-term. In 2014, eight students from Fukushima University participated in the first year of the exchange by visiting to the Seattle area and visited participating Seattle area organizations and schools. In 2015, eight high school students from Washington State will be selected to visit Japan.

The TOMODACHI Exchange Program is hosted by U.S.-Japan Council, sponsored by the National Association of Japan-America Societies (NAJAS), implemented by Japan-America Society of the State of Washington.

## **1 Purpose**

This exchange program’s purpose is to help build stronger ties between high school students in Washington State and Japanese students and citizens through a nine-day visit to Japan. Additionally, they will experience Japanese culture and learn about disaster prevention, crisis management and leadership. The program will also provide the opportunity for American students to experience a homestay with a family in the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, to interact with Japanese high school students, and to engage in volunteer activities in the region.

## **2 Program period ( 9 days)**

- July 6 (Mon) Departure from Sea-Tac International Airport (SEA)
- July 7 (Tue) Arrive at Narita International Airport/Check in hotel in Narita area
- July 8 (Wed) Visiting: Fukushima Prefectural Government
- July 9 (Fri) Visiting: Local High school for AIS classroom visit  
Visiting: Fukushima measuring of food safety facility
- July 10 (Sat) Trip to Tohoku Area
- July 11 (Sun) Trip to Tohoku Area
- July 12 (Mon) Back to Tokyo
- July 13 (Tue) Microsoft Japan Corporate Visit in Tokyo
- July 14 (Wed) Departure from Narita/Japan

\*Subject to change. To be confirmed later

### **3 Number of Participants**

8 high school students (accompanied by one (1) chaperone)

### **4 Accommodations**

Hotels and homestay (tentative destinations: Fukushima, Miyagi/Sendai, Tokyo)

### **5 Contents of the Program(tentative)**

- People-to-people exchange with Japanese people through a home-stay experience, visits to high schools and other cultural experiences
- Learning about disaster preparedness and crisis management
- Visits to Japanese institutions known for leading technology
- Volunteer activities

### **6 Eligibility**

Applicants must be:

- A U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident
- Between 15 and 18 years old at the time of departure (July 6, 2015)
- Enrolled in both a Washington State high school and Japanese Language program
- In good physical and mental health
- Willing to learn about the Japanese culture and interact and engage with the Japanese people
- Be able to take part in the entire itinerary

Applicants must also:

- Have not visited Japan previously
- Have the consent of a parent(s) or a guardian(s)
- Not have plans to participate in any other program to study in or visit Japan prior to this program
- Be a native speaker of English
- Some Japanese language ability is preferred but not required

***Priority will be given to students who are eligible for and actively participating in their local school district's free and reduced lunch program.***

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## **7 Expenses Covered by the Program**

- Air fare (economy-class, round-trip)
- Meals during the program
- Accommodations in Japan (July 7, 2013 through July 14, 2015)
- Expenses related to group activities
- Transportation fees in Japan
- Overseas Travel Insurance (with an upper limit on coverage)

*The participants will be insured with an overseas travel insurance policy during the period of the program. The detailed coverage conditions are defined in the contract between the insurance company and the sponsor. Chronic or preexisting diseases or injuries, as well as dental care, pregnancy, childbirth and any short or long term ailments arising from premature childbirth or miscarriage are not included in the coverage. The Sponsors cannot bear any responsibility beyond the coverage of this insurance.*

## **8 Participants are responsible for the following fees and expenses:**

- Transportation from home to the Sea-Tac International Airport on July 6, 2015
- Application fees for a U.S. Passport (A travel visa is not required for this exchange program)
- Medical Certificate
- Personal expenses prior to and during the exchange program
- Transportation from SEA to home on July 14, 2015

## **9 Obligations**

Participants must:

- Obey the laws of Japan
- Attend all the activities of the exchange program
- Not make use of this program to stay in Japan for any other purpose or activity
- Not take part in any activity that is not permitted under Japan's laws for tourists visiting the country, such as seeking or engaging in employment, etc.
- Participate in the exchange program as scheduled:
  - a. Arrive in and depart from Japan on the scheduled dates of the program.  
No early departure or extension of stay will be allowed.
  - b. Not visit any other countries except Japan.
  - c. Not return to the U.S. during the program (an exception may be made in the event of an unforeseen or extreme circumstance)

- Not be accompanied by family members during the stay in Japan, nor have visits by family members while in Japan
- To live as a member of the host family during homestay and accept normal family responsibilities; and to adapt to and live within the rules and customs of the host family, showing respect for the host parents.
- Submit a written report about the trip to Japan-America Society of the State of Washington within one month of the program's completion
- Authorize the use of photos and/or video images of the participants taken during the program, free of charge, for future promotional materials of the organizers, sponsors and other partners of the exchange program
- Report immediately to staff member any possible contraction of an infectious disease during the exchange program, in accordance to Japan's "New Infectious Diseases Control Law" (1998, Law #114)
- Complete surveys for follow-up and feed-back regarding the TOMODACHI Exchange Program
- The participants are encouraged to share their experiences in Japan with the family, friends, classmates and the community after the trip
- Attend one of JASSW event upon JASSW's request to support JASSW programs such as "Japan In the Schools".

## **10 Program withdrawal**

The participation in the program may be terminated under the following circumstances and a participant will be required to leave the program and return home (if in Japan):

- If his/her physical or mental health has made it impossible or unsuitable for him/her to continue to participate in the program.
- If the participant has seriously violated the terms and conditions of the program including those stated in section 9 (above).
- If a false description in the application form or any other application document is found.
- If the participant has accepted an opportunity to study in or visit Japan with a different program prior to this program.
- If the participant shows inappropriate behavior in a way which is judged by the organizer as being detrimental to the program.
- Any additional costs incurred due to the participant's early return (e.g. change of reservation fee on the airline ticket) will be borne by the participant.

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## 11 Application procedure

- Required Documents
  - a. Application Form
  - b. Liability release form
  - c. Essay on three following topics – no more than TWO pages single-spaced
    - Why do you want to participate in this program?
    - What future role do you see yourself playing in the United States-Japan relationship?
    - If selected, how would you share what you learned and experienced in Japan with your family, friends and classmates?
  - d. Teacher Recommendation:

Please ask your Japanese language teacher to complete the teacher recommendation form in the attachment.

We request that the teacher submit the recommendation electronically directly to JASSW at [aolson@jassw.org](mailto:aolson@jassw.org)

Recommendations submitted by students will not be accepted.

All forms can be downloaded from Japan-America Society of the State of Washington's website at [www.jassw.org](http://www.jassw.org)

- Application Deadline is **Monday, February 16, 2015**
- Candidates selected for in-person or internet interviews will be notified by Monday, February 23, 2015.
- In-person or internet interviews will be scheduled during the period from Tuesday, February 24, 2015 to Sunday, March 15, 2015.
- Notification to the selected candidates for the Program will be made on Monday, March 16, 2015.

## 12 Contacts

If you have any questions, please contact Akiko Olson, Programs and Operations Director, Japan-America Society of the State of Washington by email at [aolson@jassw.org](mailto:aolson@jassw.org)