

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL
DISTRICT 6440
Youth Exchange Program



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Your Doorway to the World
Rotary Youth Exchange



Rotary Youth Exchange, the most successful exchange program in the world for high school students dates back to 1927. This year, Rotary International Youth Exchange Programs will help approximately 7,000 young people experience the world through the efforts of Rotary volunteers worldwide.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 6440 Youth Exchange Program

This could be your year



Welcome!

What an exciting adventure awaits you, as a potential Rotary exchange student, as you look to expand your horizons as they've never been expanded before. We invite you to explore, learn more about the program, and, if it's right for you, take those first steps toward one of the most amazing, memorable, adventurous years of your life.

As a Rotary Youth Exchange student, you will spend a year living with several host families in a country other than your own. You will learn a new language; learn a new way of living – and a great deal about yourself. But there's more. While you're busy learning, the people you meet will be learning too – about our country, your culture, and your ideas. You will be a young ambassador. You will be helping to bring the world closer together – and you'll be making some good friends in the process. If you're ready for the challenge – and the rewards – of living in another land as an exchange student, then you're ready to discover new worlds through the Rotary Youth Exchange program. To learn about program options, requirements, costs, and more, read on.

Who Are We ?

Rotary International is the world's oldest and most international service organization, with over 1.2 million members in 32,000 clubs, 530 districts in almost 170 countries. Exchanges can occur between any two countries in which there are Rotary clubs. Currently, Rotary clubs in approximately 70 different countries annually sponsor or host Youth Exchange students. The official Rotary motto is, "Service Above Self", and Rotarians live their lives in accordance with the [Four Way Test](#). You can find out more about our wonderful organization and its many programs and projects by visiting the [Rotary International website](#).

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Rotary District 6440, known as "The Home District", is comprised of 72 Rotary clubs and with about 3,000 Rotarians, located in 5 counties of northeastern Illinois, USA. Our district includes the north and west suburban cities located around Chicago including Schaumburg, Evanston, Lake Forest, St. Charles, Waukegan, and Wheaton. For more information on our district visit our [district website](#). District 6440 is part of and conducts its' exchanges in cooperation with Central States Rotary Youth Exchange (CSRYE).

The RYE academic year immersion program is the best way to absorb a new culture and learn a language. Through your experience of living with several host families and attending high school, you have the opportunity to make new friends to help you understand the culture, the heritage and tradition, and the people- just like a native!

Languages Here are some of the languages the RYE program may give you the opportunity to learn:

Finnish	Japanese	Portuguese	Spanish
French	Czech	Danish	Slovak
German	Swedish	Polish	Italian
Norwegian	Hungarian	Russian	Aussie

Denmark was definitely the best time I've ever had and I loved being a Rotary Exchange Student! If you've been to Denmark, saa glaeder mig til at hoerer fra de! Michelle-Denmark 2000-01



Cultural Immersion - It's an Education

The only way to understand the world is to see it in depth, in person.

As a Rotary Youth Exchange (RYE) student you'll have the opportunity to gain the knowledge and insights to prepare you to be an ambassador of America in a world that is becoming smaller every day.

If living in a new country sounds like your kind of challenge, then RYE is for you. A life awaits you with loving, caring host families who have volunteered to open their homes and hearts to you. You'll attend school where you'll make friends, teens just like you, who will help you learn about their culture and country. You'll learn- from your teachers, friends, host Rotary Club, and host family.

As your year progresses, you'll learn new ways to deal with people, take care of your self with greater confidence, and gain insight into the world around you.

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Teen Students- See the World In Person

High school students and possibly recent graduates, if they meet the age requirement, are the candidates for the RYE program. You may go to one of more than 30 countries with which CSRYE has agreed to be exchange partners. Live in a totally new culture, speak a new language, see the world- but not as a tourist - but as a member of the Rotary family. We invite you to examine our program, and then apply to See the World In Person as a RYE student. Click here to [contact us](#).

Who can go? The Rotary Youth Exchange program is open to high school students, the sons and daughters of Rotarians and non-Rotarians alike. To qualify for our exchange program, students who will be age 16 to 18 ½ at the start of the exchange year and are in the upper half of their academic class, must apply in the fall prior to departure through their local Rotary club. If the application (interviews with the student and their parents are required) is accepted, the new candidate and their parents will be required to participate in a thorough orientation program provided by the sponsoring Rotary District to prepare them for their year abroad.

	<p><i>Rotary Exchange is the best thing anybody can ever do! It let's you discover new places and things you might have never gotten to experience any other way...I recommend it to every high schooler. Aussie! Aussie! Aussie! Oy! Oy! Oy!</i></p> <p>Liz- Australia 2000-01</p>	
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The host Rotary club provides support and guidance on the receiving end of the exchange. While the host family provides room and board, the student and his own family assume certain financial obligations. These include round-trip air transportation, clothing, and incidental expenses (pocket money) for the student. The host Rotary club will provide a modest monthly allowance and pays the student's tuition for all required academic programs. The sponsoring Club will cover the cost of health insurance for the year and the student's orientation costs.

You can make a difference – in a world of differences – by taking a step toward promoting world understanding through Youth Exchange. Contact your local Rotary club today – the world needs more ambassadors for peace and understanding.

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Ambassadors to the World

You As a Rotary Youth Exchange student, you will spend a year living with several host families in a country other than your own. You will be a young ambassador. You will be helping to bring the world closer together — and you'll be making some good friends in the process. If you're ready for the challenge — and the rewards — of living in another land as an exchange student, then you're ready to discover new worlds through Rotary Youth Exchange.

RYE wants students who are flexible, yearn for adventure, and can meet the challenge of adapting to life away from home in a new country.

Some exchange countries do not require that you know their language. Several of these countries have an intense language camp for new students arriving under the **RYE** program. With the support of **RYE** you'll soon feel right at home just like a native, definitely not a tourist.

Your host families will do their best to help you fit in and become part of their family. They will help you learn the local customs, their rules and the **RYE** Rules, and most importantly, a safe environment for you to call home. All host families are volunteers and get no payment from Rotary. Their reward is having you in their home and enjoying the exchange experience.



An Academic Year Abroad

The Rotary Clubs of Rotary District 6440 sponsor area high school students to study abroad and live with host families in a foreign country for one year. In return, we host students from the countries to come to District 6440 to study in the United States. Each year students are encouraged to apply to be part of this exciting experience, one that will always be remembered. During your stay, you will be part of the host family and be treated as their son or daughter. You typically will have three different host families during your year long stay. If you have any questions or concerns during your study year, there will be a Rotarian Counselor in your city to assist you.



[Applications](#) are available on-line right here. They must be submitted by early October for departure the following August. Following selection, you will attend a series of orientations to help prepare you for your experience.

Country preferences will be accommodated whenever possible

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but you must be flexible. Country availability may vary from year to year. Rotarians will assist you in making your country selections.



Start exploring the world to find out where you want to go. You can click on the **regions** listed to the right that will then take you to the individual countries.

[Western Europe](#)
[Central/Eastern Europe](#)
[Central & South America](#)
[Nordic Countries](#)
[Asia & South Pacific](#)
[Africa](#)

What is your favorite destination? Here are some of our exchange partners: **Europe:** Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Turkey, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Spain, and Switzerland. **Nordic:** Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland. **Central & South America:** Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, and Venezuela. **Asia & South Pacific:** Russia, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Thailand. **Africa:** South Africa, Zimbabwe.

Youth Exchange Affects Us All

Hey, this experience is gonna be **fun!** Of course, but there will also be some serious aspects to consider. Increased maturity, second language proficiency, geographic knowledge, and lifelong friendships are just a few. There will be other RYE students from all over the world in the same region as you. When was the last time you met a Russian with a smile like Natasha's? Hers is one you'll not likely forget. Making the world a smaller, safer, and more understanding place is our goal.

Natasha from Russia



It's about growing up- You will find that you will change, becoming more tolerant, independent, open, and responsible.

It's about learning a language- A full year immersed in a country where another language is spoken will provide you the opportunity to learn more than any 'honors' class you can take in school. The best way to learn is to use it- the **RYE** way.

It's about culture- Daily life with a new family, in a new country, a new school, will provide the insight into any culture like no other method can. What you can gain is awareness, flexibility, and appreciation for others.

It's about an eye on college- Your future may just get brighter due to having a **RYE** experience in your background. Many colleges look favorably on an exchange experience and appreciate a 'world-wise student'. Many students choose to study international business related majors after their experience.

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It's about making friends for life-The bonds you make with your new schoolmates, host brothers, Rotarian counselors, and other RYE students will remain strong for as long as you let them. Memories and friends go hand in hand forever.

Rotary Youth Exchange- A Tradition

Rotary International is a non-profit, all volunteer, international service organization that uses its resources to provide the children of the world the opportunities to create a better understanding in the global community through the RYE program. The best part- it is low cost! When you compare what Rotary does offer versus what other programs talk about- it's an easy choice! Consider the following:

- Training and orientation where you will meet inbound and rebound students from your assigned exchange country.
- Local Rotary counselors at both "homes".
- Carefully maintained safety-network.
- Free school enrollment.
- Paid health insurance.
- Carefully screened host families who provide free room and board.
- Your parents do not have to become a host family.

Rotary Clubs are in almost 170 countries and members are all volunteers. For more information about Rotary International [click here](#). For CSRYE [click here](#).

Thousands of parents trust Rotary every year because we're with you every step of the way. We will guide you through the application, do in-depth interviews, arrange your airline tickets, provide health and liability insurance, and have concerned Rotarians waiting for you to leave the plane and get you to your first host family. They have the experience it takes to make your experience a success.

Rotarian volunteers make sure that you are well supported throughout your year. Our travel representatives will obtain your visa and ensure that the safest and most direct routes are utilized to get you to your new home. You will see your YEO frequently, possibly every week at the local Rotary meeting. If a problem arises, your YEO will step in and smooth out the problem. Remember, no two exchanges are alike. It will be up to you to make your experience truly remarkable, Rotary will help make it successful.



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Student Qualifications- What does it Take?

Who is Eligible?

The Rotary Youth Exchange program is open to high school students, or possibly those who have just graduated, between the ages of 16 and 18½ on departure. Academically you must be in the upper half of your class. It does not matter whether your parents are members of a Rotary Club - the program is open to children of Rotarians and non-Rotarians alike.

There is an interview process that helps us determine if you would be able to successfully complete an exchange year. We want to make sure the program is right for you and you are right for the program. Exchange student candidates must be outgoing, self-confident, friendly, adaptable, and adventurous, willing to learn a foreign language, with above average grades in school. The application form will require you to tell about yourself and your family, and provide references from a language teacher and school administrator.



Do I need to know the Language?

Our application calls for a letter from a foreign language teacher that indicates that you have a good aptitude for picking up a second language. Some hosting countries have very rigid fluency requirements. Naturally, it will help to be familiar with the language of the country you get assigned. But we don't limit the program to those who are already bi-lingual. In fact, one of the great benefits of the program is quickly gaining fluency in another language. Typically, our students become fluent in 3-4 months, even without any previous knowledge of the language! But we strongly recommend that all participants start learning their target language with a tutor as soon as they are selected for the program and know what country they will be doing their exchange. The more of the language you know up front, the better your experience will be.

When would I leave ?

Most summer departures are in August. Winter exchanges go only to the southern hemisphere and leave in late January or February. There is about a 5-week window for departures depending on when the schools begin in the host country.

Will I get School Credit for my Exchange Year?

This is always a tough question because it varies from school to school and country to country. You should sit down with your school counselors when you apply and when you know what country you are going to for your year. Language fluency frequently is a huge determining factor. Many students take

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summer school classes to ensure that classes required for graduation are covered. Pre-planning makes a big difference. If you have questions contact your Club Youth Exchange Officer or the District Coordinator.



These students have done it...can you too? They went to Brazil, Spain, Ecuador, Finland, and Russia. Where will you go?