
CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

In collaboration with
ST. PETERSBURG INTERNATIONAL
FOLK FAIR SOCIETY, INC.

STUDENT APPLICATION 2018



**STUDENT AMBASSADOR
EXCHANGE PROGRAM
WITH SISTER CITY
TAKAMATSU, JAPAN**



STUDENT AMBASSADOR EXCHANGE PROGRAM

About St. Petersburg and Takamatsu

St. Petersburg and Takamatsu became Sister Cities in 1961. This is amongst the oldest sister city relationships in the United States. The International Sister City program is based on the idea that citizen-to-citizen contacts among countries will promote better relations and peace. The City of St. Petersburg and its International Relations Committee (IRC) sponsor student ambassadors to Takamatsu in the spirit of citizen-to-citizen international relations. St. Petersburg International Folk Fair Society, Inc. (SPIFFS), an organization with long-standing support from the city's international community, has been charged with providing support and management of the Student Ambassador program.

About the Student Ambassador Program

Each year the IRC selects two to three (2 - 3) high school juniors who are residents of St. Petersburg as goodwill ambassadors to Takamatsu, Japan. Selected students will spend approximately two weeks in Takamatsu. Typically students are in Japan in July but dates vary according to the school calendars of students.

SPIFFS will make travel arrangements and all international travel costs including round-trip economy airfare and travel insurance are paid by the program. Students will be hosted by families in Takamatsu. Students are expected to contribute approximately \$12 per day towards their living expenses in Japan. They will also be responsible for personal living expenses while in Japan including transportation, activities arranged by host families such as visits to local attractions, meals in restaurants, and miscellaneous expenses. Ability to pay is not a requirement to apply for student ambassadors. Students and their families concerned about costs should apply. If selected, students who demonstrate need will be assisted in financial obligations by the IRC.

While in Japan, students will have an official meeting with the Mayor of Takamatsu, attend high school with Japanese students, represent the city as goodwill ambassadors, and share information about our city and culture with Japanese students and others. Students will experience typical Japanese family life, culture, customs and local sights while living with host families.



Student's Time and Commitment

A good deal of time is required. During the selection process, absence from a scheduled informational or interview session will disqualify the student's application. Once selected, all Ambassadors are required to attend various training sessions prior to departure and in general promote the program.

Attendance at training sessions and other informational meetings is critical. These sessions will be held weekly during the month of June, 2018. Unexcused absence from more than 20% of required sessions will be grounds for dismissal from the program. An estimated 2-3 hours per week commitment is expected.

During their stay in Takamatsu, students are encouraged to post photos and details of their experiences to the city's website for all to enjoy.

This is an exchange program. Up to three (3) Takamatsu teens will be in St. Petersburg in July. Upon their return, the St. Petersburg students are required to participate in the activities scheduled for the Japanese students visiting St. Petersburg; assist in preparation of a presentation to share with the community; and give at least two talks about the exchange experience and students will be expected to share their experiences with other students, civic groups, city officials, and other interested parties. Articles in school newspapers, interviews with local media, and appearances before IRC and City Council are all possible means of sharing their experiences with the community and promoting the program.

During the school year following the Takamatsu stay, Ambassadors are required to volunteer up to twenty (20) hours at local non-profit organizations, promoting the Ambassador exchange and participating in the preparations for the following year's Ambassadors.

Families of St. Petersburg student ambassadors are required to host students in their homes or find IRC approved host families. The IRC welcomes the involvement of families of applicants and ambassadors.



How to Apply

Students interested should complete the application and mail or hand deliver the completed application and forms to Lotta Baumann, SPIFFS Executive Director.

Mailing Address: St. Petersburg International Folk Fair Society, Inc. Attention: Lotta Baumann 330 Fifth Street North St. Petersburg, FL 33701	Delivery Address: St. Petersburg International Folk Fair Society, Inc. Attention: Lotta Baumann 559 Mirror Lake Drive North St. Petersburg, FL 33701 <i>Call to arrange delivery time</i>
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Ambassador Program 2018 Calendar

February 15	Application deadline - <u>Application postmarked or delivered by 3 pm</u>
March 27, 5 p.m.	Information session for applicants and families at City Hall
TBD April	Interviews and selection at City Hall
TBD June	Ambassador orientation
TBD July	Depart for Takamatsu

Interview session:

Each qualified applicant and their parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) will be interviewed by members of the International Relations Committee. Students will be asked questions about their own lives, their experiences living in St. Petersburg and asked to explain the structure and function of St. Petersburg's city government.

Note:

If you are chosen to be a Student Ambassador for this program, you are required to have a current passport.

Any questions:

For more information about the application procedure and cultural exchange program, please contact Lotta Baumann, SPIFFS Executive Director, at 727-552-1896 or at internationalfolkfair@gmail.com.

Attach photo here



Form 8A

2018 STUDENT AMBASSADOR APPLICATION FOR TAKAMATSU, JAPAN

(for High School Juniors residing in St. Petersburg)

Student's name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

How long have you lived in St. Petersburg? _____

Home phone # _____

Cell phone # _____

Student's email _____

High school _____

Course of study _____ Grade point average _____

Academic Achievements (Dean's list or other honors, including dates)

What foreign languages or foreign study programs have you participated in?

Are you proficient in a second language? _____

If yes, which language(s)? _____



Form 8A continued

Parent or Guardian name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone # _____

Cell phone # _____

Email _____

I will provide home stay for one Japanese student or find an IRC approved host family to host one student.

Signature

Date



Form 8B

2018 Certification of Application of Student Ambassador Applicant

The applicant must be available for interviews. If selected, the student agrees to be available to present, discuss, and share his/her learning experiences upon return from the trip.

All required documents must be received by SPIFFS by 3 p.m. February 15, 2018.

Student Applicant
Signature

Parent/Guardian
Signature

Date _____



Form 8C

2018 STUDENT AND PARENTAL CONSENT FOR AUTHORIZATION TO REVIEW STUDENT RECORDS

IT IS THE APPLICANT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO COMPLETE AND PROCESS THE FOLLOWING CONSENT FORM.

I hereby authorize and consent to the collection and forwarding to the International Relations Committee for the City of St. Petersburg my high school grades, honors, extra-curricular activities, and other related records.

I further understand that this information will be reviewed by authorized members of the International Relations Committee for the City of St. Petersburg in consideration of me for the 2018 Student Ambassador Program, and hereby consent to that review.

Student Applicant
Signature

Parent/Guardian
Signature

Date _____



Student's Letter to Host Family(ies)

Write a letter introducing yourself to your host family(ies) in Takamatsu. Remember that this letter will be their first impression of you. Incorporate your answers to the following questions, providing as much detail as possible.

Specifications:

Type your letter on a separate sheet(s) of paper and include your name on each.

Maximum length: three (3) pages.

1. What do you do when you have free time?
2. What do you do at your school? (How many subjects do you take? What are they? How long are the classes? What is your daily schedule during the school year? Start with when you wake-up and discuss only one typical day's schedule.) Are you able to choose courses at your school? If so, which courses did you choose, and why?
3. What are your school interests and activities? What leadership positions have you held?
4. How would you describe your home? (Do you have your own room, or do you share your room with others? Where in your house do you study? How far is your home from your school? Do you drive, ride a bus, or walk to school?)
5. How would you describe St. Petersburg?
6. What are your interests and accomplishments? Are you interested in art, literature, music, sports, and/or other activities? How did you become interested in the activity? How long have you been interested? How much time do you devote to the activity?
7. What trips have you taken outside your country? Why did you take these trips, with whom, and for how long?
8. What things do you dislike? Do you dislike certain foods, animals, treatment by other people, etc.?
9. What do you think are your strong and weak characteristics?
10. What are your future plans and ambitions for your education and career? Why?
11. What do you specifically hope to accomplish as an exchange student, both during your exchange and when you return?



Parent's Letter to Host Parent(s)

Write a letter to the family who will host your son/daughter while in Takamatsu.

Type your letter on a separate sheet(s) of paper and include your child's name on each. Maximum length: two (2) pages.

Please incorporate into your letter answers to the following questions:

1. How is your child's relationship with you and your family? With his/her friends?
2. How does your child react to disagreement, discipline, and frustration?
3. How does your child handle challenging or difficult situations?
4. What amount of independence do you give to your child? What is your child's level of maturity?
5. What makes you proud of your child?
6. Why do you want your child to be an exchange student?
7. Any other comments/insights about your son/daughter you would like to share?



CHECKLIST: REQUIRED DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED

1. 8A: Student Ambassador Application Form
2. 8B: Certification for Student Applicant Form
3. 8C: Student and Parental Consent for Authorization to Review Student Records Form
4. Student letter to the Host Family(ies)
5. Parent letter to the Host Parent(s)
6. Copy of your High School transcript
7. High School Class photograph
8. Attach or mail under separate cover two (2) letters of reference for the student. One must be from a school contact such as a faculty member or principal. The other must be from an adult in the community who is not related to the applicant.
9. Submit a typed, double-spaced essay, not to exceed three (3) pages stating why you would like to participate in this program and what you hope to gain if selected. Include why you are qualified to represent the City of St. Petersburg, what you would like to share about St. Petersburg, and the benefits you have derived from living here.
10. List all honorary organizations of which you are a member.
11. List student organizations, committees, activities of which you are or have been a part in high school. Be specific and include offices held and length of time with each organization.
12. List your volunteer services and community projects while in high school. Indicate if a project was part of a school-based service club.