

# **SHORT TERM STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

**family to family vacation homestay  
a cultural exchange  
for high school students**

**Rotary District 7870  
(Southern Vermont and  
Southern New Hampshire)**

**DISTRICT 7870 Short Term Youth Exchange Handbook  
Welcome to Rotary's best-kept secret –  
Short Term Exchange.**

We are excited about helping you achieve your dream of spending part of your summer in a new and different culture. This handbook is our attempt to answer as many questions as possible and to ease the paperwork process for you. We ask that you and your parents take the time to read this handbook. We hope you find it helpful.

**What is it all about?**

**Introduction** A Rotary Short Term Exchange presents opportunities for applicants to advance their knowledge and world understanding by allowing them to exchange in a different country. Participants will live with host families in their selected land usually for three to six weeks in the summer, and host their new partner at home, under the sponsorship of their local Rotary Club.

**Objective** To foster world peace, international understanding and good will by extending international communication at the personal level through the exchange of students of high school age. It is our hope that these young people will be able to observe, first hand, the problems and accomplishments of other countries by living with and meeting people of cultures, creeds and colors other than their own.

**Who is eligible?** Any applicant, age 15 through 18, of good character, possessing a warm personality, with a desire to live abroad and host in return. Candidates should be adaptable and flexible, well mannered, and want to experience life in other countries and cultures. Children of Rotarians and non-Rotarians are equally eligible.

**How does one go about participating in the Rotary Short term Exchange Program?** Applicants must be sponsored by a local Rotary Club. Any Rotarian will put you in touch with his Youth Exchange Officer regarding details. High school guidance counselors may also be able to help you make that contact.

**Why is it called an exchange program?** You will be matched with a student of similar interests in a country of your selection or approval. The two of you will spend an agreed upon time together – half the time in your home and half in their home for a minimum of at least three weeks each way.

**Is proficiency in a foreign language needed?** NO! The program is cultural in nature, but is also for a short period of time. Many countries throughout the world teach English as a second language, and most participating students are quite proficient in speaking our language. If you have taken a foreign language in high school and elect to visit a country that speaks that language, you will be able to gain some conversational ability, but most students do not find language to be a barrier to having a great exchange experience.

**How does a student benefit from being abroad?** Being away in a foreign country has a powerful broadening and accelerating

effect on your maturing process. Managing your finances and making decisions enhances your independence from what your parents would have done for you as a matter of course. You develop an understanding of and a tolerance for people which will benefit you throughout your life.

### **How much does it cost?**

Four elements comprise the cost of the program. 1: a \$65.00 application fee for processing and administration. 2: a \$75 district fee for orientation and background checks. 3: CISI-Bolduc life, medical and liability insurance: one month \$69; three months \$189. 4: round trip airfare to and from the foreign country and pocket money, (plus passport and visa if needed.) Travel arrangements can be made through the ESSEX recommended travel agency, Tzell Park Avenue. The ESSEX STEP Chairman and the insurance company will receive the travel arrangements automatically when made by Tzell Park Avenue.

When travel arrangements are made through any other agency or individual, the complete itinerary **MUST BE PROVIDED** to the ESSEX Short Term Chairman and CISI Bolduc insurance company by E-Mail or Fax as soon as arrangements are completed.

### **What is so special about Rotary's Short Term Exchange**

**Program compared to other programs?** The Rotary International Short Term Exchange Program is volunteer driven. It is organized and administered by **volunteer** Rotarians and their families throughout the world. They operate at several levels: the local Rotary Clubs, the District and Regional levels here and abroad. They select students, prepare them, arrange hosting abroad, travel, insurance, etc. This work is performed by Rotarians as a service. They are *not paid* for this work. In programs where people are paid to find and host students, quality may be sacrificed to satisfy quotas and bank accounts. Ultimately such operational costs are passed on to the parents. Rotary does not believe this to be in anyone's best interest. The Rotary program is also the least expensive program. Students have local contacts from Rotary Clubs here and abroad who are directly involved in the welfare of the students. At times of immediate need, students away from home will be more comfortable knowing Rotarians of their host club will be available and be able to help and offer guidance.

**How does the program work?** Once your application package is submitted by your local Rotary Exchange Officer to District Chair (Kathie Stone), she keeps one and forwards the rest to the ESSEX STEP Chairman, (Ed Skwirz) who checks it and send a copy to your

first choice of countries and to that country contact. That contact here will communicate with the foreign contact and try to make a match keeping in mind your age and interests. When the match has been established, you will be informed, and you can start to communicate with your match. Your families then decide on dates and make travel arrangements.

**How do I apply?** That's easy! **Ask your local Rotary Club officer for help** in understanding how to complete the application, especially contact information for the Rotary officers you must list, and the other steps in the process. **Bring up the application** from the computer at [www.exchangestudent.org](http://www.exchangestudent.org).

**Type in all requested information** including the name, address and phone numbers of your local Rotary Club officers and your District (7870 STEP) Chair, Kathie Stone, 79 Edge Hill Road, Londonderry VT 05148. Tel. 802 824 6033; Cell. 802 366 0210 E-mail. [kdsu@comcast.org](mailto:kdsu@comcast.org).

E-mail addresses are important, they are the quickest way to notify you and your local Youth Exchange staff as your match progresses. **ALL applications must be typed** for ease to read, fax and E-Mail. Scanning pictures onto the first and picture pages works well. **Save this application with all the information inserted.**

**Print a preliminary copy to review then correct with your Rotary Exchange Officer.** Print 5 copies when complete and correct, or print one copy and make 4 photocopies before signing. You and your parents will **sign all copies with blue ink**. Keep one copy and give the original and three other copies to your Rotary officer.

Make a list of at least 3 "available" countries you would like to visit with number 1 being your 1st choice of countries. Your club chairman lists these on your application checklist. Tell your chairman how flexible you are. For example, if you are willing to go to any Spanish-speaking country, make sure your chairman advises us on the checklist. If you will only go to your first choice or if there is somewhere you won't go, let us know. Sometimes we are unable to get cooperation from a foreign contact or there is no exchange partner available. When this happens having several options helps to find you a suitable match. Indicate whether you prefer a match with a male, a female, or either.

Complete a CISI-Bolduc **insurance application Short Term Plan B**. The one month policy (one month travel or less) is \$69. Longer travel (one month up to three months) is \$189.

Take applications to your **local Rotary Club** for their **signatures**.

Write **three checks**:

1. To "ESSEX STEP" for \$65.00.
2. To District 7870 for \$75 (orientation and background checks)
3. To CISI-Bolduc: \$69 for travel insurance up to one month or \$189 if your travel is between one and three months.

**Keep one copy of the application** for your files. Take the other 4 copies to your club Exchange Officer with the other documents (insurance form, checks, any remaining host documents, etc). Your **YEO will keep one application** and send 3 copies to the district chairperson. **Apply for your passport** or renew it if necessary. (The expiration date must be at least 6 months past your expected return date to the USA.) Reserve the day for required orientation: usually the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in May

### What Countries are available?

Argentina 1	Australia 1	Austria	Belgium	
Brazil 1	Canada	Colombia	Czech Republic	
Denmark	Ecuador	England	Finland	
France	Germany	Hungary	Iceland	
India 2	Italy	Japan**	Mexico	
Poland	Spain	Sweden	South	
Africa 1	Switzerland	Taiwan	Netherlands	Turkey

1 – Sends to USA in December – February, Hosts July – August ; minimum 8 weeks inbound, 6 weeks outbound

2 – Sends to USA in April – May, Hosts July – August ; minimum 8 weeks inbound, 6 weeks outbound

All others send & receive during June – July – August; minimum 3 weeks each way, could be 4 weeks

\* Application must be submitted by December 25.

**What happens next?** You will receive a letter confirming that your application has been forwarded to be matched in a country of your choice. Once a match has been achieved you will hear from your contact. It is not unusual that you could hear directly from your match before you hear from your contact. Upon hearing from or contacting your match, you can start making plans. Both families should agree on the dates of your exchange and make travel arrangements. If you hear from your match prior to hearing from your contact, please let your contact and Kathie Stone know immediately.

**Who makes the travel arrangements?** You and your parents are responsible for making your travel arrangements. We recommend Tzell Park Avenue Travel Agency at 1-800-888-5275 ext. 106. They

are experts with our program. **Or** you can make arrangements with a travel agent of your choice. **You must send your complete travel itinerary to your country contact, the ESSEX STEP Chairman and CISI-Bolduc immediately.**

**Why must I carry this insurance** when I already have it? Many of the health-care policies carried by your families have limited coverage overseas. This policy through CISI is Rotary International approved and fills in the many gaps in coverage. It is accepted around the world. It covers you from the moment you take off until you land again on US soil.

**When can I expect to hear about my match?** Normally the country contacts begin to complete matches in April. Almost all are completed early in June. You will hear as soon as your country contact is notified.

**What should I expect from my country contact?** Country contacts are Rotarians volunteering time to help make your dreams become reality. They have jobs, families and other responsibilities, so be patient with them. And remember that they must wait to hear from their counterparts in foreign countries before providing you information. Your country contact will keep you informed and send your foreign match application as soon as it is received. If you receive the name and address of your match, do not wait for the complete foreign application to begin making your contacts and travel arrangements.

### Who is my country contact?

Edward M. Skwirz, ESSEX Short Term Chairman  
32 Ridgeland Drive  
Cumberland, RI 02864  
Tel: 401 333 6457 Fax: 401 334 1474  
Email: [essexstepeds@cox.net](mailto:essexstepeds@cox.net)

Contact to: Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, Poland, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Taiwan

Kathie Stone, District 7870  
79 Edge Hill Road  
Londonderry VT 05148  
Tel: 802 824 6033 c 802 366 0210 E-mail: [Kdsu@comcast.net](mailto:Kdsu@comcast.net)  
Contact to: Argentina, Austria, Germany, India, Spain

Geri Sheridan, District 7260  
96 Evergreen Lane  
East Pachogue NY 11772-5806  
Home & Fax 631 475 1164 Email [gerisheridan@verizon.net](mailto:gerisheridan@verizon.net)  
Contact to Australia, Mexico, RIBI (England Ireland Scotland)

Dave Wolfe, District 7980  
52 Far Horizon Drive  
Monroe CT 06468  
Home: 203 268 7047; Work: 203 452 7692  
Email: [dave@wolfepromo.com](mailto:dave@wolfepromo.com)  
Contact to Ecuador and Brazil

**My District Chairman is**

Kathie Stone  
79 Edge Hill Road  
Londonderry VT 05148  
Tel. 802 824-6033; cell 802 366-0210; email [kdsu@comcast.net](mailto:kdsu@comcast.net)

**My local Rotary Exchange Officer is**