



Keokuk - Kai-shi Exchange



Interested in Traveling to Japan?

- Visit Kai, Yamanashi, Japan, Keokuk's sister city since 2008. (And former sister city Ryo since 1998).
- Represent the City of Keokuk.
- Learn how Japanese live day to day.
- Enjoy Japanese cuisine.
- Encourage broader understanding of the world beyond our borders. Ambassadors develop an appreciation of cultural differences.
- Travel with a group of students and chaperones from Keokuk. Stay for 10+ days with a host family in Japan.
- Host a Japanese guest in your home for 10 days.

CHAPERONE MIDDLE SCHOOL AMBASSADOR EXCHANGE

To travel is to learn. Stepping out of your routine, your community or your culture for even a short time can refresh, energize and educate you in a way few other experiences offers. The exchange program includes a 10+ day travel experience to Japan.

You will chaperone a carefully selected delegation of middle school students, who participate in their own exchanges. Orientation sessions scheduled as a group give the students and chaperones the chance to work as a team and prepare for the shared experience. During the stay in Kai-shi, chaperones have few logistical responsibilities, as all touring and travel arrangements within Japan are handled by the Kai-shi staff.

Chaperones interested in participating are encouraged to contact us for more information.

About the KSCA

The student ambassador exchange program is a volunteer exchange sponsored and organized by the Keokuk Sister Cities Association, Inc..

Keokuk Sister Cities Association connects the people of Keokuk to the people of the world to foster learning experiences and continuing relationships as friends.



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DECIDING TO APPLY

When does the exchange take place and how long does it last?

The exact dates vary each year, but typically includes the last week of July and the first week of August. Keokuk and Kai-shi alternate years hosting (odd years Keokuk hosts, even years Kai-shi hosts). Do consider that the exchange week often conflicts with band camp and sports camps so be sure to confirm your availability before applying.

How much does it cost to travel to Kai-shi?

It varies, but a general estimate would be \$2,000. This estimate includes required contributions towards airfare and the balance for other expenses described below. The KSCA covers the cost of the airfare with donations and fundraising activities, and required contributions from you.

Other expenses to expect include a passport application fee, luggage or travel gear, pocket money for souvenirs and the two travel days, inexpensive gifts for the host family, as well as optional activity expenses in Japan. Individuals have control over many of these expenses. Kai-shi arranges for transportation to and from Narita airport (Tokyo) and various sightseeing trips.

How much does it cost to host?

Chaperones stay with a host family and there are no lodging or food expenses in Japan; in return, hosting a chaperone means to cover food expenses and basic expenses for their guest. The KSCA works hard to keep the program affordable.

Other expenses to expect include inexpensive gifts for the ambassador's family, as well as optional activity expenses.

Are there other, non-financial obligations?

Prior to leaving, chaperones must attend orientation sessions that will prepare them to be good guests in a Japanese home and to represent our community in the best manner. While in Japan, chaperones must participate in all exchange activities.

Chaperones must participate in host activities when the delegation returns. KSCA volunteers create a hosting schedule.

As part of the preparation, the delegation works together to design a performance, usually a song or dance, that will be performed in Japan. The performance should represent our culture and be understood by non-English speaking audience.

Participation in KSCA fundraisers is required. Participation in fundraising efforts can result in substantial cost reductions.

Will my Japanese family speak English?

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English may be spoken by some professionals, but, typically it is students in the home who are the translators for our students who are visiting. Kai-shi families decide whether they want to host a Keokuk ambassador with the knowledge that their guest will not speak Japanese. This means the host has some confidence in their language skills. Learning to communicate through barriers is part of the benefit of the program. Chaperones and students must be willing and able to handle this challenge in a flexible, gracious and pleasing manner. Most days, the delegation spends time together with representatives with Kai-shi. This includes Japanese staff fluent in English and native English speaker who speaks Japanese. Group activities always include an adult who speaks English fluently.

What will I eat?

The Japanese diet is very different from the American diet. Staying in a Japanese home will expose you to different foods and traditions. Miso soup, fish and seafood (cooked and raw) and rice are often daily staples. So are vegetables and fruits. Ambassadors often return home having tasted eel, octopus, and other seafood not common to Keokuk menus. Ambassadors are not expected to like everything, but must be open to new cuisine and able to accept and appreciate foods of another culture in a polite and gracious manner.

The visiting chaperone is asked to prepare a meal for the host family.

What are my responsibilities as a chaperone?

You have the responsibility for the group on travel days. Once in Kai-shi, your primary responsibility is to assist Kai-shi staff with communication issues and emergencies. You are responsible for helping students with homesickness and problem solving. You are also responsible for addressing any behavioral issues that may occur. The KSCA carefully selects students. We seek students with a cooperative nature, who are recommended to be good travel companions. As with all children, the delegation may need occasional reminders about minding their manners. Chaperones are expected to set an example by keeping an appreciative mind and open heart while in a foreign situation.

What is the selection process?

1. Send a complete application along with three recommendations by the deadline.
2. Applications are reviewed. Selected students are invited to interview with KSCA volunteers.
3. Following interviews, a delegation is composed and students are notified.
4. Orientation meetings are schedule with families.

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CHAPERONE APPLICATION FORM

Any adult who lives in or who works in or has a spouse who works in Keokuk may apply. Teachers and administrators at all grade levels are encouraged to apply.

Name: _____ Address: _____

Mobile Phone: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____ Home Phone: _____

Employer: _____ Position: _____

Work Phone: _____

On a separate piece of paper, briefly answer the following questions:

1. Write a description of yourself including such information as talents, interests, work experience, general health, and any previous travel experience.
2. What sparked your interest to apply for this exchange?
3. What experience have you had supervising or traveling with students outside of a classroom experience? What challenges arose and how did you overcome them? What was rewarding?
4. What do you hope to learn from your homestay in Kai, Japan?
5. If you are a teacher, how do you hope this trip will impact your teaching?

Two personal recommendations are required from adults who know you. At least **one** recommendation must be from a current or former supervisor. None may be from a relative. These recommendations should be sealed in a separate envelope and returned along with your application.

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Are you under a doctor's care? _____ If yes, explain: _____

Are you taking any medication? _____ If yes, do you require an adult's assistance? _____

Are you a U.S. Citizen? _____ If No, Alien Registration Number _____

If not a U.S. Citizen, country of citizenship? _____

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED

COSTS

1. Applications must be accompanied with \$30 payment for two year KSCA family membership. More than one family members may apply under the family membership.
2. Applications must be accompanied with a payment of **\$40/person**. The deposit is non-refundable and used for administrative costs.
3. The estimated cost of the trip to Japan will be \$2,000 per person. Your cost will also depend on the success of KSCA fundraisers and donations received. Deadlines for the payments will be established in conjunction with travel agency policies.

CERTIFICATION

Successful applicants must comply with obligations as follows:

- Join the Keokuk Sister City Association
- Commit to a minimum 2-year period
- Participate in KSCA fundraising activities
- Attend orientation meetings and other planning meetings in preparation for the exchanges
- Host a sister city student/chaperone in your home
- Promote the sister city program
- Obtain and submit a passport and 2 copies by the deadline date established by KSCA
- Submit all funds required for airline ticket purchase by the required deadlines

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By signing this application:

I certify that the information provided is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also understand the obligations outlined in this application above and will comply with the best of my ability.

I agree to participate in the Keokuk – Kai-shi Ambassador Exchange Program. I understand I will travel from Keokuk, Iowa to Kai-shi, Japan.

I agree to release the Keokuk Sister Cities Association, Kai-shi International Friendship Association, and the associations' volunteers from any liability, responsibility, damages, expenses, lawsuits or injuries which may occur or be given rise to during his/her participation in the youth exchange.

I have adequate medical, accident, dismemberment, and repatriation insurance coverage for myself. I have verified this coverage with my agent and it is valid overseas. I am able to provide documentation if requested.

I understand that the Keokuk Sister Cities Association provide no medical, accident, dismemberment or repatriation insurance.

Print name – applicant	Signature	Date
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IN THE EVENT OF INJURY OR ILLNESS:

By signing this application, I hereby authorize the representative abroad of KSCA and KIFA Keokuk – Kai-shi Ambassador Exchange Program for two years from date below, their officers and/or agents, to transport to medical facility, secure medical treatment and care deemed necessary, including the administration of an anesthetic and surgery.

Print name – applicant	Signature	Date
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Insurance Company: _____

Policy Number: _____ Phone: _____



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DELEGATION PROFILE

This information will be used to match you with your host family. This form will then be given to your host family.

Name: _____ Gender: _____ Shirt Size: _____

Address: _____ Age: _____ DOB: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Email: _____

Phone: _____ Pets? _____

Family Members (Name, Age, Shirt Size):

_____	_____
_____	_____

Hobbies: _____

Interests: _____

Likes: _____

Dislikes: _____

Allergies: _____

Other Activities: _____

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