

# Hercules Sister City Association

P.O. Box 5092  
Hercules, CA 94547-5092  
Email: hercsiscity@hotmail.com

President/Treasurer: Lynn Fissell

Secretary: Mariko Lindsey

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January 13, 2020

Dear Teacher and Student:

Re: Hercules/Tsushima Youth Ambassador Program

Hercules, California and Tsushima City, Japan in Aichi Prefecture have enjoyed a long-term relationship that began in November 1981 with a signing ceremony of the top-elected officials of the two jurisdictions. In the past few years, the Hercules Sister City Association, a non-profit volunteer organization working closely with the City of Hercules, has conducted a Youth Ambassador Program. Involving the youth of both cities has proven to be the most appropriate and feasible way to provide cultural exchanges.

Youth Ambassadors are chosen from among residents of the City of Hercules for their community involvement and willingness to represent Hercules. A visit to selected sites in Tsushima and several locations in Japan help broaden the understanding of and appreciation for the unique features of the host city and Japanese culture. In 2019, the trip was taken in late July. It is likely that the 2021 trip will occur during that same time period. Adult members of the Hercules community also will be sought. Some of them will be serving as chaperones and will also experience home-stay in Tsushima City.

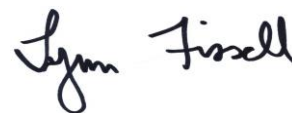
Teachers: If you would like to nominate a current 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade Hercules resident student that you feel is responsible and dedicated, provide a teacher recommendation that will be attached to the application form filled out by the student.

Students: You currently must be in the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade and a Hercules resident. One teacher nomination is required, should be provided on a separate piece of paper, and be attached to your completed application form.

Teachers and Students: The completed application and required essay should be in Mrs. Sharon Calonico's or Mrs. Kidder's possession *no later than Tuesday, February 25, 2020* to be considered by the Association. *Hercules resident students enrolled at another school in the area should mail the package to HSCA, P.O. Box 5092, Hercules, CA 94547-5092. No applications received after the deadline or submitted by any other methods will be accepted.* Additional applications, if needed, can be obtained by sending an email to hercsiscity@hotmail.com.

Thank you for your participation in this important endeavor.

Sincerely,



Lynn Fissell  
President/Treasurer

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# Hercules Sister City Association (HSCA) Application for Youth Ambassador 2020-2021

Completed application, teacher recommendation, and required essay are due no later than Tuesday, **February 25, 2020** by either of the following methods: 1) for Hercules resident students attending Hercules Middle or Hercules High School, turn it in to **Mrs. Sharon Calonico at Hercules Middle School or Mrs. Bonnie Kidder at Hercules Middle School** or 2) For Hercules resident students that are enrolled at another school in the area, mail the package to **HSCA, P.O. Box 5092, Hercules, CA 94547-5092** so that it can be post-marked no later than February 25, 2020. Applications received after the deadline or submitted by any other methods will not be accepted.

**TEACHER RECOMMENDATION:** On a separate piece of paper, the teacher recommending the student should explain why the recommended student is a good candidate to represent the City of Hercules as a Youth Ambassador to Tsushima, Japan. On the paper, be sure that the teacher's name, the subject he/she teaches, and the name of the applicant is listed at the top and the teacher's signature is at the bottom. Attach the paper to this application form.

**ATTACH A RECENT HEAD  
AND SHOULDERS  
PHOTOGRAPH WITH A  
PLAIN BACKGROUND OR A  
WALLET-SIZE SCHOOL  
PHOTOGRAPH HERE**

**(AT THE TIME OF YOUR  
INTERVIEW, INDICATE IF  
YOU WANT THE  
PHOTOGRAPH RETURNED  
TO YOU)**

## PERSONAL INFORMATION (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Last)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

What grade are you currently in? \_\_\_\_8<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_9<sup>th</sup> GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

In what year will you graduate from high school? \_\_\_\_\_

Male: \_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ U.S. citizen? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Do you have a current passport? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Telephone Number: (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(required for communicating about interview date and time)

## HSCA PARENT INFORMATION AND SIGNATURE

General: In odd numbered years, a maximum of six of students are selected as Youth Ambassadors to visit and experience a home stay in Hercules' Sister City, Tsushima, Japan (near Nagoya) and other cities in Japan for approximately ten to fourteen days (including approximately four days in Tsushima). Adult volunteers assist in fund-raising for the trip, and adult chaperones/delegates accompany the Youth Ambassadors on the trip. More information can be found at <http://www.ci.hercules.ca.us/index.aspx?page=519>.

Application: The application, essay, teacher recommendation, and interview make up the items that are considered when selecting the Youth Ambassadors.

Interviews: Immediately following the application deadline, an interview will be scheduled. Interviews will be held on Saturday and Sunday. The schedule will be emailed to the email address that you provide and interviews will be set up on a "first come, first served" basis. Interview questions are not available in advance. The youth and his/her parent will be able to ask questions during the interview.

By signing below, you understand and agree to the following:

- If selected, your child will have a unique opportunity to participate in a cultural exchange program that promotes international understanding and friendship, a chance to experience another culture first-hand, and act as representatives of the City of Hercules. In the summer of 2020, a delegation of students and adults from Tsushima, will visit Hercules for about a week. Your family is encouraged to host a member of that delegation. Your child will be expected to participate in all pre-departure meetings and cultural orientations. After the trip, your child should promote the Youth Ambassador program to other students, and be able to commit to a full year of HSCA activities to aid in the orientation of the next set of Youth Ambassadors.
- All students who apply must be residents of the City of Hercules until the student leaves on the trip to Japan.
- The cost of the 2020 trip is expected to be about \$4,500 per person (offset by fundraisers) and will take place in July/August 2021. Members of the delegation will be allowed to provide input and approve the final trip itinerary prior to having the final cost of the trip determined by the travel agent.
- If your child is selected, attendance at the parent orientation meeting, signature on the liability release form, and proof of medical coverage are required. Attendance at monthly HSCA meetings (with at least one parent) is strongly encouraged and annual family membership in the HSCA is required.
- Each Youth Ambassador will need a current passport which does not expire within 6 months of the trip. A copy of the passport pages, including photograph and signature, need to be submitted to the HSCA as soon as the passport is available. You will be notified of additional information that may need to be provided.
- Prior to the trip, the Youth Ambassadors will be given instruction in basic Japanese language, culture, and customs. Each student will memorize speech in Japanese to be given while in Tsushima. The classes are mandatory and free.
- The Youth Ambassadors and parents will plan and participate in fundraising activities prior to the trip. The proceeds from those activities will be shared equally among the selected Youth Ambassadors. Any funding gap between the fundraising activities and the cost of the trip will be the responsibility of the family.

Parent(s) Name: (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent: \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUIRED ESSAY**

In addition to submitting the completed application, please attach an essay answering the question below. *Limit the essay to one page and double-space your lines. Type or print the essay in **black ink**.*

Why do you want to represent the City of Hercules as a Youth Ambassador and what can you tell us about yourself that makes you unique?