

## **GUIDELINES FOR INBOUND STUDENTS**

Welcome to the beginning of a wonderful adventure as you prepare for an exchange to District 5100 in the heart of the beautiful Pacific Northwest. Within our district you can find some of the most beautiful, coastlines in the world, mountains ranges with year round skiing, windsurfing, and all other forms of recreation all within just a few hours from your home.

Our Rotary District covers the northern portion of the State of Oregon, and southern part of the State of Washington. We have over 76 Rotary Clubs and over 3,500 Rotary members. The District has about 35 clubs that participate in the Youth Exchange Program. Each year District 5100 hosts up to 45 students from up to 22 different countries. This makes us one of the largest individual District Youth Exchange Programs in the North America.

Our District also has the distinction of being one of the strictest, but best, Rotary Youth Exchange Programs in the world. The strict part will make your parents happy, but the guidelines that we put forward are simply meant to give you the opportunity to have the most successful exchange possible. So when reading the guidelines, keep an open mind. The following information is to help you prepare to have the best exchange experience possible. We encourage you to read this manual carefully and contact your individual Country YEO (Youth Exchange Officer) or any member of District Committee with questions or concerns that you or your parents may have.

### **GETTING READY**

**If you are reading this document, it means you may have received your guarantee forms, as well as a letter of instructions to prepare you for your arrival in District 5100. Please go over these instructions with your sponsoring club or district and solicit their help in obtaining your J-1 Visa from the U.S. Embassy in your country. YOU WILL PROBABLY BE REQUIRED TO MAKE A PERSONEL VISIT TO THE U.S. EMBASY FOR AN INTERVIEW. YOU WILL NEED YOUR GUARANTEE FORM, DS2019, AND A RECEIPT SHOWING THAT YOU HAVE PAID THE \$180 FEE. This is a required fee that the U.S Government charges all inbound exchange students. Go to this site to obtain your document and pay your I-901 fee. The fee is \$180 (USD) and may change without notice. **The I-901 Fee for J-1 inbounds will be increasing from \$180 to \$220 effective June 24, 2019.****

**Here is the link for information on the SEVIS I-901 fee:**

<http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901>

The **Guarantee Form** lists your first host family with their address, phone and e-mail address. You are encouraged to contact them, and stay in communication with them right up until your arrival. Ask them about the climate, what kind of clothes you will need, about your school, host brothers and host sisters, whether you have your own room, or just any question that comes to mind. The host family listed on your guarantee form may change before your arrival, or may be a “welcoming family” and not your real first host family. We do this so we can get your documents to you as fast as possible so you can complete the visa process. You will be informed when you receive the guarantee form from your Country YEO if the family listed is a “welcoming family” or the real first family.

The guarantee form also lists the school you will be attending. Almost all the schools in District 5100 are public, and Oregon & Washington have the reputation of having one of the finest public school systems in the U.S. You are not required to wear a uniform, but you are required to attend the school that falls within the area in which you live.

There is **no guarantee that you will officially graduate from high school here**. You may ask the school, but they are under no obligation to accommodate you. Do not come here assuming that you will be allowed to graduate. It is a conversation you will have with your high school counselor after you arrive.

The guarantee form states the allowance that you will receive from your hosting club. The club will pay your allowance at the beginning of each month.

The guarantee form also lists your hosting Rotary Club and the International Airport closest to the city where you will be hosted. Portland International Airport (PDX) serves the area where our District is located.

The instructions you receive from our District ask you to complete several documents to return to us either before or upon your arrival here.

1. Statement of English Proficiency - This is needed before we can issue your DS 2019 that is needed to get your visa. You should have already sent it to your country officer.
2. Certificate of Immunization (Oregon or Washington) - This form must be completed in full and signed by your family or physician. If you are missing any of the required immunizations, you will not be admitted to high school here. Please complete your immunizations prior to arriving. If your immunization record is missing or incomplete, all required immunizations must be obtained before school starts. You will be required to pay for the immunizations.
3. Please send in advance copies of your school grades/marks/transcripts **in English**. If they are not available to you in English, please have them translated.
4. Please read and sign, along with your parents, one copy of the rules provided to you. Please read this section carefully, and understand that these rules will be enforced. If you or your parents disagree with or do not believe you can comply with the rules, please contact your Youth Exchange Officer to discuss whether you should continue on with the exchange.

**Please send these documents to your Country Youth Exchange Officer (YEO) in advance. We must have all these forms completed in order to get you through the orientation process.**

You will receive the following documents from the U.S. Embassy that must be included with/stapled to your passport on your arrival:

1. Your J-1 visa, which should be good for the exchange program year.
2. An I-901 Receipt.
3. The DS-2019 form issued by this district and stamped by the US consulate.

Please make your airline reservations early. You must arrive here no later than 7 days prior to the start of school. Students arriving late may be at risk of not being able to continue their exchange. Please ensure that your host family is ready to receive you and knows your arrival plans. Please advise your host family, hosting club, and Country YEO when you have made your airline reservations and have a firm itinerary. Your airline tickets must be round trip. Please do not travel here without return tickets. The return tickets should be open-ended or changeable without any or a very small fee. We suggest using a travel agent to help get the correct type of ticket.

### **TRAVELING AND ARRIVAL**

Unless you are traveling with Rotary Youth Exchange personnel, you must travel directly to Portland (PDX) from your host country with no overnight layovers in any city. If you encounter any delays in your flight, and know you will not be arriving in Portland on time, please contact your host family, host club, and District YEO. Advise them of your new arrival time and ask them to advise anyone else you may be expecting at the airport. The same procedure would apply if you find that you will be arriving earlier than expected on a different flight. Bring the important contact numbers of your host family and YEO with you on the plane. Do not pack them with your checked baggage. You must arrive with a fully paid, round-trip, open return airline ticket in your possession. No standby tickets are allowed!

Before leaving home, all baggage should be labeled both inside and outside with your name, your destination address, and phone number. A flat label should be used in addition to a tag. Leave your baggage claim number with parents. If baggage is lost, notify all airlines and your Country YEO at once.

On any connecting flights, move directly from your arriving gate to the next departing gate and check in before taking time to shop or eat.

Please wear your Rotary Blazer and any name badge you might have when debarking from your flight in Portland. It makes it easier for Rotary personnel and your host family to find you.

On arrival in Portland, due to security restrictions, no one will be at the plane debarking gate, so just follow the signs toward the baggage area and you will come to an arrival area where your host family, representatives from the hosting club, and your District Country YEO, or another district committee member will be there to greet you. If no one is at the arrival area to greet you, stay in that area. Do not go down to the baggage area or outside the terminal to the pick up area. If no one comes, call your host family first, followed by your District Country YEO or any other member of the district committee. A local telephone call in Portland costs \$0.50 from a pay phone. Any call outside the Portland area may be long distance, and must be preceded by a 1, then the area code,

followed by the number. You may also use a credit card to make long distance calls. A paging system is also available in the terminal. The phones are white and labeled as paging telephones.

If a club in Hermiston, Pendleton, Milton-Freewater, La Grande, or Enterprise is hosting you, your host family might not be present to greet you at the airport. Those cities are a five to six hour drive from the airport. You will stay in the Portland area with a member of the District YE Committee until the host family or club can arrive. This may be on the weekend after you arrive.

At the airport, the District Representative will ask to see your passport and airline tickets to check that your documents are in proper order. In many cases, the District representative will elect to keep your documents to make copies for the District files. Your documents will be returned to you at the first orientation in September or sooner if convenient. We will also collect any money required for the optional trip. The emergency money is usually held by the club counselor, not the Country YEO.

Student's immunization records will be checked, and you may be subjected to a Tuberculosis Skin Test. If you are missing any required immunizations, you will be advised and your host family or counselors will make an appointment to get the immunizations you require to attend school.

## **THE INBOUND ORIENTATION RETREAT**

Within one month of your arrival here, you will be attending a four-day orientation along with the other students from all the countries we exchange with. **The orientation retreat is a required a event.**

At the orientation, you will meet all the other students, and the District YE Committee. You will learn about the activities you will be participating in during your year here, what the expectations of Rotary are, and you will receive valuable tips to help you to have a successful exchange experience. We will also have a lot of fun in the process.

## **AMONG THE TOPICS WE WILL DISCUSS AT THE ORIENTATION ARE THE FOLLOWING:**

### **HOST FAMILIES**

You will be hosted by a minimum of two, but not more than four families during your exchange year. This requires a lot of adjustments on your part, as you must fit yourself into the life of your host family. You are not a guest, but a part of the family. There is no obligation whatever on the part of your host family to adapt to your way of life. You must do all adaptation. Remember that your host families owe you nothing. On the other hand, you owe your host families an enormous debt of gratitude for the very considerable personal and financial sacrifice they are making in hosting you. Without these host family sacrifices, it would not be possible for you to spend a year abroad as an exchange student. The great majority of problems in the Youth Exchange Program around the world arise from the refusal of students to adapt to their new environment.

Make an effort to be part of your new family. As a young person, you have reached the stage where you are spreading your wings and trying to be more independent from your natural family. You have gotten your wish as you are now with a totally new family. It is your challenge to get to know your new family. What are their rules? What chores do they expect you to do? When do they expect you home? What makes them happy? What makes them sad? What makes them MAD?

Your welcome packet will include a first night questionnaire. Sit down with your new family the first week and go through it, question by question. It will open the lines of communication and you will find out what is expected of you. This will improve your chances for a successful exchange.

You may or may not have your own room. If you are sharing a room, respect the privacy and space of your host brother or sister. If you have your own room, do not spend too much time in it alone. Ask your family if you can do your homework at the kitchen or dining room table. Ask your family for help with your homework. Offer to help with the cooking, the laundry, the housework, and the yard work. Ask your host parents if you can call them Mom & Dad or what they prefer.

Above all respect their rules, their lifestyles, and give them the same love, respect and affection you gave your parents back home.

## **MOVING**

When it comes time to change host families, do not complain or resist the move. You will have become attached to your current family, but it is time to move on to a whole new experience. After you have moved, you must check with and have the approval of your current host family before spending time or participating in activities with your previous host families. Give each host family the same amount of love and respect you accorded the last family. The hosting Rotary Club decides when, and where, you move. You may not choose your own host family unless asked for help by your hosting Rotary Club.

## **MONTHLY ALLOWANCE**

Your host Rotary Club will provide you with a monthly allowance that will usually be paid around the first of each month. Your allowance is intended to cover school lunches, toiletries, postage, and other miscellaneous expenses. Allowances will range from club to club, depending on the cost of living within your hosting area. Do not compare your allowance with those of other students. The club will also help you with transportation issues, getting to Rotary Meetings and District activities. These are the only financial obligations of the host club. Anything else you receive is a bonus.

## **COUNSELOR**

Your host Rotary Club will have assigned you a counselor. The counselor usually will be a Rotarian and of the same sex as you, but not always. The counselor is your advocate, someone whom you can talk to about challenges in your exchange, your host family, club, school, or finances. Your counselor will usually have your emergency fund money. Your counselor might help you get registered for school, review your school performance with you, assist with getting you to Rotary meetings, and spend time with you.

## MEDICAL INSURANCE

Students coming here are required to purchase this medical insurance policy for the duration of their exchange. **The current cost of the policy is \$1,457.00 (USD). To enroll, the student will receive an email with a special link to enroll online from your country officer. The email with the link will be sent to you. You MUST purchase PLAN B+. Do NOT purchase any other insurance plans. The link will take you to this option on the CISI Bolduc website. Only use the link sent to you in the separate email to complete this process.**

All enrolled students will have free access to the Participant Portal and Phone App, where they can:

- View/print their ID card, coverage brochure, consulate letter
- Obtain emergency contact information
- Look up providers. Please note, participants may visit any facility outside of the US, they do not need to access a provider from our list. We offer primary coverage across the board.
- Resources & links page (State Department resource)
  - Travel warnings
  - Country Specifics
  - Health and Vaccinations

After you have purchased this insurance, you will need to bring a copy of your ID card with you when you arrive.

## MONEY

You are required to bring \$500 (USD) for use as an emergency fund. This fund must be kept with a Rotarian and if it goes below \$500, your natural parents must replenish it. The fund must be in the form of US dollars and may not be in the form of a credit or debit bankcard, nor travelers' checks. Your prom, a big party, or a trip to the beach is not an emergency. Sudden medical expenses that need to be submitted to the insurance company or dental work that is not covered by your insurance would qualify as a legitimate use of the emergency fund.

The fund is to be used only for legitimate emergencies, and your Country YEO, host family or counselor will supervise its use.

Whatever other funds you brought with you for tours, clothing and the like, should be put in a bank, not kept by you personally. Have your counselor help you set up a bank account and assist you in managing your funds so they will last the exchange year. If you brought credit or debit cards, keep them in safe place, and if they require a PIN (Personal Identification Number), ensure that you do not keep the PIN number in the same place as your card.

Do not borrow money from friends or your host parents. Never loan money to anyone here. If you did not bring a phone credit card and must call home for some reason, or make any other long distance call, be prepared to pay for the call in advance. Do not use the host families phone to make long distance calls without their permission. Do not assume that your host family will pay any

expenses for you beyond room and board. If they invite you on a trip or to some special occasion, always offer to pay your share.

Above all, manage your money well, and allow your family and club to assist you. You are here for about ten months. Do not spend all the money your parents sent you here with in the first thirty days.

## **WEIGHT GAIN**

You will be arriving in a country where there are fast food on every corner. You are under some stress from being in a new situation, and food becomes very attractive. Your exercise routine may have been disrupted by your change of environment. All of the above may result in some weight gain. Our female students are especially vulnerable to this syndrome. Be aware of this and combat it with being active, having a regular exercise regimen, and knowing how to say NO to second helpings, Whoppers, and Big Macs.

## **YOUR PRIORITIES**

**(This is very important to the success of your Exchange)**

Your **FIRST** priority is to required scheduled District 5100 activities. There will be five or six of these during your year here, and unless you are advised otherwise, in writing, your attendance is required at each of these events.

Your **SECOND** priority is to your host family. If they have planned activities in which they expect you to participate, they have priority over any other activity you might have planned, except Priority #1.

Your **THIRD** priority is to your host Rotary Club. They made the decision to host you, have paid your District fees, and expect you to attend meetings regularly and be part of club activities. Your presence and participation help sustain the Youth Exchange Program in your host club.

Your **FOURTH** priority is to your School. You are expected to attend school every day, make an effort in class, and participate in school activities.

## **THE RULES**

Along with these guidelines, you were provided a copy of the District 5100 rules for both you and your parents to sign and return to the District prior to your arrival. They are not listed again here, but the guidelines elaborate on some of the rules, and discusses some general guidelines and standards of behavior.

You are here to become part of the American culture, one far different from you own. Your perception of America has been formed to a great extent by magazines, movies and television. The America you will find is much, much different. Your role as an exchange student is to adapt to our culture and way of life. This means that the customs and laws of this country may not be the same as yours, but that does not mean they are wrong, just different.

**Do not waste time and ruin your exchange by constantly comparing America to your home country, and being critical of your new culture. Observe, learn, and adapt.**

The rules and guidelines are also in place to assist you in maintaining the high standard of behavior expected of all Rotary YE students. You are an ambassador of your country and the Rotary Youth Exchange Program. The impression you make on your club, host family and school, determine the present and future success of the exchange program.

**One very important point to remember is “if the rules of your sponsoring country are more restrictive than District 5100’s rules and guidelines, then the more restrictive rules shall apply. If your host families’ rules are more restrictive than either the hosting or sending district, then the family’s rules will apply”.** (Please do not get confused, and think it is the other way around)

### **STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS**

Some of our rules are in response to State and Federal requirements that may be stricter than what you experienced in your home culture. Such would be the case with cigarettes and alcohol. The age for drinking and purchasing an alcoholic beverage in Oregon and Washington is 21. It is also a violation of the law for a person over 21 to either purchase or serve you alcohol.

The rules concerning cigarettes and vaping (e-cigarettes) are even more difficult as America has become a culture where the use of cigarettes at any age is discouraged. Smoking and vaping have been banned in most public places. It is very difficult to find host homes for students who smoke. If you are a smoker, you should either quit before coming on your exchange, or reconsider your decision to come here. If you come to the U.S. as a smoker in disregard for the rules you and your parents signed, you will be unable to continue the exchange.

### **DATING**

Most students do not understand the purpose of this guideline until they form a relationship and then have to end it to go back to their home country. Binding yourself to a single person for the duration of your exchange limits your opportunities and experience, and puts you at an unacceptable risk should the relationship become too serious. (For the curious among you “too serious” means sex)

### **DRIVING**

For liability reasons, driving is prohibited while on your exchange. Many students come here hoping to get their driver’s license, as it is cheaper and easier to obtain here. Many students wish to take Drivers Education courses. Generally, you cannot take Driver’s Education Courses without driving. **Since you cannot drive ... alas, you cannot take Driver’s Education.**



## SCHOOL

You are expected to attend school and make an effort to pass all your classes. Excessive tardiness and absences are not acceptable, and may put your exchange at risk. Your participation in school activities will provide you opportunities to meet and make new friends. If you do NOT attend school, you will be sent home. Your visa is a student visa which mean you must attend school. If the school expels you for behavior or academics, you will be sent home.

Neither the Rotary District nor your school promises that you will officially graduate from your hosting High School. Do not come here planning to graduate. Please speak to your school counselor with any questions you have regarding graduation. In most cases, you will be allowed to participate in graduation activities, and receive a certificate commemorating your participation in the school year. In rare instances the counselor will work with you to meet official graduation requirements, but do not come here expecting it.

## COMMUNICATIONS

As a general rule, you should not receive or make phone calls, Skype, chat, text or have other direct communications to family and friends at home for the first ninety days of your exchange, other than an initial call when you arrive here to let them know you have arrived safely. The purpose behind this is not to punish you, or your parents, but to help you adjust to your new culture and family. For most of you, but not everyone, excessive direct family communications will cause homesickness, and make it difficult to settle in with your host family.

Please restrict yourself and your parents to one e-mail per week for the first ninety days of your exchange. E-mail remains one of the least expensive ways to communicate both to your home country and within the U.S. If you do not have an e-mail address, you are encouraged to obtain one prior to coming on exchange. Free e-mail is available to you through several sources, the most common ones being hotmail.com, gmail.com, and yahoo.com. **Email should be considered as an inexpensive way to write a letter. The use of Skype, Facetime, “chat rooms” or instant messaging is strongly discouraged. Their use can contribute to homesickness.** You are expected to write letters often and in abundance. Pen, paper and stamps are plentiful, cheap and easy to come by. Give them a try.

## LANGUAGE

The easiest way to blend into a new culture is to use the native language. You are in America, where English is the accepted language. You will not learn it if you do not practice speaking it. Every word spoken in your native language is a lost moment to use a word in your new language! Whenever your host family, club, or the District YE Committee hears you speaking your native language on the phone, or with other students, you will be asked to speak English. The District YE Committee members will assume that if you are not speaking English, you must be talking about something you do not want them to hear. Bad Idea!!!

## GROOMING AND DRESS

Dress to fit in the American Culture. For the most part, school uniforms are not required. Take care not to dress in a way that makes you stand out, or be identified with a gang or other alternative style that would not be acceptable to your host family or Rotary Club.

Rotary guidelines allow males to have neatly trimmed beards or moustaches, and single ring in the ear. Females are allowed two earrings in each ear in the bottom lobe. Hair styles and colors should not be radical. (The definition of radical seems to change from year to year, but we will let you know if you have arrived there) If your host family or school has rules that do not allow the above, their rules will apply.

Tattoos, other than the wash off kind, are prohibited unless you already have them before you arrive. Rings, studs and the like are not permitted to be installed in any portion of your body, chin, lip, tongue, belly button, or otherwise. (When and if the District arrives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we will be sure to let you know).

## LOCAL TRAVEL

There are some marginal areas of allowed commuting travel within the District. For the most part the determination is left with your host parents, based on what they would allow their own children to do. Travel outside of the local area but within the district needs approval of the host parents, club and your District Country YEO. Travel outside of the local area **AND** outside of the district is considered independent travel. One instance of travel that might be approved would be to take a bus alone from Portland to La Grande, a trip of 300 miles. This trip would only be approved if the host parents, club and District YEO all agree. A bus, or light rail trip from Hillsboro to Portland would be considered local travel as it is a common method of transportation within the Portland Metropolitan area. Host parent approval only is required. Salem area students using their local transit system would also be considered local travel requiring host family approval only. Traveling over a continental bus or train system outside of the district is prohibited. Travel with host parents, Rotarians, your school or church is **not** considered to be “independent travel.”

## INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

**NOTICE: INDEPENDENT TRAVEL MAY BE SUSPENDED AT ANY TIME FOR SAFETY REASONS.**

**INDEPENDENT TRAVEL IS A PRIVILEGE NOT AN ENTITLEMENT. Whether or not a student may make an “independent travel” trip, is at the absolute sole discretion of the District 5100 Chairperson.** No other District officer has the authority to grant permission for such a trip. You may be allowed one independent travel experience during your exchange not to exceed fourteen days. The fourteen days cannot be split into more than one trip, unless your parents are legally separated or divorced and both are planning separate visits, and then the total travel days may still not exceed fourteen days. For the most part, independent travel is reserved for visits to relatives. As most independent travel requests will be to visit relatives, a request for two students to take independent travel together will be denied. Independent travel requests to travel either individually, or in a group, to a tourist destination with no family at the other end will be denied.

Travel requests to visit family friends or a former host family or student will be considered. The following factors will be considered before permission for an independent travel trip may be granted:

- the purpose of the trip (i.e. to see a relative or family friend);
- the timing of the trip (i.e. during summer vacation, or other time of year when school is not in session);
- the overall performance of the student in school, with their host families and their host club.

Before permission for an independent travel trip will be granted, the student must request a letter or email from each of the following people, granting their permission for the trip.

- Natural parents
- Sponsoring Rotary Club
- Sponsoring District's Youth Exchange Committee Chairperson
- Host family
- Host Rotary Club
- Host school Principal (if school is in session)
- Host District Youth Exchange Officer (YEO)
- The person, or person, the student intends to visit

Each of these letters or emails shall be addressed to, and sent directly from the writer to the District Chairperson at least 30 days prior to the intended trip. Each letter/email will also convey, in sufficient detail, that the writer understands the full nature and extent of the purpose of the trip. This means the dates and times of travel, the method of travel, the people that will be visited, the special purpose of the trip, and any other information that the District Chairperson should consider in reaching a decision on whether or not to grant permission. The letters/emails must indicate the name, address, telephone numbers and email address of the person, or persons, being visited. The letters should also indicate any relationship to the student (i.e. aunt, uncle, brother, sister, family friend, etc.).

Once the District Chairperson receives the letters, consideration will be given to the request. This does not mean permission will be granted. Permission for independent travel will not be granted if the requested trip falls during a scheduled District activity, or during traditional holidays, such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. These are typically very special family times and the host families will be given absolute deference to those times.

Travel with natural parents, where the student and the parent travel outside the student's host area, will be considered independent travel.

Travel will be permitted only by regularly scheduled commercial airlines. When the person putting the student on the plane observes the plane take off from the ground, that person shall call the person who is meeting the student at the other end, and advise them that the student is in fact on the plane. When the student arrives at the destination airport, the person meeting the student shall immediately call the person who sent the student off, and advise them that the student has in fact arrived safely and is now in their custody. This same communication must occur on the return trip also.

**IF ALL PARTIES ARE NOT AGREEABLE TO THE ABOVE TERMS AND CONDITIONS, PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR THE TRIP. DO NOT PURCHASE ANY TICKETS UNTIL YOU HAVE PERMISSION FOR THE TRIP!!!**

### **PARENTAL VISITS**

Parents are not permitted to travel with their students to the site of the exchange, nor at any time within the first 120 days of the exchange. A visit during a major holiday, or during a required District event, is not permitted. Parents must have the permission of the host Country Youth Exchange Officer (YEO), host family, and host club before making plans to visit. Visits during the exchange where the student travels in the U.S. with the parents will be considered as the student's independent travel experience.

Parents are NOT allowed to come to the U.S. and pick up their student at the end of the exchange. This is a violation of the US Department of State regulation and is a violation of the student's visa. The end of the exchange is the time for the student to say goodbye to their host families and friends. Please consider this before you make plans.

### **TOURS**

District 5100 provides several activities throughout your stay in Oregon. Trips include an Inbound Orientation, an optional bus trip, a Ski Trip, District Conference, and final June event. This is considerably more activity than is provided by most Rotary Districts.

Due to the increased level of activity, District 5100 does not run any U.S. tours, nor do we allow our students to participate in any Rotary or other exchange group tour not chaperoned by members of the District 5100 Youth Exchange Committee. Trips with the student's host family, Rotary club members, church or school are permitted.

Students who are active in their clubs, schools, and host families will have ample opportunity to travel in this country through other group trips and family activities. The number of opportunities that will be available depends greatly on the student, and how they have presented themselves to the community.

An authorized **OPTIONAL** trip is scheduled each year. This trip is **NOT** included in the program fees paid by the hosting Rotary Club. Information regarding this trip will be provided separately.

### **TRAVELING HOME**

You are not thinking of this now, but your year here will go quickly and before you realize it you will be preparing to go home. Your Country YEO should contact you in early March to confirm your departure date. Check with your family at home, your hosting club, and host family before choosing your departure date. Notify your Country YEO when you have decided upon your departure date. The YEO can help confirm your return flight if you need it. Choose your departure

date carefully. Should you change your mind and wish to amend your reservations, there will likely be a fee imposed by the airlines or travel agent for each change.

If your parents are here while you are trying to say goodbye, either they or your friends and host families will be hurt, as you will not be able to give everyone the attention both you and they would like. **Parents are NOT allowed to come to the U.S. and pick up their student at the end of the exchange.**

For flights out of Portland (PDX), check with all airlines you are using to see what their baggage limits are. Also, check with each airline to see how many carry-on bags they will allow (Some allow two, some only one). Excess and/or overweight bags are very expensive.

Be sure to notify your host families, club, and Country YEO of your departure date, and do not forget to retrieve any documents and your Emergency fund from your club. Most of all, do not forget to take back with you all the wonderful memories of your exchange, hopefully one of the best years of your life.

### **IN CONCLUSION**

The Rotary International Youth Exchange Program, through your host Rotary Club, is offering you a unique experience to live in a new and different environment. You are expected to immerse yourself in the culture and customs of the host country, learn the language quickly (if it is different from your own), to accept gracefully the differences you will encounter and to join wholeheartedly in Rotary, school, and community activities.

Your compliance with the rules and guidelines will assure you of a successful and rewarding experience. Students who do not wish to assume the responsibilities of the Program put their exchange at risk of coming to an early end. For most of you, however, this is the beginning of the most **WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE OF YOUR LIFE. THE ROTARIANS AND FAMILIES OF DISTRICT 5100 LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR ARRIVAL.**