

## **Low-Cost Travel Opportunities**

There are numerous foreign travel opportunities available that require a relatively small financial outlay from the student.

**Foreign service programs:** sponsored by houses of worship and non-profit organizations are often low-cost, because participants are hosted by people in the community they will be serving. Here are two examples:

### **1. Amigos de las Americas**

**Local contact:** Sigrid Bergenstein, Co-President

1-617-759-4876, sigridb@comcast.net

**Website:** [www.amigoslink.org](http://www.amigoslink.org)

**Destinations:** Central and South America

**Program Cost:** Fundraising offsets at least half of the \$4600 total program cost; cost should not be a deterrent, as the cost can be brought down to as low as \$500 for students in need of more financial support

### **2. Congregational Church of Needham Guatemala Partnership**

Program is open to non-congregants on a space available basis.

**Contact:** Caryl Johnson, 781-444-3383, [caryl\\_johnson@needham.k12.ma.us](mailto:caryl_johnson@needham.k12.ma.us)

**Destination:** Guatemala

**Program Cost:** Airfare (approximately \$800) plus \$185

## **The Rotary Youth Exchange**

Through the Rotary Club of Needham, Rotary International, an excellent opportunity is available to you for experiencing another culture as part of your Global Competence Program. Rotary International has a program called Rotary Youth Exchange where students travel from the US to live with families in other countries and students from other countries come to the US to stay with families here. These trips can be for a whole school year (Long-Term Exchange), or for 3-8 weeks (Short-Term Exchange).

For outgoing students, the costs are kept extremely low compared to other programs because Rotary Clubs on both ends are doing much of the organization through volunteer efforts and the host families are volunteering their homes. The costs are limited to a \$65

application fee, a \$150 insurance policy, and air fare. If you are traveling on a Long-Term Exchange, you will even get a monthly allowance to give you spending money while you are there. The hosting Rotary Club pays that expense.

If you are interested, you should first check out the Rotary Eastern States Student Exchange web site ([www.exchangestudent.org](http://www.exchangestudent.org)). Here is a quick excerpt from what you will find there:

“Each year, Rotary Youth Exchange provides about 8,000 young people the opportunity to experience the cultures, problems and accomplishments of people in other countries. Through this Rotary program, students are given the opportunity to grow as individuals while their concept of the world is growing too. Participants return with a broader view of the world and a deeper understanding of themselves.

When these young people become adults, many assume leadership roles in their communities and bring to these positions the benefits of and insights from their exchange experiences. As a result, Rotary's Youth Exchange program becomes a powerful force in the promotion of world understanding and peace.

Through Youth Exchange, Rotarians seek to provide the best possible environment for students. The program enjoys the advantages of over 30 years of experience and a network of more than 1.2 million Rotarians around the world. This experience and support system ensures the best possible exchange for participants in the program.”

Once you have reviewed the web site, if you are interested, you should call or email the Rotary Club of Needham contact, Bill Paulson at 781-929-2453 or [bill@billpaulson.com](mailto:bill@billpaulson.com) for more information.

### **National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI)**

The U.S. Department of State offers merit-based foreign exchange scholarships through its National Security Language Initiative for Youth programs (NSLI). These exchanges, for students interested in studying less commonly taught foreign languages, are a summer, semester or year in length. Details can be found on the NSLI website: [www.NSLIforYouth.org](http://www.NSLIforYouth.org).