

Columbia Association **INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM**
Sister Cities High School Student Exchange *Summer 2020*

chaperone application packet

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chaperoneoverview

Columbia Association's International Exchange Program is accepting applications for volunteer chaperones for its summer 2020 Sister Cities High School Student Exchange Program with Columbia's sister cities Cergy-Pontoise (near Paris) in France and Tres Cantos (near Madrid) in Spain.

CA's High School Student Exchange Program is a reciprocal home-stay exchange of linguistic and cultural immersion. The exchange takes place between the last week of June and the end of July; the exact dates are set in the spring. Participating Howard County students spend approximately two weeks in Cergy-Pontoise or Tres Cantos hosted by local students and their families, and reciprocate by hosting those students for another two weeks.

The European exchange program offers participants the opportunity to practice their French or Spanish language skills, visit France or Spain, experience French or Spanish life and culture firsthand, and share and rediscover the U.S. and American culture with the French or Spanish students.

One or two chaperones (depending on the number of students participating, normally a 1-10 ratio) accompany the Howard County students. Although there is no monetary compensation for chaperones of this exchange, Columbia Association pays for chaperone airline tickets and covers the cost of all field trips and organized activities. Lodging and most meals while abroad are provided by the French and Spanish chaperones.

Chaperones travel to and from the sister city with the group providing supervision, enforcing program rules, solving any problems that may arise and ensuring that the group maintains a high standard of behavior as representatives of Columbia, Howard County and the United States.

As it is for the students, this is meant to be a cultural exchange. Therefore, the chaperones stay in the homes offered by the sister city and reciprocate by hosting the sister city chaperones during their stay in the U.S. Chaperones are expected to be ambassadors for Columbia Association and the U.S.

Requirements for Sister Cities High School Student Exchange Program chaperones are: to be a responsible adult age 21 or older; be available during the entire length of the exchange (chaperones cannot work during the exchange); be able to fulfill the duties of the chaperone as stated in the chaperone program agreement and the program rules; host the French/Spanish chaperone when they come to the U.S.; and have experience as a chaperone of high school teens and enjoy working with them. Chaperones must be proficient in French or Spanish (as applicable).

If you are interested in being a chaperone for the summer 2020 exchange, please complete, sign and submit the enclosed chaperone application packet by Friday, February 28, 2020.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Laura Smit, program manager of Columbia Association's International Exchange and Multicultural Programs, at 410-715-3162 or by email at Laura.Smit@ColumbiaAssociation.org.

chaperone checklist

INSTRUCTIONS

Thank you for applying to be a chaperone for the 2020 Columbia Association Sister Cities High School Student Exchange Program. The program depends on chaperones to ensure a successful trip for our high school exchange students.

Please use the checklist below to ensure that your application packet is complete before you submit it. You may add additional sheets if needed. Please print clearly.

- Chaperone Application
- Chaperone Personal Statement
- Chaperone Program Agreement
- Chaperone Program Rules
- Two headshot photos

It is strongly recommended that you keep copies of this Application Packet for your reference.

Applicants who are selected to be chaperones for the summer high school exchange are expected to host a foreign chaperone during the second half of the exchange. Interviews will be conducted in mid-March.

Application deadline: February 28, 2020

PLEASE SEND YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:

*Laura Smit, Program Manager
Columbia Association
International Exchange & Multicultural Programs
6310 Hillside, Suite 100, Columbia, MD 21046
Email: Laura.Smit@ColumbiaAssociation.org
Telephone: 410-715-3162*

chaperone application

I am applying as a chaperone for the high school student group traveling to (circle one):

Cergy-Pontoise, France / Tres Cantos, Spain

Name *As it will appear on passport* _____

Street address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **ZIP Code** _____

Home phone _____ **Work phone** _____ **Cell phone** _____

Email address *Print clearly* _____

Current employer *(Teachers, please specify school)* _____

Employer phone *(Teachers, please list school phone)* _____

Position/title _____

Grades and languages you teach (if applicable) _____

What language(s) do you speak? _____

Evaluate your ability to speak Spanish/French: Beginner Survival Participatory Clarity Professional Fluent

T-shirt size *(Please circle size preference)* **S M L XL**

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

1. Have you ever traveled overseas? Yes No If yes, where? _____

2. Have you ever been a foreign exchange student? Yes No If yes, where? _____

3. Have you ever hosted a foreign exchange student? Yes No If so, for how long? _____

4. Have you ever been a chaperone on a high school trip? Yes No If yes, when? _____

5. Do you have a valid passport? Yes No

6. Are you a U.S. citizen? Yes No If not, what country's passport will you use during the exchange? _____

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MEDICAL

1. Do you have any medical conditions of which your host family should be aware? (e.g. asthma, epilepsy, migraines) Yes No

If yes, please explain. _____

2. Allergies: Please list any allergies you have. Rate each allergy from **1** (for mild reaction) to **4** (for life-threatening). _____

PETS

1. I have (kind and number of pets) _____

2. I am allergic to (type of animal) _____

3. I would prefer not to live in a house with _____

SMOKING

1. Does anyone in your family smoke? Yes No

2. Are you willing to stay with a family where there are smokers? Yes No

DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

I have the following food allergies: _____

I prefer not to eat: _____

HOSTING

1. Are you able to host a foreign chaperone here during the second half of the exchange? Yes No If not, why not? _____

2. Would you be willing to be hosted by a chaperone of the opposite sex overseas? Yes No

3. Would you be willing to host a chaperone of the opposite sex here in the U.S.? Yes No

I hereby certify that I am aware of and accept Columbia Association's Sister Cities High School Student Exchange Program requirements, and that the information provided in this application is correct to the extent of my knowledge. I understand that completion of this application does not imply that I will be selected, and that I must submit to a criminal background check and a home interview if I am selected to serve as a chaperone for the exchange.

Applicant's signature

Date

chaperone personal statement

PLEASE ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BELOW ON A SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER OR ATTACH A WORD DOCUMENT OR PDF.

1. Why you would like to serve as a chaperone for Columbia Association's Sister Cities High School Student Exchange Program with one of Columbia's sister cities — either Cergy-Pontoise (outside of Paris, France) or Tres Cantos (outside of Madrid, Spain)?
2. What experience do you have as a chaperone and/or working with groups of teenagers?
3. What foreign exchange or international travel experience do you have? Please explain your ability to adjust to another culture.

Please submit your “Chaperone Personal Statement” with your application.

chaperone program agreement

A CHAPERONE GUIDELINES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chaperones travel to and from the sister city with the group, providing supervision, enforcing program rules, solving any problems that may arise, and ensuring that the group maintains a high standard of behavior as representatives of Columbia, Howard County and the United States.

This program is meant to be a cultural exchange for the chaperones as well as the students. Therefore, the chaperones stay in the homes offered by the sister city and reciprocate by hosting the sister city chaperones during their stay in the U.S.

Specific responsibilities of the high school exchange chaperones include, but are not limited to:

1. Attending and supervising the student participants during the sister cities exchange, including:

- Getting to know each student participating in the exchange.
- Being aware of students' medical history and needs.
- Assisting students with language problems.
- Helping with culture shock and homesickness.
- Addressing problems or concerns between exchange students and host families.
- Going with sick students to doctor visits, clinics or hospitals and visiting sick students at their home while abroad.
- Dealing with any other issues that may arise.

2. Maintaining communication with the students while abroad by:

- Creating a WhatsApp group for the exchange prior to departure that includes the cell phone numbers of all the American students.
- Messaging the students as a group daily via WhatsApp while traveling and in the sister city, checking in with them, and informing them of each day's activities (in English).
- Letting all the students know that you are there for them and that they can contact you individually via WhatsApp, email or phone calls.
- Holding a group meeting with the students on the fourth or fifth day after arrival abroad, separately from their host students, to discuss how they are doing.
- Inquiring about how they are doing whenever encountering a student.
- Helping students to communicate any medical issues, food allergies and/or preferences with host families, as needed.

3. Maintaining communication with the students while in the U.S. by:

- Messaging the students via WhatsApp with details of each day's activities and trips, and to share information sent out via email by CA's exchange program staff.
- Assisting the foreign chaperone in summarizing information sent to U.S. parents and students so they can send it out to the foreign students in Spanish/French.

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- 4. Participating in all program-organized group activities abroad and in the U.S., including:**
 - Group activities, which may include full-day and half-day trips on buses, daytime and evening activities, and overnight travel (when abroad). Trips may begin as early as 8am and may last until 2am.
 - Pre-travel group activities, which may include student and parent orientation sessions, social get-togethers at student homes and other activities, such as bowling.
 - Welcome and goodbye parties with students and parents.
 - Lunches and/or dinners with the other chaperones, as well as sister cities staff and volunteers both abroad and in the U.S.
- 5. Assisting with the matching of American and Spanish/French students, reviewing student applications, helping address any possible questions/concerns before the exchange begins, and keeping files for reference during the exchange.**
- 6. Attending and assisting with the orientation sessions conducted by CA International Exchange staff for parents and students prior to travel abroad, including:**
 - Organizing “get-to-know-you” activities for students.
 - Conducting a travel language session, using materials in the Sister Cities Handbook.
 - Meeting and speaking with the parents of the students prior to travel.
- 7. Assisting with tasks during the exchange, including checking students in for bus trips, keeping track of students and parent chaperones during trips, and breaking the students into small groups for each trip.**
- 8. Maintaining communication with the International Exchange Program staff and other chaperones by:**
 - Emailing, messaging or calling within a day of arrival and periodically throughout the stay.
 - Keeping CA exchange program staff informed of concerns or problems as soon as possible if any significant problems arise.
 - Sharing any student concerns, problems, or suggestions for improvement that may require action by the other chaperones and local program organizers.
- 9. Documenting the exchange experience by taking photos and collecting brochures/website URLs/maps as appropriate for future orientations and information for possible promotional use. Additionally, you’ll be posting about the group’s experiences while overseas and in the U.S. via the parent and teen WhatsApp groups, and in the Sister Cities Facebook group.**
- 10. Representing Columbia and Columbia Association at all official functions in the sister city, which includes presenting gifts to the sister city from the people of Columbia and making official speeches as needed.**

B PROGRAM RULES

Chaperones are charged with enforcing the program rules that the students and their parents sign in order to be accepted into the Sister Cities High School Exchange Program. The program rules — which apply from the day of departure for Spain/France until the day when the Spanish/French students fly home — are as follows:

As a participant in CA’s Sister Cities High School Student Exchange Program, students and chaperones act as ambassadors for Columbia, Howard County and the United States of America, and therefore are expected to maintain a high standard of behavior. Students and parents agree to and sign the program rules. Students who violate program rules may be sent home if participating in the overseas portion of the exchange and/or dismissed from the program.

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No alcoholic beverages Teens are forbidden to consume any alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine, at any time while participating in the program.

No illegal drugs Teens are forbidden to use any drugs except medications prescribed by a physician and/or noted on the medical form. Teens may carry and use over-the-counter pain medications such as Tylenol and Advil for minor aches and pains.

Driving of motorized vehicles prohibited Teens will not drive any motorized vehicle, including cars, motorcycles or motorbikes, while participating in the overseas portion of the exchange.

Hitchhiking prohibited Under no circumstances will teens attempt to hitchhike while participating in this exchange program.

Improper behavior I understand that any student whose behavior, in the sole judgment of the Sister Cities High School Student Exchange Program chaperones and of Columbia Association, is inappropriate or dangerous or reflects unfavorably on Columbia Association or the Sister Cities High School Student Exchange Program, may be sent home immediately and/or dismissed from the program. The student's return from overseas will be at the family's expense and without supervision, after proper notification of the student's parents and/or legal guardians.

Remaining in host country after group leaves I understand that no student will be allowed to remain in the host country after the group has left unless specific arrangements have been made with Columbia Association before travel overseas commences.

Note: Columbia Association does not forbid chaperones from drinking alcohol; however, as chaperones are continuously on call, they must not be (nor appear to be) intoxicated. Failure to abide by these rules and regulations may result in disciplinary action, including removal of chaperone status and exclusion from all future International Exchange Program activities.

C HOSTING

As a sister cities exchange chaperone, I agree to:

1. Receive my French/Spanish counterpart with warmth and friendliness, and make them feel welcome when I host them.
2. Be responsible for the lodging, meals, and entertaining/showing your counterpart around on free days.
3. Try to make my exchange counterpart's stay in the U.S. as beneficial, productive and enjoyable as possible.
4. Speak French/Spanish with my counterpart as much as possible during the France/Spain portion of the exchange, and English during the U.S. portion of the exchange.
5. Do all in my power during my stay abroad to adapt to the customs in France/Spain and to the schedules and lifestyle of the family who will host me.
6. Respect and be courteous to my host chaperone and their family while abroad.
7. Notify CA's exchange program staff in case of any problems or concerns with your French/Spanish counterpart.

D EXPENSES

1. Columbia Association will pay round-trip airfare to Spain/France for the chaperones.
2. CA will also reimburse up to \$200 of other qualified travel expenses with proper documentation.
3. Chaperones are responsible for the lodging and meals on free days and evenings (at home and outside) of their exchange counterpart. Note: Meals during program trips and activities are covered by the respective organizations in Spain, France and the U.S.

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4. Prior to departure abroad, chaperones receive a cash advance/emergency funds from Columbia Association to pay for approved program-related expenses and emergencies while overseas and in the U.S. The funds must be used only for emergencies, doctor visits, other expenses directly related to dealing with issues/problems with the students, such as meals during program-related trips (not covered by the local program) and miscellaneous items needed to perform the duties of the chaperone.
5. Chaperones must keep all receipts for program expenses and must return unused funds along with supporting receipts to CA within 10 days of their return to the U.S.
6. Columbia Association will not pay for excess baggage or overweight luggage. Chaperones should check airline regulations prior to departure.

E PERSONAL TRAVEL

During the exchange (whether overseas or in the U.S.), all overnight personal travel on free days by chaperones must be approved by CA's exchange program staff in advance. A maximum of two nights away will be allowed, and personal travel cannot conflict with any planned program trips or activities.

F WORKING DURING THE EXCHANGE

While participating in the sister cities exchange, chaperones may not work at other jobs or participate in other programs during the entire length of the exchange.

G MEDICAL INSURANCE

I have adequate medical, accident, dismemberment, and repatriation insurance coverage for myself. I have verified this insurance coverage with my insurance agent and have confirmed valid overseas coverage. I understand that Columbia Association provides no medical, accident, dismemberment, or repatriation insurance. Upon my acceptance into the program, I will complete the medical history and emergency form.

H VEHICLE INSURANCE

I understand that the vehicles that I will drive during the exchange in the U.S. must be insured at least to Maryland's minimum liability levels.

I CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

I understand that in the course of determining the suitability of a chaperone for both accompanying students and hosting an international chaperone, CA will seek relevant background information in the form of a criminal background check.

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I, _____
_____ hereby agree with Columbia Association Inc. (the “Association”) to the following by affixing my signature below on this date, _____ 20____. In connection with my participation in CA’s Sister Cities High School Student Exchange Program (the “Program”), I understand and acknowledge the nature and extent of the activities that will be involved in the Program and assume the risks inherent in such activities on behalf of myself. I voluntarily waive any and all claims, costs, liabilities, expenses (including attorneys’ fees), and judgments against the Association, its directors, officers, employees, servants, subcontractors and agents, and hereby release, excuse and discharge the Association, its directors, officers, employees, servants, subcontractors and agents from all claims, costs, liabilities, expenses (including attorneys’ fees), and judgments that may arise out of my participation in the Program and all aspects attendant thereto. The undersigned further agree(s) to indemnify and hold the Association, its directors, officers, employees, servants, subcontractors and agents harmless from any and all claims, damages, actions, liabilities, expenses (including attorneys’ fees), and judgments that may arise out of my participation in the Program.

I hereby certify that I have reviewed the above Chaperone Program Agreement, and that I will comply with the above guidelines and regulations if I am selected to serve as a chaperone for Columbia Association’s Sister Cities High School Student Exchange Program.

Applicant’s name _____ **Date** _____

Applicant’s signature _____