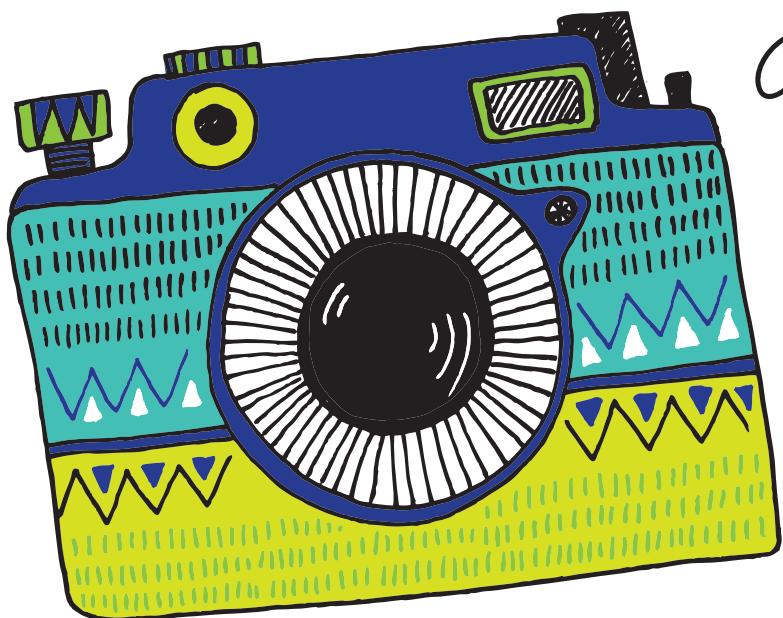


# EXPERIENCE

## *the Summer*

*of a  
lifetime!*



Sister Cities  
OF NASHVILLE



# WHO WE ARE

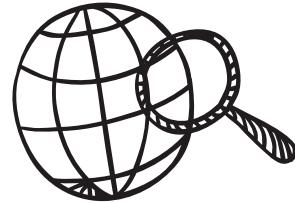
## Our Mission Statement

*To connect Nashvillians with people of the world, promoting peace through mutual understanding, respect and cooperation – one person, one community at a time.*

Founded in 1990, Sister Cities of Nashville (SCN) is a chapter of Sister Cities International, which is based in Washington D.C. SCN is a volunteer organization that connects Nashvillians with friends around the world through exchanges, cultural programs, and partnerships.

## SCN Student Exchange Objectives

- Intercultural knowledge and relationship building
- Global awareness
- Personal values and language skills
- Focus on communities, service and commitment



## By participating in the SCN Student Exchange program, students will:

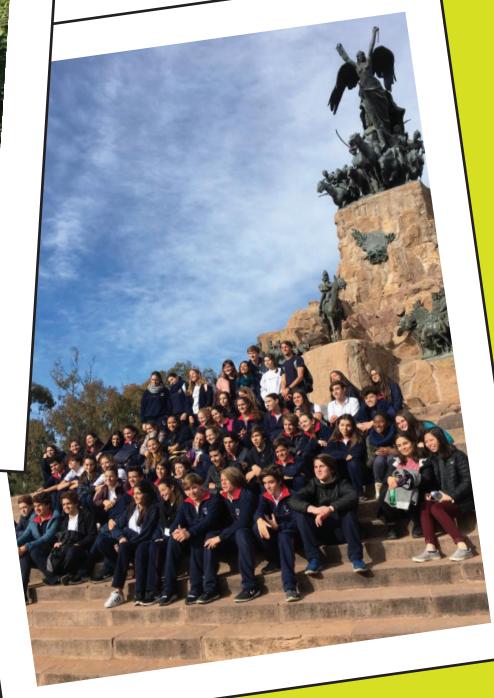
- Become an international ambassador for Nashville in their chosen Sister City
- Learn about their host country, its people, culture and language
- Develop skills to deal with future challenges, independence and self-awareness
- Expand their interests and experiences
- Build friendships that last a lifetime
- Gain respect for the customs, economic differences, lifestyle and daily routine of the host country and family

## Sister Cities of Nashville currently maintains high school exchanges with:

- Caen, France
- Magdeburg, Germany
- Mendoza, Argentina
- Taiyuan, China
- Tamworth, Australia



tour A hand-drawn style word "tour" followed by a five-pointed star outline.

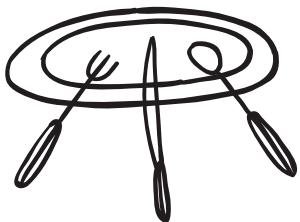


# STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

Deciding to leave my family and friends to go live with strangers who speak a different language bolstered my confidence in being more independent and adventurous, which is important as I go to college next year.

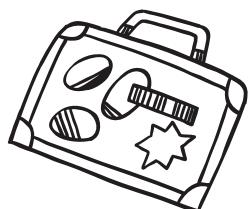


I learned not just the language, but also about the culture and way of life in France. I learned to present myself well, be independent, and try new things, and I am so grateful for that.



Going to Australia and seeing towns and cities that aren't as broadcasted gave me a new

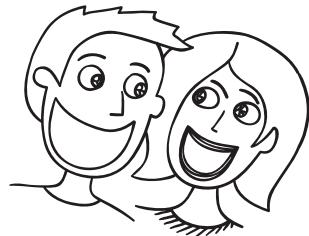
appreciation for places that don't easily compare to where I live. I loved looking out from my host family's backyard and seeing miles of open land and kangaroos hopping about. You learn to love another way of life while making friends for life.



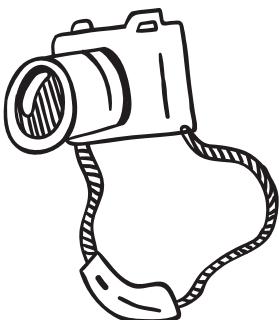
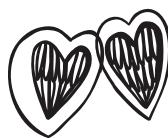
Even if we don't speak each other's language, we are very much alike. Teenage boys like video games and food and we are all expected to go to college.

My trip to France taught me how important it is to build relationships with people who are different from me.

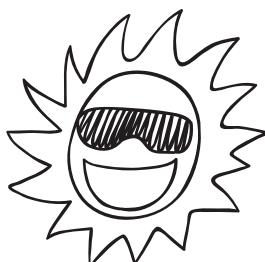
It taught me that communication with people from the other side of the world is valuable ~~and~~ that there is more than one way to communicate.



THROUGH THE SISTER CITIES PROGRAM I GAINED A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF A DIFFERENT CULTURE AND WAY OF LIFE OF THE INCREDIBLY WELCOMING AND GRACIOUS ARGENTINIANS.



BY GOING TO GERMANY AS A FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENT I WAS ABLE TO NOT ONLY GRASP THE EVERYDAY HOUSEHOLD LIFE, BUT ALSO TYPICAL EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS. IT WAS A LOOK AT ANOTHER COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE BEYOND A TEXTBOOK PAGE.



# EXCHANGE CITIES

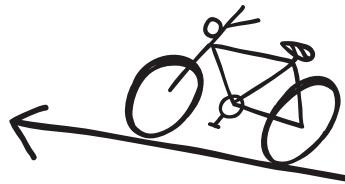
## CAEN, FRANCE

Caen, the capital of Normandy, is located a few miles inland from the D-Day beaches. It was one of William the Conqueror's capitals and is near the historic departure point for his invasion of England. Caen was Nashville's first active sister city with the relationship originating nearly thirty years ago. It became an official sister city in 1991. Programs have included annual delegation visits, academic exchanges, programs for students and lawyers, and even basketball games between local teams.

Students who visit Caen and Paris will typically attend the D-Day ceremony and experience the awe of the American Cemetery and Omaha Beach. The exchange will be full of history, great food, and a lot of time to practice speaking French!

- Exchanges typically take place the first two weeks of June
- Cost is estimated around \$1,500 - \$2,000
- Exchange trip includes excursion to Paris, France

\*Students are required to have two years of French language instruction



## MAGDEBURG, GERMANY -

Not all exchanges take place every year, please check our website for this year's offerings. Magdeburg is located along the Elbe River in northern Germany about 90 miles west of Berlin. The importance of the city extends from the middle ages through the Reformation to the present. Just to the east of the former inner-German border, Magdeburg is now the capital of Saxony-Anhalt. It has maintained a very active partnership with Nashville for several years and became its official sister city in 2003.

Student ambassadors to Magdeburg spend their two weeks enjoying the Magdeburg Cathedral, Elbauenpark Tower, Magdeburg zoo, visiting schools, and meeting local officials. Magdeburg and Berlin are home to some major attractions including the Magdeburg Symphony, Magdeburg Science Museum, the Green Citadel, the Holocaust Memorial and the Reichstag building. While there is no language requirement, this exchange is a great opportunity for students studying German.

- Exchanges typically take place the first two weeks of June
- Cost is estimated around \$1,500 - \$2,000
- Exchange trip includes excursion to Berlin, Germany





## MENDOZA, ARGENTINA

Located in the eastern foothills of the Andes Mountains, Mendoza was settled in 1561 by Pedro del Castillo. Two of the region's main industries are wine making and olive oil production. Mendoza has been designated as one of the eight great wine capitals of the world. With its proximity to the mountains, Mendoza is a frequent destination for visitors wishing to engage in mountaineering, hiking, rafting and horseback riding activities. Mendoza became an official sister city to Nashville in March 2009.

Students visiting Mendoza will enjoy a mountain excursion with caving and ziplining opportunities. They will explore the unique terrain of the Altos Limpios sand dunes and, of course, sample all of the amazing food. Best of all, they will never forget the kindness they are shown and the friendships they make!

- Exchanges typically take place the first two weeks of June
- Cost is estimated around \$2,000
- Exchange trip includes a weekend mountain excursion

\*Students are required to have two years of Spanish language instruction

## TAIYUAN, CHINA

Taiyuan, China became an official sister city to Nashville in April 2007. It is the capital city of Shanxi Province. Shanxi and Taiyuan have been important to China since ancient times, due to their strategic location and mineral resources. Shanxi lies near the Yellow River, where China's civilization began, and Taiyuan served as China's northern and western outpost. Shanxi continues to be a major producer of coal in China, and has developed a focus on heavy industries such as iron and steel. Taiyuan has a dozen universities, some of which specialize in educating engineers. Although considered a small city by Chinese standards, Taiyuan has a population of 4.2 million. The partnership between Nashville and Taiyuan builds on a longstanding regional partnership established between Tennessee and Shanxi Province in the 1980s.

Student ambassadors in Taiyuan are met with such enthusiasm! Exchange students in Taiyuan enjoy tours of historic sites such as Ancient Pingyao City and Jinci Temple. They also visit the Shanxi Museum and attend art and music classes at Yuying High School. In Beijing, they see sites including the Great Wall and Forbidden City.

- Exchanges typically take place for two weeks in mid-June
- Cost is estimated around \$2,500 - \$3,000
- Exchange trip includes excursion to Beijing, China



## TAMWORTH, AUSTRALIA

Like Nashville, Tamworth is a regional center and a hub for industry, commerce, education and tourism. Located in the state of New South Wales, Tamworth is 260 miles northwest of Sydney and 360 miles southwest of Brisbane, the two respective capitals of New South Wales and Queensland. Tamworth became Nashville's 7th sister city in June 2013.

Kangaroos, marsupials, Bondi Beach, and the Sydney Tower are just a few of the amazing attractions in Tamworth and Sydney. Tamworth has a lot to share in music and art and the Tamworth host families are always ready to show their guests a great time!

- Exchanges typically take place the last two weeks of June
- Cost is estimated around \$2,500 - \$3,000
- Exchange trip includes excursion to Sydney, Australia

# HOST FAMILY OPPORTUNITIES

Not sure if you're ready to travel but want to be a part of an international experience? Being a host family to an international student is a life-changing experience!

Host families take in a student from one of our sister cities such as Caen, Magdeburg, Taiyuan, Belfast or Mendoza for up to two weeks. Students stay in your home, eat dinner with your family, and participate in family activities.

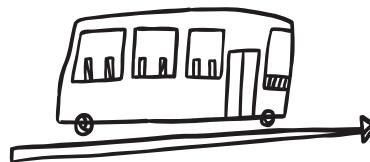
More than anything, they become a part of your family; they become your child and your children's sibling. Many of our host families keep in contact with their past students and visit back and forth for years to come.

## What is involved in being a host family?

- Host families commit to providing their student a comfortable place to sleep. The sleeping arrangements do not need to be a private room, but it is best if the student can feel comfortable using the space for some privacy.
- Students spend their evenings and weekends with their host family, and families commit to including them in family meals and activities. It is not expected that families will completely rearrange their lives when their student is with them. What they want more than anything is to simply be a part of your regular lifestyle!
- During the week, Sister Cities will take students sightseeing and to meetings with city leaders. Host families commit to making arrangements to get their student to the pre-arranged drop-off in the morning and pick-up locations in the afternoon.
- Most importantly, host families commit to being open to a new relationship, new adventures, sharing their culture and traditions, and learning about new ones!

## How do I sign up to host?

Visit [scnashville.org](http://scnashville.org), click on International Exchanges then fill out the online host family application!



# JUST SO YOU KNOW...

## **How are students selected?**

Applications are reviewed in first-come, first-served order. If a student's application is complete and includes a personal statement, a recommendation from a teacher and a \$300 application fee, then they will be accepted as Student Ambassadors on a first come, first-served order. Their application must reflect that they are in good standing in their school.

## **What is different about Sister Cities Exchanges versus other international travel opportunities I might be offered through my school?**

Sister Cities Exchanges focus on the experience of living like a local and being a part of your host family. Tour days typically run 8:30am-3:30pm and are on week days only. Evenings and weekends are time that students spend doing the things that other teens do in that country and truly getting to know their exchange city and their host family.

## **What is the hosting experience like? Is it weird to stay in someone else's house?**

While there is certainly an initial adjustment period as the student and host family are getting to know each other, many students report that the host family experience is the most meaningful part of their exchange program. Living with a host family offers the best possible opportunity to get to know the culture and lifestyle of your exchange city and it builds a deeper connection than could ever be established while staying in a hotel.

## **Is there a payment plan?**

Sister Cities requires a \$300 application fee to be paid with submission of the application. This is fully refundable only in the event that the student is not accepted onto an exchange. The fee is nonrefundable if a student accepted into the program withdraws after the application deadline. We ask for a \$500 payment by the end of January and a \$1,000 payment by the end of February. The balance is due at the end of March. Once we determine and book flights, we'll be able to share the amount of final balance due (if any). If applications are not submitted until early March, we will require a check for \$1,800 be submitted with the application (This total covers the \$300 application fee, \$500 January payment, and \$1,000 February payment).

## **Is there any financial assistance offered?**

Every year, Sister Cities of Nashville allocates funds for financial assistance for students in need. All students in need of financial assistance must complete a financial aid application that includes remarks from your school counselor regarding financial need.

## **What comes after the exchange?**

Sister Cities loves to keep our exchange students involved! Many students go on to serve on our Youth Advisory Board or participate in international exchange opportunities in college. Some past student ambassadors have gone on to study international relations as well! Our hope is to help build cultural bridges by gaining experience with other cultures and lifestyles, and we are eager to support our students' future endeavors in any way we can!





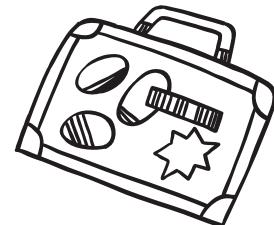
# IN PERSON EXCHANGES, WHAT TO EXPECT

## Sister Cities of Nashville Student Ambassador Exchange Program | High School Exchange and Home Stay

Sister Cities of Nashville, Inc., founded in 1990, is a 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion of global understanding through educational, professional and cultural exchanges and funded by government and community support. The Student Ambassador Exchange Program is facilitated by Sister Cities of Nashville, and supported by a dedicated group of Nashville government, business & community leaders, teachers, parents, students, and volunteers.

### SCN Student Exchange objectives:

- Intercultural knowledge and relationship building
- Global awareness
- Personal values and language skills
- Focus on communities, service and commitment

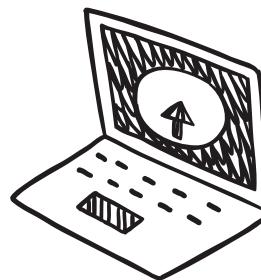


### Students and families participating in the SCN Student exchange program will:

- become an international ambassador representing Nashville in their chosen sister city,
- learn about their host country, its people, culture and language,
- develop skills to deal with future challenges, independence and self-awareness,
- expand their interests and experiences
- build friendships that last a lifetime
- respect the customs, economic differences, lifestyle and daily routine of the host country and family

### SCN Student Exchange Program includes:

- Placement in a carefully selected host family, room and board included
- Pre-departure cultural training and group bonding
- Pre-departure orientation information
- Travel and on-site chaperone-liaison
- Support of a local representative
- Airport ground transfers to and from host family residence
- Supervision during the exchange program abroad



### What SCN's Program cost does not include:

- Public transportation and admission costs to student selected activities and entertainment (not group scheduled activities)
- Entertainment and incidental costs incurred by the student
- Long distance telephone (Students can use Skype, Zoom, email or other apps to communicate for free.)

### Requirements/Expectations of Applicants when staying with a host family:

- Represent the City of Nashville as a student ambassador by respecting the culture, customs and habits of host family members
- 2 years of host country foreign language preferred (1 year may be permitted with teacher's recommendation). There is no foreign language requirement for students traveling to either Germany, China, Canada, Northern Ireland or Australia.
- Participate in family activities, dinners, and outings with host family
- Help with household chores of host family
- Share culture, language and life experiences with household members
- Abide by host family rules, local laws and customs and those of your country of residence, which includes use of alcohol and driving.
- Attend host country high school classes



# IN PERSON PROGRAM FEES AND REQUIREMENTS

## SCN STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM FEES AND REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Students must submit the attached or online SCN Student Exchange Application Form and letter of recommendation from a teacher, by March 1, 2022.
- 2) Students must pay the \$300 Student Application Fee at the time they submit the Application Form. The Fee covers SCN administrative processing and includes a family membership to Sister Cities of Nashville for one year.

The Application Fee and Teacher Recommendation letter can be mailed to Sister Cities of Nashville, P.O Box 120555, Nashville, TN 37212. The Application Fee is refundable until March 1, 2022; however, after March 1, the Application Fee is non-refundable. If a trip is cancelled due to insufficient student applicants, the Application Fee will be refunded, unless a student desires to apply for another SCN trip in the same calendar year. It is the sole responsibility of the students (and their parents) who are traveling on an exchange with SCN to ensure they have current and appropriate travel documents (including passports and visa, if necessary) for their destination country.

### **Payment schedule for Student Ambassadors traveling on summer exchanges:**

Application fee of \$300 due with application

\*\*Application is not considered complete until application fee and teacher recommendation are submitted

January 31 - \$500

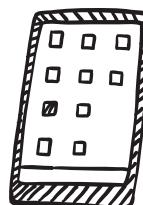
February 28 - \$1,000

March 30 – Balance due (if any)

Sister Cities of Nashville purchases ALL plane tickets in order to ensure group members are traveling together. The payments outlined in the schedule reflect reimbursement to SCN for airfare and any other expenses necessary to pay prior to the trip.

Financial Aid application can be downloaded from the Sister Cities of Nashville website:

<http://www.scnashville.org/student-ambassador-experience.html>





If students submit an application after one of the payment deadlines (January 31 or February 28), the total amount owed up to that date should be submitted with the application. Checks, money orders or cash are accepted. A late fee of \$10 will be assessed for any returned checks. If a payment is not received within two weeks of the final due date, the student will forfeit his/her participation in the trip and all previously made payments, depending on the costs incurred by SCN. If for any reason a trip is cancelled by SCN, including not having enough participants, all monies will be refunded by June 1st of the travel year. SCN accepts all major credit cards but will assess a 5% service fee to the payment if a family wishes to use a credit card.

Final trip costs are dictated by airline ticket prices, though we do our best to find convenient flights at the most affordable price. While flight prices vary each year, estimated trip costs can be found below:

Caen and Paris, France = Approx. \$1,900

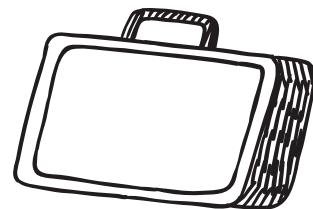
Magdeburg and Berlin, Germany = Approx. \$1,500

Mendoza, Argentina = Approx. \$1,800

Tamworth and Sydney, Australia = Approx. \$2,600 (in 2018, did not run in 2019-2021)

Beijing and Taiyuan, China = Approx. \$2,700 (also includes \$240 for visa)

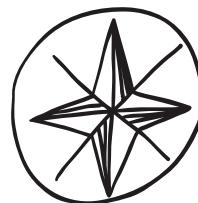
These prices do not include any additional spending money students are encouraged to bring. On average, the students spent \$100-150 on incidentals – souvenirs, snacks, etc.



# VIRTUAL EXCHANGE OPPORTUNITIES

Sister Cities of Nashville offers a wide array of opportunities to directly connect with friends in our sister cities without ever leaving Nashville. While it is not always feasible to travel in person, it is still exciting to create lasting friendships and exchange knowledge and information through our virtual platforms. Since launching virtual exchanges in early 2020, SCN has facilitated many popular and fun connections that continue to be available to students, teachers, classrooms, and school groups. The possibilities to connect are endless! If you don't see a program of interest to you below, please reach out to us about starting your own virtual opportunity between our sister cities and your school or classroom.

1. **Virtual Language Exchanges:** Online language exchanges in French, Spanish, and Chinese are offered each year between classrooms in Nashville and classrooms in Mendoza (Argentina), Caen (France), and both of our Chinese sister cities, Taiyuan and Chengdu. These exchanges offer one-on-one direct pairings between a Nashville student and a similar-aged counterpart in our sister city. Students are asked to connect with their counterpart at least twice a month for a period of two months, though once a week for a minimum of two months is preferred for a more impactful experience. Encounters are conducted half of the time in English and half in the partner language so that both students can benefit from the exchange. Students participating in language exchanges must have two years of experience in their foreign language and be at least middle school level.
2. **Classroom Exchanges:** Sister Cities of Nashville offers the opportunity for whole classrooms and student groups to connect with classrooms in our sister cities. These can be tailored to fit with the class curriculum and schedule. Time differences between cities do need to be considered, but our sister cities are eager to connect and try to accommodate engagements with our Nashville classrooms. Classroom exchanges have varied in type including project based learning, co-learning where both classrooms learn the same topic from their own respective cultures, and STEM exchanges where students partner on projects from across the globe. Classroom exchanges can be tailor-made for each educator's needs, so let us know how we can help you!
3. **Curriculum Resources:** Visit the "Exchanges & Programs" section of our website to find videos, resources, and activities that you can incorporate into your classroom curriculum. You don't have to be part of an active exchange to connect with our different cities and cultures! Programs include:
  - a. Travel Outside the Box is a short educational video series with background information and Nashville connections to our sister cities. This program is offered on Mendoza (Argentina), Caen (France), Belfast (N. Ireland), and Magdeburg (Germany).
  - b. Sister Cities Camp Kits are online packets of information, history, and activities on each of our 9 sister cities. These packets offer a variety of ways to engage students in learning about our sister cities in a fun way.



# MORE INFORMATION

For more information about International Student Exchanges as well as Host Family opportunities please visit [www.scnashville.org](http://www.scnashville.org) or email:

Claire Coleman, Student Exchange Director at  
[claire@scnashville.org](mailto:claire@scnashville.org)

Sarah Lingo, Executive Director at  
[sarah@scnashville.org](mailto:sarah@scnashville.org)

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615-952-0201



**Sister Cities**  
OF NASHVILLE

