

# CHAPERONE NEEDED FOR SUMMER 2025

## IKATA EXCHANGE- RED WING SISTER CITIES

The Red Wing Sister Cities Commission is searching for a community member who is willing to serve as a chaperone for six students, ages 14-17, selected for the 2025 exchange trip. The students and chaperone will serve as ambassadors of the Red Wing Community and carry on a tradition of exchanges between the two cities that was agreed upon when Ikata and Red Wing entered into an agreement to establish friendship relations back on August 8, 1995. Ikata is a small collection of towns, population around 8,400 located in Nishiuwa District, Ehime Prefecture, Japan.

The chaperone selected would travel with the students to Japan for approximately 10-13 days and visit Tokyo, Hiroshima and Kyoto prior to the homestays commencing in Ikata. The Chaperone would be responsible for the students during this time as well as helping them prepare for the trip beforehand by organizing and participating in fundraising and coordinating preparation gatherings with students with the assistance of the Ikata Student Exchange committee. The total cost for the trip is approximately \$4500. In the past the chaperone has received approximately \$2500-3500 in assistance from the commission and generous donations and fundraising for travel fees.

“Thinking about being a Chaperone in Ikata, Japan? DO IT! As the 2018 Ikata Chaperone I cannot encourage you enough to set aside any irrational fears and jump at this opportunity; you will not be sorry. You will be rewarded greatly for taking my advice. When else will you get to be treated like an ambassador in your travels to a foreign land? How else can you foresee being invited into the homes of strangers and welcomed as an old friend? In what capacity will you get the honor of representing the USA in a manner that is so good and real? All these things can be yours by taking a chance and offering to be a citizen of the world - Chaperone today!” – Jeff Schneider, 2018 Chaperone



“In 2008, I chaperoned a group of ten students. Responsibilities with the students on the trip was to be the liaison for any issues that arose and help with logistics with students while travelling. Prior to this trip, I was involved in setting up fundraising and participating in fundraising events. Upon our return to Red Wing, I participated in the Sister Cities events such as River City Days, dinners and other activities with the students who came to Red Wing from Ikata. My trip had an out of pocket

expense of about \$700.00. I enjoyed the trip very much and felt it was a wonderful experience to enjoy with the students and would highly recommend the chaperone experience. I would be happy to discuss in further detail the duties and things I wish I knew before going on the trip. It is a great opportunity for someone who is energetic, loves travel and enjoys leading youth.” – Cyndi Reese, 2008 Chaperone and Sister Cities Commissioner

“Chaperoning five high school students on their Sister City exchange trip in 2017 was a highlight of my life. Never having been to any Asian country, I was intrigued by the opportunity to see beautiful Japan and help the students navigate a new culture. Preparing the students for this trip was a wonderful way to get to know them better and to teach them about the people, food and customs. We drank tea, went to a Japanese sushi restaurant in Rochester, made origami paper cranes and learned to use chopsticks, all before even setting step on the plane. Each grocery bagging event we did helped the students value the trip even more by putting their time and talents to use to raise money and interact with the public about this adventure. It was an amazing journey of sightseeing in the major cities of Tokyo, Kyoto and Hiroshima, and then the week of getting to know our sister city of Ikata with the wonderful people there who made our stay so memorable. When we welcomed the Japanese students to Red Wing upon our return to the U.S.A., we were able to share our city pride with them, making this truly a cultural exchange. I highly recommend this chance to accompany the students and experience another part of our world.” – Gretchen Anderson, 2017 Chaperone and Sister Cities Commissioner

**Applications will be taken until Wednesday, November 6, 2024.** Applicants will be interviewed between November 11-15, 2024. The Commission plans to select the 2025 Ikata chaperone at the November 20, 2024, special meeting. Applications can be returned via email to Sister Cities Staff Liaison, Lisa Acker, at [lisa.acker@ci.red-wing.mn.us](mailto:lisa.acker@ci.red-wing.mn.us) or dropped off in person at the Community Development Department between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday -Thursday or 7:00 am -11:00 am Friday (419 Bush Street, Red Wing). Questions on the student exchange program can be directed to Lisa Acker at 651-385-5113.