**Date: February 14, 2025**

**\*\* IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT: NEW PROGRAM OFFERED FOR STUDENTS \*\***

Your District Rotary Youth Exchange Team is now offering a ***SHORT-TERM EXCHANGE PROGRAM (STEP)!*** This is in response to many students that expressed interest in a summer only youth exchange program.

**Specifics of the programs are:**

1. Two different types of STEP are available:
2. **Camp** – Usually 10 days – 2 weeks; campers are from around the world; highly competitive to be accepted; age ranges vary by camp, with most taking 13 to 18 year olds. *See attached list.* Note the application deadlines, age limits, and more information under column marked “PDF Flyer.”
3. **Family to Family**: This program offers a Michigan student a 2-3 week stay with a family in another country with a student approximately the same age. After the 2-3 weeks then the student from other country comes to the Michigan student’s family for 2-3 weeks. Age requirement: 15-1/2 to 18-1/2.
4. **Applications for Camps are OPEN**; **Deadline see camp schedule. For Family to Family: March 31, 2025**.
5. Costs vary, but are minimal.
	1. There will be a per diem cost for insurance, plus some program costs to the district for administration. Air fare will be the responsibility of the family.
	2. No VISAs are required.
	3. Passports must be up to date; expiration date beyond 9/1/2025.
6. Application process is not as long as Long Term; however, must be done promptly to ensure placement. Requirements include:
	1. Student application with medical information;
	2. Student’s parents complete a Host Family application for Family-to-Family program;
	3. Background checks required for the Family-to-Family program.
	4. Student and Family interviews will be held with Rotary District and Club Officers to verify eligibility and suitability.

**Club Officers and Interact Advisors:** Please disseminate this information to: your high school counselor, high school Interact Club, any faith-based youth groups, and students in 4-H programs. Best practice is to inform your high school foreign language teachers and teachers of World Cultures.

**Questions? Please feel free to contact Rotary District 6360 STEP coordinators:** Danielle Plichta – 269-491-0800; djplichta@lpslancer.net

Cathy Jo Mattson – 901-218-0192; cathyjomattson@gmail.com

Rotary Youth Exchange – a peace building program one student at a time!

Sincerely in Rotary,

**Margie Haas**

District 6360

Youth Exchange Chair