

The INTERCAMBIO experience

INFORMATION FOR INTERESTED FAMILIES

The Intercambio program offers students and families from West Hartford and Madrid a unique linguistic and cultural experience through a homestay enriched by travel and educational activities. The program sends a group of West Hartford students to Madrid during odd-year summers (2019, 2021, etc.). During even-year summers (2018, 2020, etc.) we host a group from Madrid with families in West Hartford. Participants make a two-year commitment, and may begin the program either by hosting or traveling first. New applicants will host this summer and then travel the following year. Each summer, the program lasts approximately 4-5 weeks, beginning after the school year finishes and ending the last week in July. Participants stay with the family of the child they hosted or will host.

The coordinators from the West Hartford Public Schools and Santa María del Pilar (our sister school in Madrid) match participants based on age and interests, taking into account family and home situations as well. The selection and matching process includes an online application for the student and parents, contact with guidance counselors, teachers and administrators, as well as an interview with the student. An interview with family members and/or a home visit may also be requested.

The hosting commitment for families in the program includes the following:

- Accepting an exchange visitor as a new member of the family (not an honored guest), subject to the same rules and regulations as other members of the family.
- Providing an environment where an exchange visitor and their family will feel that you are genuinely concerned for their personal well-being and safety.
- Providing guidance and understanding to a young visitor from another culture who will also be subject to the same feelings, frustrations and growing pains as all teens.
- Setting an example from which an exchange visitor will learn about life in our country, including family relationships, cultural variances, and value systems.
- Staying informed of the group's efforts to plan logistical and enrichment aspects of the home stay (day trips to New York & Boston, sporting events, farewell party, etc.)

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Hosting – Summer 2018

Visiting students from Santa María del Pilar will spend a month in West Hartford (presently scheduled from June 30 until July 27). They normally attend a special summer school class in the morning. Host families are encouraged to include visitors as a part of family trips and activities. The coordinators organize a few special activities, help host families plan group activities, and will be on call at all times. There will be a mandatory meeting for host families prior to the arrival of the group.

Traveling – Summer 2019

Before the homestay in Madrid, participants enjoy a group excursion during which they visit and explore historic cities in Spain. Many spend time at a family's summer home in the mountains or on the coast. The cost is approximately \$3500 (depending on the exchange rate) and includes all expenses except lunches during the excursion and incidentals during the entire trip. We will be in Spain approximately five weeks and return home last week in July.

The travel and home stay components of the exchange program are enriched by several activities for participants, who are eligible for one high school credit upon completion. The requirements include attendance at an evening class prior to departure, keeping a diary, anticipation and reflection papers, group exploration activities during the excursion, and classes and day trips coordinated through our sister school.

For more information please contact:

Conard: Dana_Martin @whps.org or Mark_Grudzien@whps.org

Hall: MariaPilar_delcacho @whps.org

Online application procedure:

There are two separate sections, one for students and another for parents. Both must be completed and submitted for an application to be considered.

Students will need to attach a photo at the end of their application.

The applications are accessible via Hall's website.

Enter "Hall Intercambio" into Google and it will be the first option.

<http://www.whps.org/page.cfm?p=1868>

Applications will be accepted until January 5, 2018, after which time their receipt and status will be communicated to all applicants. The recruitment period may be extended if necessary.