



2024

# Interact Ambassadors to Kenya and Central Mexico Facts Sheet



**WHO:** Two separate teams of up to six of our top high school age Interactors from our district will be selected to send to Kenya and to Central Mexico for two weeks during the summer of 2024.\* These Arizona Interact representatives will be accompanied by adult Advisors, and they will be hosted by Interact, Rotaract and Rotary Clubs in Kenya and Central Mexico. Our Rotary district has developed longstanding relationships with trusted partners in each of these countries. Applicants who desire to serve as one of these representatives must be an active member of an Interact club in Arizona, Needles, CA, or Laughlin, NV. The required application must be completed and submitted, together with two letters of recommendation, including one from an Advisor to their Interact club. There is a separate application to apply for a position on the Kenya team and for the Mexico team. A choice must be made, since a person cannot apply for both teams.

**WHEN:** It is expected that our Interact Ambassadors teams will be traveling on their service missions during the period between the last week of June and the second week of July. Exact travel dates and length of time in each country may vary, depending on the airline schedules, the pricing of the fares and our Rotarian hosts' schedules.

**WHAT:** The Interact Ambassadors program is integrally involved with our Interact District 5495's signature Crutches 4 Africa project. In addition to our Interact clubs collecting used mobility devices to ship to these and other countries, funds are raised each year to help underwrite the cost of shipping the mobility equipment and to cover the cost of the airfare for the student members of the Ambassadors teams, the team's travel insurance and some of the in-country travel expenses. The adult Advisors who apply and are selected to accompany the Interactors on these teams pay for their own airfare.

**WHY:** Our Interact district provides leadership training and experiences at the Club, District and International levels. Interactors and Advisors who are selected to serve as members of an Ambassadors team embark on a four-month online training program, plus a possible retreat, to prepare them for their Rotary service in a different country and culture. Part of their international service experience will include their assisting our partners in those countries with their ongoing distribution of mobility devices to those who have been crippled by polio or accidents. However, the teams will also observe and participate in a number of other service projects as well while they are in these countries. Home hosting by our Rotarian partners affords opportunities to more fully experience the culture than tourists to those countries would ever have. However, our teams will also get to see the noteworthy sights and natural wonders these countries have to offer during the time they are there. In all circumstances, the safety, security and welfare of our teams have been uppermost considerations in our planning and arrangements. This will be our seventh team we have successfully sent to Kenya, and our third team to Central Mexico. With these trips regarded and insured as Short-Term Rotary Youth Exchanges, the same rules apply to our Interact Ambassadors as to Rotary Youth Exchange ambassadors, including no drinking, driving or drugs.

**HOW MUCH:** While the airfare for the students, along with the travel insurance for the team, are covered from the funds raised for the project, there are still costs involved for the selected Interact representatives and their families. They bear the financial responsibility for obtaining the necessary passport & visa, required inoculations, luggage charges, and the desired amount of spending money. There are also in-country team travel costs, including transportation, meals, some lodging, and entrance fees for attractions that will be visited. A \$750\* contribution toward these in-country team expenses is required, to be paid by each student and adult team member in 3 increments. The first non-refundable \$250 payment is due at the time the Ambassadors are selected, with the remaining second and third payments of \$250 to be paid by April 1st and May 1st. (Scholarships/Fundraising opportunities may be available, if needed.) If a team member cancels participation after the airline tickets have been purchased, the student's parents will be responsible for reimbursing the Interact District for the cost of the student's airfare, and half of the district's cost of the in-country travel expenses which have been prepaid.

**APPLICATIONS** for the Ambassador and Advisor positions must be submitted by February 1, 2024. The screening of the applications, and the online interviews of the applicants, will take place during February, with the selections to be announced at the Interact District Conference on February 24, 2024. Questions concerning the Interact Ambassadors program can be directed to Dr. Art Harrington, Rotary District Interact Chair, [arths@msn.com](mailto:arths@msn.com), (928) 245-0411.

\* Please understand that the situation with the worldwide occurrence of COVID continues to change. At any time, District 5495 can choose to reschedule or cancel the program, due to varying circumstances. In that event, the \$750 deposit is fully refundable; however, students will not be reimbursed for inoculations or visa/passport expenses.