

Shaya Mansaray

Minami Nihon Culture Center

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Why I am a good candidate to receive this Scholarship

My name is Shaya Mansaray, I am 17 years old and a Senior in High School. Currently, I have been studying Japanese for three, going on four years with multiple different schools. Ever since I was young, I was fascinated with Japan. For example, I watched a bit of anime, but I was also interested in folktales and yokai, and also the food and the cities. My mother lived in Japan for 3 years before I was born, and I heard about it originally through what she said it was like. I was always curious about the culture of a Japan, like the food and the stories. This opportunity to go to Japan would help me broaden my perspective, learn skills I never had, and improve my understanding of the language. I think it would be a great opportunity to be able to broaden my perspective and meet people from other places. This trip could help me learn about people from other places, and in the future, it could help me connect with people of different backgrounds and have deeper understandings of more communities.

I was in 9th grade when I decided to learn Japanese. Despite my original school not offering the class, I found a way to get a class online to be able to learn as soon as possible. I've tried to dedicate myself to my studies as much as possible, and I always

want to improve where I can. If I was able to go to Japan, I feel like it would help me better improve and apply my skills so I can be more confident in my speaking skills and communication with others. This opportunity could also help me learn to solve problems and be observant in new situations. Since I still don't know the language, I need to be able to observe what's around me and try to evaluate what words mean. This can also help me in the future if I need to figure things out on my own.

Not only could this opportunity help me academically though, but it would also just be a great experience to see what and how other people do things. Over the years, my family has hosted 12 international students, six weekend students, one three-month student, one summer student and four students during the school year. Eleven were from Japan and one from China. This got me interested in participating in an exchange program myself. I love hearing about what other people do in other countries and how what they do is different. I think the opportunity to see it for myself would be really fun!

Overall, I think I should be accepted for this program because it would not only give me a chance to learn Japanese in an environment where I could use it, and also an opportunity to challenge what I've learned, but I also think it could be a fun experience to go to another country and see what life is like and what life is like for people on the other side of the world for myself and give me an opportunity to travel. I appreciate your consideration, thank you.