



To promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation, one individual, one community at a time.

SISTER CITIES OF MORGAN HILL'S STUDENT CULTURAL EXCHANGE WITH SAN CASCIANO, ITALY

- WHO:** Sister Cities of Morgan Hill, www.morganhillsistercities.com/. The nonprofit formed about 15 years ago and currently hosts relationships with six international cities: San Casciano, Italy; Seferihisar, Turkey; San Martin de Hidalgo, Mexico; Ameca, Mexico; Mizuho, Japan; and Headford, Ireland. Morgan Hill's program is modeled on Sister Cities International, a world-wide organization fostering connections between cities, counties, or states. Most Sister Cities organizations are comprised of volunteers, with the support of their local, elected officials.
- WHAT:** Student cultural exchange program, launched in 2018. It is an exchange between San Casciano, Italy, and Morgan Hill teens. The program is comprised of two phases for teens between the ages of approximately 15-17: the first is chaperoned and guided travel to San Casciano, Tuscany, Italy. The second is Morgan Hill families hosting an Italian teenager in their homes a year later.
- WHEN:** Even calendar years will be slated for traveling to Italy; odd calendar years will be slated for Italian students traveling to Morgan Hill. The first phase for Morgan Hill teens traveling to San Casciano happened in July 2018. Participants were housed with local Italian families and enjoyed a range of excursions and activities. The second phase is slated for the summer of 2019, and will give those first phase participants, plus other interested families wishing to join the program, a chance to host an Italian teen.
- WHERE:** San Casciano is a beautiful Italian city located in Tuscany, nine miles south of Florence. More about San Casciano can be found at www.sancascianovp.net/ (in Italian) and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Casciano_in_Val_di_Pesa.
- WHY:** Morgan Hill already has a very popular and respected educational exchange program with another of its Sister Cities relationships based in Mizuho, Japan. The Mizuho Morgan Hill Student Exchange Program (MMHSEP) has a long history of sending and receiving middle school-aged children between Morgan Hill and Mizuho. It, too, alternates between Morgan Hill kids traveling to Mizuho one year and then hosting Mizuho kids the following year. The group is also now getting ready to host students from Mizuho in the summer of 2019.
- The San Casciano Exchange Program aims to build on the Mizuho team's diligent success and extend the international travel experience to older teens. Like the Mizuho program, the

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San Casciano team will also encourage a direct connection and friendship between families of the two cities before and after the travel time frame itself.

FUNDING: While it is the goal of the Cultural Exchange committee and Sister Cities to offer funding support to travelers and host families, the program does not yet have a funding support mechanism in place. All components are paid for by participating families.

CONTACT: amywhelan7@gmail.com for questions and to express interest. Application available.

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