



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

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## **SISTER CITIES OF MORGAN HILL LAUNCHES CULTURAL EXCHANGE WITH SAN CASCIANO, ITALY**

- WHO:** Sister Cities of Morgan Hill, [www.morganhillsistercities.com/](http://www.morganhillsistercities.com/). Formed in 2002 and currently hosts relationships with five international cities: San Casciano, Italy; Seferihisar, Turkey; 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:** A cultural program, an exchange between San Casciano, Italy, and Morgan Hill. Launched in 2018, the program is comprised of two phases for teens between the ages of 15-17: chaperoned and guided travel to San Casciano, Tuscany, Italy, the first year, followed the next summer by the same Morgan Hill families hosting an Italian teenager in their homes.
- WHEN:** The next program cycle is scheduled for Morgan Hill teens to travel to Italy in the summer of 2021. Participants will be housed with local Italian families. The second phase is slated for the summer of 2022, and will give those first phase participants a chance to host an Italian teen. The duration of the trip is approximately two weeks.
- 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/](http://www.sancascianovp.net/) (in Italian) and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San\\_Casciano\\_in\\_Val\\_di\\_Pesa](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 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 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 and costs are paid for by participating families. Costs typically include air fare and spending money. Almost all meals are covered.
- CONTACT:** [amywhelan7@gmail.com](mailto:amywhelan7@gmail.com) for questions and to express interest. Application available.

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