

#2 Applicant Essay

My name is XXX. I am 17 years old and an 11th grader at Winston Churchill High School. Currently, I have an unweighted GPA of 3.7. My father was born in Taiwan and moved to America when he was 14 years old. Throughout my middle school and high school years, I have been actively participating in and holding leadership positions at activities among Taiwanese communities and organizations such as Formosa Association of Student Cultural Ambassadors (FASCA), Millennial Global Youth, Washington Metropolitan Association of Chinese Schools (WMACS), Washington DC Taiwanese School (WDCTS), Taiwanese American Association of Greater Washington DC (TAAGWC), Taiwan Culture Center (TCC) and Rockville Sisters City.

For one of the projects at FASCA, I initiated and organized the “Thanksgiving Food Drive” event, in which I coordinated the leaders at WDCTS, the Culture Center of Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO), and Washington School of Chinese Language and Culture (WSCLC) and collected food for those in need. We were able to collect about 1000 items and donate to the Manna Food Drive at the Thanksgiving Holiday in 2021.

Besides organizing this project, I have also been involved in events that help promote the Taiwanese culture. At the Bubble Tea Festival (September 25th, 2021), Potomac Day (October 23, 2021), 5K Run (November 17th, 2021), and the Lantern Festival (February 11th, 2022), I oversaw activities that introduced people from different cultures to our Taiwanese culture. I felt proud when I was able to answer questions such as “What is Taiwan’s national sport?” and “What is Taiwan’s national animal?” At the Lunar New Year’s holiday this year, I participated at the Oakton Library event, where I taught kids and adults how to make paper lanterns. It was our hope that by learning how to make the lanterns, they would learn about our written system and what we do around the Lunar New Years’ time while having fun doing the art crafts. At the recent Sakura festival, which was one of the events that FASCA participated in to promote Taiwan’s relationship with other countries, I volunteered to help at the Japanese tent. Besides helping the Japanese tent sell dolls and other crafts, I also interacted with local Americans and helped explain the Taiwanese culture such as a train game with people who were walking by for them to learn about the history of trains in Taiwan.

An event I currently participate in is the virtual hangouts where I teach Taiwanese kids who are in high school English and establish a bond with them. I lead my group to make sure all 6 students can participate in the conversation on different topics such as how Covid-19 has affected our lives, how our everyday life is, as well as our hobbies and activities we enjoy doing. These virtual hangouts activities with Taiwanese kids are going so well that FASCA administrators are now talking about continuing it.

Another two associations I am involved in are the Millennial Global Youth and the TAAGWC, where I participated in events to promote Taiwan and Taiwanese culture. In 2018 and 2019, I went to New York with my dad to join the parades promoting Taiwan joining the United Nations. We paraded and showed the local Americans with our flags and “Keep Taiwan Free” banners promoting Taiwan to the people of New York and around the world about UN for Taiwan.

I have been a student at WDCTS for 11 years learning both the Taiwanese and Mandarin languages. Besides learning the languages at the school, I have also had a lot of different opportunities to volunteer for our community as a WDCTS student. Every year, I go to Dr. Liang's summer camp to help the teachers setting up the camp and taking care of the campers. I have also helped the community such as babysitting kids at Taiwanese community events such as TAAWGC's Thanksgiving Banquet so their parents can enjoy the events without worrying. During the Covid pandemic, I helped my dad delivered lunch boxes to those in need showing that "Taiwan Can Help" and created a promotion video with my classmates in Taiwanese class to promote WDCTS. I participated in all the 2021 virtual cultural events promoting Taiwan, where we learned different aspects of Taiwan including fashion, books, food and more. In the past two years, I participated in WDCTS's dragon boat racing rehearsals and at the Dragon Boat Festival, our team beat our opponents by 0.6 seconds and won two gold medals. When the coming May arrives, it will be my third year participating and I enjoyed it a lot because not only do we get to work as a team, but we are also promoting Taiwanese culture at the Dragon Boat event.

During the past years when I was participating in the events mentioned above, I have witnessed how my parents and their colleagues have worked hard to promote the Taiwanese culture and visibility. In 2019, I was proud to be present at the ceremony where Rockville Sister City signed an alliance with Taiwan and to see multiple organizations wanting to partner with Taiwan.

I am proud and grateful that I have had these opportunities to participate in events that promote Taiwan and the Taiwanese culture as well as helping my community. These volunteer works have not only earned me three Presidential awards, which are signed by the President of the United States, but also enriched my knowledge about Taiwan. With the leadership and project managing experiences that I have gained; I hope that I will be even more capable of coordinating and helping at events that promote Taiwan and connecting people in the world as a proud Taiwanese American.