



YOUTH AMBASSADORS

**A lifetime of service begins with a
three-week exchange**



Partners brings together competitive youth, ages 15–17, of limited means and/or limited international experience to build understanding among countries, increase leadership skills and develop a commitment to service. Youth engage with local government and civic organizations, build relationships with host families and their peers, and participate in skills-based training that enables them to mobilize their communities toward positive change. None of the Youth Ambassadors Program participants below have been to the host country, Colombia, previously.

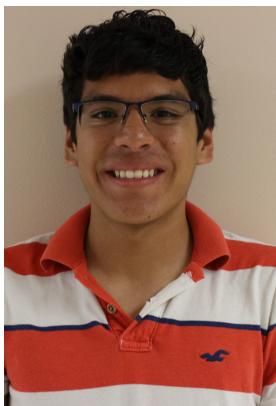
Mentor Profile



Misty Lynn Dail, 46

Misty is currently a High School Spanish Teacher in Bentonville, Arkansas and has taught the language for 23 years. She was introduced to Spanish language and became passionate about it as an exchange student while in high school. Misty introduces the language and associated cultures to about 150 students every year and was recently awarded Teacher of the Year at her school. As a volunteer, Misty helps gather donations for a nursing home, dedicates time to the Helping Hands thrift store, teaches Spanish, and helps teachers during free time in the summer. Recently, she has also served as a volunteer host for Youth Ambassadors traveling to Arkansas from Colombia and Venezuela and helped coordinate some of their program activities. Regarding her role as a mentor, Misty writes, “I would love the opportunity to make a difference in the world and be a part of this amazing program.”

Youth Profiles



Aldo Ceniceros, 15

Aldo is from El Paso, Texas and his favorite subjects in school are math, science, and computing. He enjoys sports, public speaking, and photography. Aldo dreams of becoming a technology engineer and a professional photographer. His volunteer activities have focused on health issues which include leading presentations and trainings on STD and tobacco prevention for middle and high school students during the past three years. Aldo would like to improve his community by implementing projects where teens benefit from after school programs involving sports and health/sex education. As a Youth Ambassador, he hopes to learn and share knowledge with peers he meets through the program.

*The Youth Ambassadors program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and implemented by
Partners of the Americas.*



Michael Riley Place, 17

Michael is from Bethesda, Maryland and enjoys distance running, model UN, hiking, bird watching, fishing, philosophy, and politics. His favorite subjects in school are U.S. government and environmental science. Michael has volunteered at soup kitchens, homeless shelters, food banks, senior living centers, and a summer education program at a Blackfeet Native American Reservation. He wants to be an environmental activist working in public policy or law. Michael would like to increase political interest, literacy, and participation among youth in his community. He hopes that becoming a Youth Ambassador will help him gain first hand knowledge of the relationships between the U.S. and foreign nations.



Olivia Martinez, 16

Olivia is from Washington, DC and her hobbies are competitive swimming, art, reading, music, debate, and writing. Her favorite subjects are English language and literature, European history, and biology. Olivia has volunteered at a summer camp teaching for the Girl Scouts, and at the Latin American Montessori Public Charter School. In the future, she hopes to become a pediatric surgeon and an author to make a difference in the medical field for women. Olivia wants to improve her community by helping pregnant teens who are living in group homes and housing programs. As a Youth Ambassador, she wants to learn about societal challenges and how to start service projects in her own community.



Marisa Geraldina Padilla, 15

Marisa is from Cassville, Missouri and her favorite subjects are communication arts, drama, speech, debate, world history, and geography. Her interests are acting, debating, reading, volunteering, writing, music, hiking, swimming, and socializing. Marisa has volunteered to help raise money for impoverished families and to tutor younger students in communication skills. Her future goals are to travel and experience other cultures while helping disaster stricken places as an international aid worker. As a Youth Ambassador, Marisa hopes to explore her Hispanic heritage, learn how to be a stronger leader, meet Colombian peers, and build on her ability to serve her community.



Louise Zeng, 16

Louise is from Missouri City, Texas and enjoys camping, painting, writing, and learning about business and problem solving for global issues. Her future goals and dreams are to become an entrepreneur and run her own business. Louise founded Miracle Club to raise funds and awareness for hospitalized children. She has also helped organize a walk, benefit concert, and feminine product drive to support girl's education and advancement. Louise wants to improve her community by creating a food rescue program to fight hunger and food waste. As a Youth Ambassador, she aims to improve her leadership and Spanish skills while immersing herself in Colombian culture.



Blanche Kirk, 17

Blanche is from Washburn, Missouri and she likes to read, write, draw, dance, listen to music, and sing. Her favorite subjects in school are Spanish, drama, and science. Blanche's goals are to become a doctor or nurse in order to help people. Blanche currently volunteers with pre-school children by engaging them during school bus rides and ensuring their safe arrival home. She also organizes fundraisers, service events, and plans meetings at her school's Spanish Club as the co-president. Blanche would like to expand her community service to include working with teens to raise awareness of drug use and driving safety. As a Youth Ambassador, she is excited about this being her first international experience and connecting with Colombian peers.



Ajiri Uzere, 16

Ajiri is from Bentonville, Arkansas and her favorite subjects in school are English, history, and debate. She is interested in soccer, dancing, debate, children, art, and traveling. Ajiri's aspires to become the first female president of the United Nations and hopes to study law and international relations. She also wants to help refugees from different countries and promote human rights. As a volunteer, Ajiri has served orphan children, the elderly, the homeless, and promoted campaigns against injustice. She wants to benefit her community by starting a nonprofit organization to educate refugee children. As a Youth Ambassador, she wants to understand societal challenges that are present in Colombia.



Nadia Bryanna Deskins, 16

Nadia is from Reston, Virginia and enjoys sculpting, hiking, drawing, and reading. Her favorite subjects are history, art, leadership, and Spanish. Nadia has volunteered to help mentor freshmen, aid the elderly, and rehabilitate disabled children. Currently, she is a Girl Scout Ambassador and Executive Member for the Spanish Honor Society at her school. In her community, Nadia would like to promote ethnic pride and diversity. As a Youth Ambassador, she hopes to learn how to better engage members of the community and how to become a more resourceful and creative leader. Nadia believes that creativity is the key to engage youth within a community.



Zander Arnao, 16

Zander is from Bentonville, Arkansas and his favorite subjects in school are history and English. Zander is interested in debate, Model UN, chess, and politics. His future goals are to become involved in politics and Spanish culture. Zander volunteers at the Benton County Parks and Recreation department as a soccer coach, as well as at Habitat for Humanity and Samaritan House. Zander aims to increase awareness for homeless and impoverished families and individuals in his community. Zander wants to be a Youth Ambassador so he can better understand Colombia and strengthen relations with the U.S.



Amie Tuberville, 15

Amie is from San Antonio, Texas and enjoys dancing, reading, writing, and watching movies. Her favorite school subjects are English and biology. Amie has volunteered at the San Antonio Amputee Foundation and at her local church. Amie's dreams are to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Broadcast Journalism or Communications. In her community, Amie would like to establish programs and centers for teenagers and children to interact with one another in a safe environment. Amie would like to be a Youth Ambassador to bring people together and make the world a better place for future generations.