BACKGROUND INFORMATION
The Michigan-Shiga Student Exchange Program takes 20 Michigan high school students to Shiga Prefecture, our sister state in Japan, where the students spend two weeks in July with Shiga high school students and their families. While in Shiga the Michigan students attend school with their host students, and the chaperones visit each of the host schools. The Shiga host students then spend two weeks in September with the Michigan students and their families, also attending school. More details about the program are online at www.msu.edu/user/gifted/Shiga.

This program offers a unique opportunity for the two chaperones to have an up-close look at Japanese high schools and to visit a number of towns in Shiga Prefecture, which surrounds beautiful Lake Biwa. Chaperones will have their round-trip flights paid for as well as their hotel stay and meals throughout the two weeks in Shiga. However, attending meetings in Michigan and all other miscellaneous expenses are not covered.

While this is a wonderful experience, it is a working trip and not a sightseeing tour. Each year two chaperones accompany the 20 Michigan high school students to Shiga. We like to have one male and one female chaperone.

CHAPERONE REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
The chaperone must be
- A current resident of Michigan
- Involved in education (grade K – 12)
- Physically fit; i.e., able to tolerate high heat and humidity and able to walk several miles/climb up three flights of stairs in non-air-conditioned settings
- Independent and self-reliant
- Able to cope with unexpected problems while maintaining a positive attitude
- Committed to the program 24/7 for the full two weeks
- Willing to join the coordinating committee for about 4 meetings per year in East Lansing for two years—one year prior to and one year after chaperoning.
- Willing to have a criminal background check.

Helpful background experiences
- International travel
- Japanese language and cultural experiences
- Leadership with teenagers

Helpful characteristics of chaperones
- Flexible
- Open-minded and sensitive to cultural differences
- Excited about experiencing a new culture, including eating unfamiliar food
EXPECTATIONS OF CHAPERONES

Job responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Travel to and from Japan with the Michigan high school students in July
- Ultimate responsibility for the Michigan students while in Shiga, including when the students are staying with host families for two weeks
- Visitation of up to 20 high schools in Shiga
- Visits with Shiga officials, including giving brief speeches
- Involvement in the following committee meetings for two years:
  - Student selection – one Saturday in February, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
  - Student/parent orientation – one Friday evening and all day Saturday in March.
  - De-briefing following the trip (late summer)
  - Preparation for the next year’s trip (in October)
- Duties related to the exchange experience:
  - Travel and Shiga portion – June 24, 2009, 9:30 a.m. – July 10, 4:00 p.m.
  - Shiga delegation’s day of courtesy visits and sightseeing in Lansing – first Friday in September, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.,
  - Assisting in the hosting of the chaperone weekend activities during their visit
  - Farewell Celebration for Shiga students, September 26, in the Lansing area

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Please submit the following information electronically to mcdon288@msu.edu

Applications are due by December, 2007
Interviews will be conducted on Saturday, January 26, 2008

Applicant Selection Committee meeting in January with selected applicants.

Name
Address
Daytime phone
Evening/Weekend phone
Place of employment
Current position and number of years in that position
Name and title of supervisor
Social security number (for routine background check)
Name, title and contact information for two references

Please attach a brief essay of 1 to 3 pages to express:
- Your interest and enthusiasm for being a chaperone for the Michigan-Shiga Student Exchange Program
- The ways in which you meet the requirements and recommendations listed above
- Your ability to fulfill the responsibilities detailed in the Expectations of Chaperones