



Junior Travel Scholarship

Pursuant to its mission, the AATSP Exams (NSE), a program of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP), is committed to recognizing student achievement and promoting language proficiency in the study of Spanish. To this end, AATSP Exams will offer travel abroad scholarships to Costa Rica.

Study Abroad Scholarship Description

Each year the Junior Travel Study Abroad/Away Scholarship provides eligible students the opportunity to travel to and study the language and the culture of a Spanish-speaking country or territory. During the summer of 2025 students will be traveling to Costa Rica with [United Planet](#). This “Travel Quest” is fun, educational, and winners will be performing volunteer work with the Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve in Monteverde. The project combines conservation, ecotourism, and education. Students can also receive *volunteer service credits* at the end of the trip!

The award includes flight (\$400.00 reimbursement), local transportation, tours, meals, and insurance. Your group will stay at a local hostel in San José upon arrival and at departure, and will stay with verified host families in the Monteverde community. Living with host families is a great way to immerse in the local lifestyle, while also practicing Spanish! A maximum of 5 people may be placed with each family. The tentative itinerary (attached) is subject to change.

Winners may have the opportunity to apply for university credit! Information is located under the sample itinerary. *This opportunity is optional, any associated expenses and/or duties may be pursued at the expense of the attendee.*

ELIGIBILITY

For the 2025 travel award, applicants MUST:

- Be a junior in high school during the 2024-25 academic year.
- Have received medal placement by scoring at or above the 75th-percentile on the Level II or above 2023 **OR** 2024 National Spanish/Portuguese Exam.
 - 2023 NSE/NPE: Academic year 2022-2023
 - 2024 NSE/NPE: Academic year 2023-2024
- Be registered to take the Level III or above National Spanish Exam or National Portuguese Exam in 2025.
- Agree to continue studying Spanish and/or Portuguese during their senior year in high school

NOTE: Only ONE student per teacher may apply. (Teachers may only sponsor an applicant from their own school.)

Responsibilities of Winners

1. Winners need to be available one day before the scheduled date of departure and one day after the scheduled return in case arrival in the departure city or return from it on those dates is necessary. For the 2025 Costa Rica trip, students and families must purchase their own airline ticket to San Jose, Costa Rica (SJO). Winners will be given a window of time to plan arrival and departure so that a representative of the AATSP can meet the students at the airport. Students must submit their flight information to the 2025 Travel Coordinator. After the trip, the AATSP will reimburse up to \$400.00 for flight costs.
2. Winners are expected to attend all excursions and events.
3. Winners will be responsible to pay for any items not included, which are: airfare fees above \$400.00, snacks, tips, souvenirs, additional baggage fees, and personal items.
4. Upon return from the trip, winners will be required to send to the Coordinator of Travel Awards an account of their experiences along with several digital photographs/videos/blogs to be published on the AATSP Exams website. This will be due by July 31st, 2025, at the *latest*.
5. Winners are expected to sign liability waiver by date specified in clause.
6. This trip will include a considerable amount of walking. It is the responsibility of the winner to review the travel company's accessibility policy here.
7. Winners must send confirmation of flight by March 31st, 2025.

NOTE: If a student cannot travel during the specified time, the trip will be forfeited and another student will be chosen. If a student accepts the trip but does not complete the trip, they will be charged for the value of the trip.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated for COVID-19 and may be required based upon the requirements of the tour agency or other entities. More information about COVID-testing and vaccination status for travel will be shared at a later date.

DEADLINES

Additional dates & deadlines will be given to winners upon acceptance.

- Application deadline: January 6, 2025
- Notification of winners / alternates: February 10, 2025
- Travel to Costa Rica: July TBD 2025

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

By January 6, 2025, applicants should fill out the [online application form](#) and include all attachments listed below. *No late applicants will be considered.* If you have any questions, please email nse@aatsp.org.

1. A link to a standard video clip (5 minute *maximum*) in Spanish in which you discuss with your teacher both of the following topics:
 - How you feel the study abroad experience will impact your life
 - Why the committee should select you given that there are many qualified applicants
 - Video submission requirements:
 - The speech should be spontaneous and conversational in tone.
 - The student should be the dominant speaker.
 - Both the student and the teacher should be visible in the recording.
 - The video should be uploaded to YouTube with permission for anyone with the link to view. Include the link in the body of your application email.

2. One essay in Spanish or Portuguese of no more than one page in which you pick ONE of the following topics: (File name: Student Name – Essay)
 - How do you think your experience will change you personally as a human being and impact you as a global citizen?
 - What do you anticipate will be your personal challenges during your experience and how will you prepare yourself to meet these challenges?

3. High School transcript (does not have to be an official transcript) (File Name: Student Name-Transcript)

4. Letter of recommendation from your current Spanish/Portuguese teacher who should comment on your language skills, your personal and academic motivation, and your ability to get along with others and adapt to unforeseen circumstances. (File Name: Student Name - Teacher Rec)

5. Parent authorization/[media release](#) form completed & signed. (File Name: Student Name – Media Release)

All applications will be acknowledged. If you do not receive an email acknowledging receipt, please contact the NSE Office at nse@aatsp.org.

Once selected for the Junior Travel Scholarship, **within two weeks** winners must send their \$50 application fee (a check payable to “National Spanish Examinations”). In the memo section write “Junior Travel” and mail it to National Spanish Examinations, 160 Rail Rd, Suite 3, Chesterton, IN 46304. Upon completion of the requirements the check will be shredded. If not completed, the check will be deposited by August 31st, 2025.



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Sample Group Itinerary (6 nights/7 days)

Date	Agenda
Day 1 - Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrive in San José and transfer to local hostel• Orientation• Welcome dinner• Overnight in San José hostel
Day 2 - Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Orientation with local staff at partner headquarters• Transfer to Monteverde• Welcome Activity with Local Homestays
Day 3 - Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volunteer Work and Placement Introduction• Site Tour• Homestay
Day 4 - Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volunteer Work• Cultural Activity (Dancing, Cooking, or Handicraft-making) or Presentation• Homestay
Day 5 - Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volunteer Work• Transfer to overnight in La Fortuna de San Carlos for Arenal Volcano Visit
Day 6 - Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arenal Volcano Visit continued• Transfer back to San José• Farewell Dinner
Day 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transfer to airport for departure from Costa Rica



United Planet™

Optional Internship University Course Credit

Students may receive university course credit for their service travel program with United Planet through our School of Record, Portland State University. Students must verify with their home university whether credits will be accepted and are responsible for transfer paperwork and procedures. Students will be enrolled at PSU to receive the university course credit from United Planet and Portland State University.

In this course, students will receive 1 credit for successful completion of all course assignments, equivalent to 10 hours of coursework. A sliding scale will determine the amount of remaining credits to be provided based on the number of hours completed at the internship. One credit hour will equate to 40 hours dedicated to the placement. A minimum of 80 hours will be required to receive credit.

INTL (404) Internship Credit Details:

- 1 credit hour for every 40 hours devoted
- 3 total credit hours based on completing the 10 hours of coursework and at least 80 total hours of participation.
- Students can earn up to 15 total credit hours.
- Students must be enrolled with PSU at least 30 days prior to the start of their desired program term.

Pricing

The cost to receive university course credit through Portland State University as a School of Record is \$895. This cost is per student, not per credit. The cost of the course credit is in addition to the United Planet Program Fee.