2027 NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL GOODWILL AMBASSADOR APPLICATION

Deadline: Tuesday, November 24, 2026

Application form and all supporting materials (responses to questions and a letter of recommendation) must be completed and uploaded.
Note: Application opens October 13. Link will be available on the Goodwill Ambassador Webpage

Questions & Inquiries: Contact Goodwill Ambassadors Coordinators at goodwillambassadors@ncbfdc.org

The National Cherry Blossom Festival invites you to apply for one of the Festival's most highly regarded, signature programs: the Goodwill Ambassador Program. We are looking for talented, energetic individuals who have a true passion for international relationships and the National Cherry Blossom Festival.

The Festival and the Goodwill Ambassador Program is coordinated by the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Inc., a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting the beauty of nature and international friendship through year-round programs, events, and educational initiatives that enhance our environment, showcase arts and culture, and build community spirit**.**

OVERVIEW

The National Cherry Blossom Festival is an annual event that celebrates springtime in Washington, DC as well as the 1912 gift of the cherry blossom trees and the enduring friendship between the people of the United States and Japan. **The duration of the upcoming Festival is March 20 - April 11, 2027.**

In previous years, Goodwill Ambassadors have had the opportunity to attend Festival events and meet the Ambassador of Japan and leaders in the Washington, DC community. Many Goodwill Ambassadors view the experience as having been an essential step in deepening their connection to Japan or influencing their professional careers by utilizing contacts they made during the program. Goodwill Ambassadors engage with the local community and are an indispensable resource for Festival attendees and the Festival.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF WORK

The experience of a Goodwill Ambassador is a rewarding and once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The Festival's official Goodwill Ambassadors are actively engaged with the Festival by:

- Acting as "cultural delegates" in propelling awareness of the Festival's roots through attendance at Festival events and cultural exchange programs
- Representing the Festival at events including tree plantings, and community events affiliated with the National Cherry Blossom Festival or Japanese/Japanese American community
- Acting as cultural and educational liaisons at Washington, DC-area schools to teach children about history of the gift of trees and Japanese language and culture.

TIME COMMITMENT

Prior to applying, interested individuals should consider their availability to commit a **significant** amount of time to this position throughout the spring. Training sessions begin in January and events conclude with a final dinner at the end of April/early May. Typically, Goodwill Ambassadors attend:

- **Several 2 hour training and planning sessions in January, February and early March (total of 3 training sessions)**

- **15-20 hours per week to Festival-related activities between March 20 - April 11, 2027. Hours will vary based on the Festival schedule and preparation of activities for the events listed below.**
    - Several events occur during the week or during the day in addition to the weekends. As appearance requests come, we will cross reference with your class/work schedules to accommodate.
    - Events are held in Washington, DC and in the surrounding suburbs

Schedule of Events (subject to change)

- Press Conference – Early March 2027 (TBC)
- Opening Ceremony – March 20, 2027

- Blossom Kite Festival – March 27, 2027
- Petalpalooza – April 3, 2027
- Oxon Run Pinknic – April 4 2027
- Lantern Lighting Ceremony – April 2027 (TBC)
- National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade® – April 10, 2027
- Sakura Matsuri, Japanese Street Festival – April 10 – 11, 2027
- Other events, such as tree plantings, school presentations, NCBF VIP Only Events, Participating Partner events, and other obligations will be added to the Goodwill Ambassador schedule during March and April.

Note: Some of the above dates are subject to change. All scheduled events and training sessions will be planned to best fit with the schedules of the selected individuals, taking into consideration class requirements, work schedules, holidays and school breaks. However, there are many events that are considered mandatory.

This is a volunteer position and Goodwill Ambassadors receive no financial compensation for their time. A small travel stipend will be provided.

APPLICATION/QUALIFICATION PROCESS

To become a Goodwill Ambassador, applicants must meet the candidate requirements and submit the outlined application materials by the deadline. After an initial review, individuals will be selected for a virtual interview with the selection committee during the first and second weeks of December. A maximum of 6 candidates will be selected for the Program.

A. Candidate Requirements

- Age range: Current undergraduate (college sophomores, juniors, seniors preferred), graduate students, or recent college graduates 25 years old or younger at the time of application.
- Reside temporarily or permanently in DC or the immediate region January – May 2027
- Individuals with an interest in Japanese, humanities, arts, culture, event management, hospitality, or international affairs.
- Individuals with Japanese language ability or a knowledge of Japan are preferred. **We welcome individuals who have roots in or have great love for the D.C. community**
- Provide your own khaki pants, black dress pants, and dress shoes (official uniforms will be provided by the Program).

B. Application Materials to Prepare

- ✓ The completed online application form **(Note: Application opens October 13. Link will be available on the Goodwill Ambassador Webpage)**
- ✓ A resume with your educational and professional background, leadership positions, knowledge of Japanese or other foreign languages, awards/honors, participation in clubs/organizations and other special interests.

- ✓ One current photograph
- ✓ One letter of recommendation from a professor or employer.
    - Comment on the applicant's reliability, time management, and ability to handle a busy, fast-paced schedule.
    - Describe their communication skills and ability to engage with diverse audiences, including children if applicable.

- Highlight their interest or experience in Japanese culture, international relations, or community engagement.
- Discuss their teamwork, leadership, and interpersonal strengths.
- Share why the applicant would represent the National Cherry Blossom Festival well in public, cultural, and educational settings.

✓ Submit 1 short essay – 500 words maximum.

- What is your motivation for applying to the National Cherry Blossom Festival's Goodwill Ambassador Program?
- How do your skills and personality make you an ideal representative for the Festival in public settings, and for working with your peers to propel awareness of the Festival's history to a diverse audience?
- How will participating in the Program and Festival enable you to pursue personal or professional goals or contribute to the Festival and US-Japan relations?

✓ Submit 1 video recording of you demonstrating how you would lead a hands-on activity to a group of elementary-aged students being introduced to Japanese culture and history of the Festival for the first time. You may pretend that participants are present – speak to the camera as if you are speaking to the participating students while you are leading the activity. The activity you propose should teach children about one or more of the following:

- International friendship, Japanese culture, kites, cherry blossoms in Washington, DC, or the season of spring.
- The activity should take no more than 15 minutes for each child to complete.
- Aim for the video to be under 10 minutes (8-10 minutes tend to hit the sweet spot!)

NOTE: You will then need to upload the video file to a cloud-based sharing service like Dropbox or Google Drive, then submit the shared URL in the online form. If you have any technical difficulties with uploading, you may email your video to goodwillambassadors@ncbfdc.org.

KEY CONSIDERATION: Applications cannot be saved while "in progress" so it is important that you have all items ready to upload prior to completing your submission. Applications are NOT considered complete unless ALL materials are received by the deadline of Tuesday, November 24th, 2027.

C. Submission Details

All applicants must complete and upload support materials to the online application (**Note: Application opens October 13. Link will be available on the Goodwill Ambassador Webpage)**

Once the ONLINE FORM is completed, you will receive confirmation via email. Please whitelist goodwillambassadors@ncbfdc.org to ensure delivery to your inbox.

Questions & Inquiries: Contact Carlos A. Marquez Arce at goodwillambassadors@ncbfdc.org