



Oakville's David Lipton going on a unique cross-cultural exchange for youth

COMMUNITY Dec 02, 2016 by [Julia Le](#) Oakville Beaver

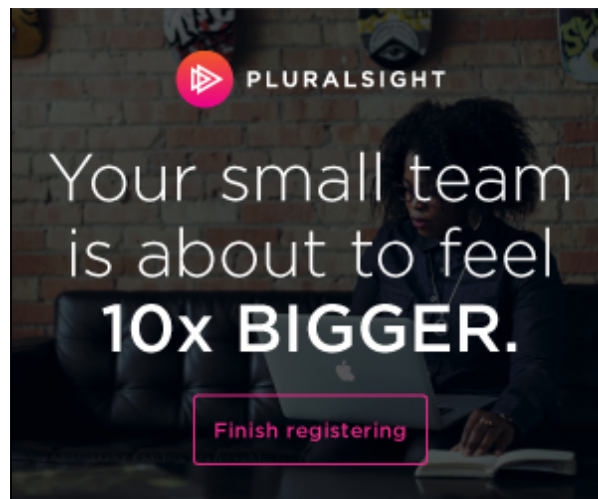
Oakville's David Lipton is among youths from around the world boarding a Japanese ship in the new year to take part in a unique cross-cultural exchange program.

Lipton, 23, made the cut for the Next Generation Global Leaders Program on the Ship For World Youth and will be among 11 youths from across Canada representing the country.

The program, organized by the government of Japan, has been running annually since 1988 to provide participating youth with the opportunity to enhance their leadership and management skills necessary to excel in an increasingly globalized world.

Approximately 120 Japanese youths and 150 overseas participants engage in a series of expert-led seminars, participant-led workshops and cultural activities.

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Lipton, who applied last summer and included a YouTube video of himself, explained the program invites 10 countries each year to participate.

This year is the first in six that Canada was invited



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The Canadian delegates, he says, will represent this country's diversity.

"That will be a strong and awesome thing to show the world when we get on board, that Canada is not just one singular identity, but we're a shared identity — it's made up of all these different people from around the world and that's how we've become this cool cultural melting pot," he said.

The two-month program will set sail from Japan in January, heading to Fiji and then New Zealand. The days will be filled with activities and seminars with the trip concluding on March 3.

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Lipton says he's looking forward to meeting young people who are interested in the same issues as he is and engaging in dialogue about social, political and economic issues.

"It's going to be a nice melting pot for people to come together, share their experiences and learn a lot from others around the world," he said.

Lipton added he started becoming more globally aware after taking an elective on international development at Dalhousie University in Halifax.

It was there he developed a passion for social justice and helping others.

He said it taught him to look at social issues with a critical lens.

"A lot of other disciplines are black and white, whereas this is grey, there are a lot of layers in social issues — economics, environment and political," he said. "You're taking all those spectra and combining them into one."



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youth charity that works to create a global network of young HIV peer educators, he worked at the Dududu Drop-In Centre.

Lipton helped enhance the HIV knowledge, leadership and life skills of youths in the Dududu community in an effort to improve health and overall socioeconomic outcomes. He also encouraged continuous organization brand development, implemented fundraising strategies, established an efficient leadership team, and secured long-term grants for the centre.

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He says hands-on experience helped strengthen his passion to do what he can to empower youths like himself to be the drivers of social change.

After returning from Japan, Lipton hopes to have a better understanding of how to engage youths so he can create his own non-profit.

"It's been a program I've been brewing with a couple of people back home in Canada, focusing on trying to give young people a platform to engage in social issues and create their own projects around social issues," he said.

For more information about the Ship for World Youth, visit swycanada.org/the-next-generation-global-leaders-program.



by [Julia Le](#)

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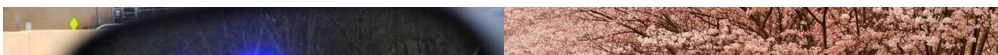


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