

St. Louis Park Junior Ambassador Program

The St. Louis Park Ambassador Program is currently accepting candidates for the St. Louis Park Junior Ambassadors. The following information may help you decide if this program is right for you.

What is the St. Louis Park Ambassador Program?

The St. Louis Park Ambassador Program selects three young adults, two senior ambassadors, and four junior ambassadors to represent the St. Louis Park Parktacular during the festival and throughout the year. These individuals promote the Children First initiative, as well as represent the city at neighboring community festivals and celebrations, such as parades, coronations, and luncheons. In addition, the St. Louis Park Ambassadors serve as community volunteers with local non-profit organizations.

The program is part of the St. Louis Park Parktacular Celebration and is run by volunteers. It is the desire of the Parktacular Board and Ambassador Coordinators to give each candidate the best experience possible, no matter what the outcome of the coronation may be.

Who can participate?

Boys and girls who are entering Kindergarten through 6th Grade in the fall. They must either reside or attend school in St. Louis Park. Children attending only daycare or childcare programs in the city are not eligible.

How do I become a candidate?

Anyone who meets the qualifications and submits an application will automatically become a candidate, however space is limited to the first 12 registered applicants.

How much does it cost?

There are no fees for you to enter. You will be provided with a sponsor from the community. If your child is selected to be an ambassador, the Ambassador program covers the cost for events during the year for your child. Our goal is to allow all children to participate in this program.

What are the benefits?

Your child will be given the opportunity to gain poise, self-confidence, social skills, and meet many new members of your community, as well as travel to many cities in Minnesota and Western Wisconsin. In addition, there will be many fun-filled activities for your child to participate in as a candidate.

How are the Ambassadors selected?

Judges will choose the candidates they feel will do the best job of representing the community for the coming year. Many of these judges are involved with other communities and have experience in working with ambassadors. They will consider personality, speaking ability, maturity, grooming, poise, confidence, and a willingness to commit to the program and its scheduled activities. They will also consider the ability of the candidates to work together as a family and

how they interact with the Senior and Young Adult Ambassadors. This is not a beauty or talent contest. With the exception of Miss St. Louis Park, all positions are selected on a gender blind basis.

How does the judging take place?

Candidates are judged at different events. They include:

Meet the Candidate: Each candidate dresses in an outfit of their own choosing that represents something about themselves (hobby, sport, career goals, etc.) and introduces themselves to the judges. During this time, they explain their wardrobe and how it describes them. The children will be paired with a Young Adult candidate, who is there to help and give moral support. This is held at the St. Louis Park Recreation Center and while open to the public, is usually attended by parents and friends.

Parade: Judges are given the option of attending the parade and reception. Candidates introduce themselves at the reception, demonstrating their speaking ability. They are also judged on their interaction with others.

Personal Interview: On the day of coronation, the panel of judges interviews each candidate. This is the most important part of the judging process. Most of the questions will be exactly the same as those on the application and completely age appropriate. Other questions asked may be an extension of the child's answer.

Coronation: The judges will observe to see how comfortable your child is in front of many people. Each child will also be asked a question from their application, so there will be no surprises and each child will feel comfortable. To help the children feel more at ease, the emcees of the Junior Coronation are former Young Adult Ambassadors and have had experience working with children of this age group.

Should there be 5 or fewer Jr. Candidates, all will be accepted into the positions of Jr. Ambassadors.

How much time commitment is expected of the new Ambassadors?

Ambassadors are expected to make their appearance schedule a priority. Some flexibility will be allowed for school, but most events are planned around the events listed in the St. Louis Park Community and School Calendar. Every attempt is made to give you at least 2 weeks notice or more, although some last minute opportunities do occur. Most of the events are given on a preliminary calendar available during your child's candidacy.

Most of the appearances occur during the summer on weekends and evenings. There are activities during the school year, but education is a priority and events are scheduled to avoid any known school activities if possible. Most activities from September to May occur on weekends.

You can anticipate approximately 35 appearances during the year. They will be in the form of parades, coronations, luncheons, and community service. In addition, we will be joining other ambassadors for dances, carnival rides, caroling, visiting senior residences, etc.

What awards/prizes are given?

Each candidate is given a gift bag for participating

At the end of their reign, each Ambassador will receive a savings bond for their participation.

Each Ambassador will receive to keep:

A crown/scepter

Sash

Embroidered polo shirt

Sundress/casual outfit

Formal (dress or tuxedo)

Accessories

Duffle bag

In addition, they will be provided on a loan basis:

Cape (girls only)

Winter coat

Winter hat, scarf, gloves, mittens, and pants

Apparel necessary for certain activities

How much commitment has to come from the parents?

Most parents are excited to have their child selected as an Ambassador and are expected to participate. Volunteers run our program and help is always needed. St. Louis Park Parktacular uses a 30-foot float for parades and help is required to set up/take down and tow this trailer. Parents usually love going to the parades and many volunteer to help by providing water, taking pictures, improving/repairing the float, and sewing wardrobes. While their children are becoming friends on the float, many parents enjoy the company of the other parents and the Ambassador family continues to grow stronger through these connections.

Why do children become candidates?

Lots of reasons!

“It looks like a lot of fun”

“My friend did it”

“Our older children participated and they really enjoyed it.”

“My child is shy and this would be good for her”

“Our family would like to become more involved in the community”

Whatever the reason, we welcome you as a candidate.

To obtain an application or for additional information, email the coordinators at slpambassadors@juno.com

