

St. Louis Park Parktacular Ambassador Program

The St. Louis Park Parktacular Ambassador Program is currently accepting candidates for this year's Ambassador Family. The following information may help you decide if this program is right for you.

What is the St. Louis Park Parktacular Ambassador Program?

The St. Louis Park Parktacular Ambassador Program selects up to three young adults, two senior ambassadors, and up to 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?

Young men and women ages 17-22 by July 15th may be candidates. They must be at least a senior in high school, in good standing academically, single, and have no dependents. They must live or attend school full time in the St. Louis Park School District. College graduates who have graduated from a secondary school in St. Louis Park are also welcome. Individuals who are 16 and completing their Junior years may participate, but may only be candidates for Ambassador.

How do I become a candidate?

Anyone who meets the qualifications and submit an application will automatically become a candidate. All candidates should be advised that they are expected to act with discretion for the duration of their candidacy. Also, we ask that you review your social media accounts and to be aware that the judges will review them as well.

How much does it cost?

There are no fees for you to enter. Those who are selected are provided with a wardrobe and all fees for participating are paid by the program. However, many families decide to purchase coordinating outfits for certain events. These costs are absorbed by each family. Examples include matching cowboy shirts for western themed parades or costumes for the Anoka Halloween parade. We also coordinate an overnight at a hotel with a parade during September or October. This event, while not required, is a highlight of the year and the costs are borne by each family.

What are the benefits?

You will be given the opportunity to gain poise, self-confidence, social skills, and meet many new members of your community. In addition, there will be many fun-filled activities for you 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 individuals 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 Junior Ambassadors. This is not a beauty or talent contest. All positions are selected on a gender blind basis.

How does the judging take place?

Candidates are judged at different events. They may include candidate activities such as:

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. Each person usually speaks for about 2 minutes. 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 Parktacular parade. 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. Some questions may originate from your application, while other questions may be formulated by the judges to evaluate your understanding of your community, your commitment to the program, and your ability to speak spontaneously.

Coronation:

1. Each candidate will introduce themselves to the audience, showing their ability to communicate to a large group with confidence
2. Each group of candidates participates in an activity selected by the outgoing ambassadors. This may be a dance, question, etc.
3. Each candidate will introduce themselves to the audience, showing their ability to communicate to a large group with confidence

4. The final part of the judging is the formal question. The question is usually selected by the judges from a list of questions provided by the outgoing Ambassadors. Each candidate will be asked the same question. Candidates are sequestered out of earshot until it is their turn to answer the question. Candidates wear formal gowns/suits/tuxedos for this part of the coronation.
5. Throughout the coronation, the judges will be looking at posture, poise, and presentation, as well as how the candidate handles unrehearsed situations.

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 and work, but most events are planned around the events listed in the St. Louis Park Community and School Calendar. We have found that most employers are very proud to have an ambassador as an employee and are quite willing to work around their schedules, since events are usually scheduled more than 2 weeks in advance. Attendance and punctuality are important and will determine the award of the scholarship at the end of the term.

Many 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 40-50 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?

At the end of their reign, provided all requirements have been fulfilled, each Ambassador will receive a scholarship for their participation. Most Congenial will also receive a plaque presented at the coronation.

Each Ambassador will receive to keep:

- A crown/scepter
- Sash
- Embroidered polo shirt
- Sundress/casual outfit
- Semi formal 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 my parents?

Most parents or guardians are excited to have their child selected as an Ambassador and are expected to participate equally with their child. Sometimes another family member over the age of 21 can stand in for the Ambassador's parent or guardian. Our program is run by volunteers 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 young adults become candidates?

Lots of reasons!

“I need scholarship money”

“It looks like a lot of fun”

“My friend did it”

“I'm proud of my community and I want to tell others about it”

“I love being around little kids and meeting new people”

Whatever the reason, we welcome you as a candidate.

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