



HI USA

HI USA ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO “EXPLORE AMERICA”

Nation’s Largest Hostel Network Helps Deserving Young People Pursue their Travel Dreams

SILVER SPRING, MD, February 2, 2023 – Applications are now open for the **Explore America Travel Scholarship**, Hostelling International USA ([HI USA](#))’s annual travel scholarship that allows young adults, ages 18-30, with demonstrated financial need, to pursue their travel dreams. Thirty-six scholarships will be awarded in three categories: 25 open to anyone who meets the criteria living anywhere in the U.S.; 10 who reside in New York; and one bestowed upon a former Girl Scout, provided in honor of long-time HI USA board member and World Foundation of Girl Guides and Girls Scouts board member Peggy Stevens. This is the largest number of Explore America scholarships the organization has ever awarded and the first time it has offered different award categories.

HI USA believes in the power of travel to foster a deeper understanding of people, places and the world around. Explore America supports this mission by giving young adults with proven financial need the ability to travel and stay for four to seven nights at select HI USA hostels around the country. The scholarship also provides a \$1,500 stipend for travel, a pre-planning workshop, and one year membership to HI USA.

According to HI USA CEO Russ Hedge, “We have seen how travel can transform lives, bridge differences in culture and geographies, and forge lifelong friendships. Through Explore America we strive to give young adults who may not have the means or exposure to travel the opportunity to do so and to broaden their own lives. Additionally, while hostel travel is common outside the US, here it’s still less understood, but a great and affordable way to travel. Through our scholarships we seek to expose more people to the world of hostelling.”

Past recipients have shared only favorable reviews. According to former awardee Hieu Vo of Silver Spring, MD, “By traveling, we step out of our comfort zone, learn to adjust, adapt, be empathetic and tolerant towards differences.”

Explore America recipients can stay at the following hostels:

- [HI Boston](#)
- [HI Chicago, the J. Ira and Nicki Harris Family Hostel](#)
- [HI Los Angeles Santa Monica](#)
- [HI New Orleans](#)
- [HI New York City](#)
- [HI San Diego Downtown](#)
- [HI San Francisco Downtown](#)
- [HI San Francisco Fisherman’s Wharf](#)

Applications are now being accepted through **February 28, 2023**. Eligible applicants must:

- be between 18-30 years of age
- be a US citizen or permanent resident
- show proven financial need (current or former Pell Grant recipient or have a household income of no more than 300% of the federal poverty guidelines)

Recipients will be notified by March 28, 2023 and Explore America travel can take place between May 31, 2023, and May 30, 2024. For more information about Explore America, visit hiusa.org/Explore-america-scholarship.

For more information about HI USA or to make a reservation at one of its hostels or vacation rental units, visit hiusa.org or @hiusa.

About HI USA

Hostelling International USA (HI USA) is a nonprofit, member organization founded on an enduring belief in the power of travel to foster a deeper understanding of people, places, and the world. HI USA promotes a dynamic community of global citizens who have the wisdom and humanity to actively make the world a better place. As the nation's leading hostel brand, HI USA hosted more than 1 million overnight stays in 2019, with guests from more than 100 countries. For over 80 years, HI USA has provided a network of affordable hostels in converted mansions, reinvented lighthouses, and historic urban buildings across the country. Visit hiusa.org for more information. HI USA is part of Hostelling International (HI), a collection of hostels in nearly 90 countries, whose roots stretch back to the beginning of the hostelling movement more than 100 years ago. The HI brand is a seal of approval recognized around the world.

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