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MEDIA RELEASE

Amazing Student Opportunities to Celebrate the 2006 Australia-Japan 'Year of Exchange' *29 Japan Study Scholarships available with AFS Intercultural Programs*

1 May 2006 2006 is the "Year of Exchange" between Australia and Japan, 12 months which commemorate the 30th anniversary of the signing of the "Basic Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation" between the two countries. In celebrating this landmark event, AFS Intercultural Programs is proudly offering **29 full and partial scholarships for all Australian high school students** to study up to one year in Japan. Partial AFS scholarships range in value between \$2,500 and \$5,600 while a full scholarship is worth up to \$11,200! This is an invaluable opportunity students should not miss!

The "Year of Exchange" initiative aims to broaden and strengthen relations between Australian and Japan by providing a year long focus on all kinds of exchange between the two countries. Such activities include the promotion of friendships, deeper mutual understanding and cooperation as well as collaborative activities in the fields of arts, education, science and technology, sport and tourism. These events are taking place in both Australia and Japan throughout 2006. Despite all these, the most simple and rewarding form of this exchange is to share our ways of life. With this in mind, these AFS scholarships will allow 29 lucky students the opportunity to do just that.

AFS Intercultural Programs is a leader in intercultural learning and offers international exchange programs in over 50 countries around the world. Of these countries, it is Japan that has always held a particular fascination for young Australians. Since the first AFS Japanese student arrived in Australia in 1974, 2,400 Japanese students have immersed themselves in Australian culture with equal numbers of Australians going to Japan. Learning the history behind the Samurais, travelling on bullet trains and bathing in "onsens" are only some of the wonderful activities that these students can undertake while there. At the same time they will develop their Japanese language skills, participate in local customs and establish lasting international friendships. As Australian-Japanese relations continue to strengthen, these scholarships will provide students with an unequalled opportunity to receive an educational experience to prepare them for a successful international career.

This is also the first time ever that AFS Intercultural Programs has offered so many scholarships to Japan in one year. In the offering of these scholarships AFS Australia welcomes the continued support of various corporate sponsors including Anglo Coal and Mitsui, J-Power, Pilbara Iron, the Sony Foundation Australia and AFS Japan. Details for the AFS Japan Scholarships and the other 40 scholarships currently available can be found at the AFS homepage (www.afs.org.au) or by calling 1300 131 736. Students must register with AFS by 31 May to be eligible.

About AFS

AFS Intercultural Programs (www.afs.org.au) is one of the world's largest not-for-profit community-based volunteer organisations and is dedicated to building a more just and peaceful world through intercultural exchange. Opportunities for language learning, cultural immersion and personal growth are at the core of an AFS exchange experience. A network of over 52 AFS partners organisations run programs in more than 50 countries involving over 11,000 students, young adults and teachers each year. AFS Australia offers over 140 programs in over 50 countries and provides over 60 scholarships each year through corporate sponsorships, international AFS partners and individual donors.

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