

Maraya and Demi's links to their Kastellorizian ancestors:

Their maternal great grand-parents were Angelo Petridis and Ekaterini (Katherine) Petridis (nee Passaris) were born on Kastellorizo.

Their paternal great grandfather Angelo (Diamandras) Antonas was born on a Greek settlement south of Turkey, Myra and his wife Zambeta (Elizabeth) Antonas (nee Papakotis) was born on Kastellorizo. They migrated to Perth, Australia in the early 1900s.

## **Maraya Takionatis**

I have chosen to apply for this exchange, because I hope that spending time on Kastellorizo will give me inspiration for the future and help me with my understanding of the world. I also am proud to have a Greek heritage and believe that we can learn a lot from the Greeks.

Personally, I also look forward to learning more about my family. My grandmother and mother, tell stories of Kastellorizo that mesmerise me, and I want to be able to tell my grandchildren these stories, as well as have stories of my own to contribute.

I would also like to go because my cousin, Demi Sipsas, has applied for this program and I think that it will be a wonderful experience for us to bond in a meaningful way and learn about our family history together. It would mean a lot to experience the island for myself, without the influence of my family, and to get to know the place on my own terms.

I think it is extremely important to know where you come from, and before I start to consider building my career, and a life after I finish school, I would like to know more of my family's history to help me with my future. Without a doubt I will learn more of the language, customs and way of life. I want to see the churches and discover every landmark. I want to see the balcony from which my great, great uncle dived each day. I want to see the house my great, grandmother was born in. I want to swim in the blue grotto and I want to study the characters which make the island. I want to see how I can fit in this island and want to feel the magic my Yiayia fondly speaks about. Ultimately, I want my Greek heritage to be more than something I was born into, I want to feel proud and inspired by my background. I hope I will find a way to promote, respect and honour this island always.

## **Demi Sipsas**

I have chosen to apply for this student exchange as I have not travelled overseas before and I think this would be a magnificent opportunity to visit the island of Kastellorizo where my maternal great-grand parents were born. Since I can remember, I have heard so many wonderful things said about this unique and beautiful island and have always wanted to go there. I would love to be given the opportunity to travel overseas to Kastellorizo to see the birth place of my ancestors. It would be a truly incredible experience. It would also mean that I will be able to improve my knowledge of the island and I could also improve my Greek speaking skills and also have a really memorable time.