

## Why should I become a Host Family?

The benefits of being a host family to an international student are numerous. Your assigned student can help you and your family learn about traditions of another culture. Being a host is a great way to learn about the world without leaving home.

## What are the Benefits?

The relationships that develop between host students and their hosts foster a new appreciation for how others live and view the world and contribute to achieving one of the principle values of the cross-cultural experiences: *cultural self – awareness*. Because we learn so many of our basic assumptions, values, and behavior patterns at an early age, we rarely think about them as we conduct our daily lives. We assume that our behavior and beliefs are “natural” and universally experienced. Cultural self-awareness allows us to see that our way of doing things is but one of the many different, equally “natural” ways. The ability to acknowledge cultural differences and accept them helps us in building relationships with people from other cultures.

## What does it take to be a Host Family?

Being a host family doesn't require any special skills --- just a genuine interest in meeting and learning about other cultures, along with the desire to share our cultural traditions with others.

## Who can become a Host Family?

Anyone interested in getting to know a student from another country – families, couples, individuals are all welcome

## What Does a Host Family Do?

Host families provide friendship to international students and assist them in adjusting to life in a new, unfamiliar culture.

The students do not live with his/her host family.

The host family is not responsible for financial support.

International Friends of Pittsburg suggests that host families meet with their students at least once a month. Some people, of course, get together more frequently.

Suggested activities include:

- Inviting your student to dinner or to family celebrations
- Meeting for coffee and conversation
- Playing board games, watching movies
- Attending local cultural & sport events
- Short trips to local attractions

Learn as much as possible about the student's culture. This will help you to better understand your student's attitudes and beliefs.

Respect your student's religion and culture. Proselytizing is not permitted among International Friends of Pittsburg's volunteers.

## The Host Family Tradition

The host families, the cornerstone of the programs offered by International Friends of Pittsburg, have a long tradition of welcoming international students to the community and introducing them to American life and customs. Some host families have been involved in the program for more than twenty years.

Each year, approximately forty to fifty students are assigned a host family.

## Activities and Services

- International Friends of Pittsburg sponsors a variety of activities for its volunteers throughout the year:
- Welcome dinners for new students each semester
- Receptions and orientation for newly assigned students and families
- Panel discussions concerning cross – cultural issues

## Who Are the International Friends of Pittsburg?

- International Friends of Pittsburg is an autonomous Community – based organization comprised of volunteers from Pittsburg and the surrounding area.
- IFP sponsors the only official host family organization for PSU international students
- IFP serves as a liaison and works in cooperation with the PSU International Programs office and other campus and community organizations
- IFP is not affiliated with any church or religious group. We respect every individual's right to practice the religion of his/her choice.

## Would You Like More Information?

If you are interested in becoming a host family or would like more information about our programs, please fill out the following form and send it to the address below:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Return form to:

Cynthia Pfannenstiel  
Assignments Coordinator

Axe Library  
Pittsburg State University  
Pittsburg, KS 66762

Telephone: (620) 235-4888  
Email: [cynthia@pittstate.edu](mailto:cynthia@pittstate.edu)

*International  
Friends  
of  
Pittsburg*



Host Family  
Program