Response to International Friends

“I would like to thank the Rolla community. As visiting Chinese students, we face many difficulties when we are studying in the US, not only in our studies but also in our lives. Your community is so nice to us and so many people are happy to be our ‘host families.’ You always help us overcome all kinds of problems, especially the language. Most Chinese students improve their English after finding a friend in the community. We greatly appreciate your help and we are pleased to be friends with you.”

-Liu Feng, president of the 2004 Chinese Student and Scholar Association
Frequently Asked Questions

What is the International Friends Program? It is an opportunity for you to meet an international student, exchange cultural information, and be a friend. You might invite the student to your home to share special events. You could both attend local events, a wedding, Sunday dinner, a birthday celebration, a graduation, or holiday parties. Students want to learn all they can about American culture and meet friends in the area.

How does the program work? We invite families and individuals who are willing to serve as community friends; likewise, we encourage newly arrived international students to apply for participation in this activity. Applications are completed by both parties, we review these and then make student/family assignments. Let us know if you have a preference or if you prefer to only host student(s) from the country you request. We will try to meet your requests. If you’ve “adopted” an international student, but haven’t signed up for the program, please submit an application and let us know you already have an international student. We’d like to add you to our contact list so that we can invite you to special events hosted by our office.

How much time will I need to commit? The answer is easy—as much time as you and your student(s) have available for this program. We recommend meeting about once a month, but this is completely up to you.

How long is this commitment? Again, this is your option. We’ll accept whatever length of commitment you choose to make. Most families maintain the relationship the whole time the student remains at Missouri S&T (and sometimes even beyond); while some wish to only participate for a year.

What kind of help do students need? Community friends can help international students understand the American way of life. As a friend, you might offer some practical assistance in shopping, dining at a local restaurant, explaining holidays and customs, and many other practical things.

What is the cost? There is no cost associated with being involved in the program. Community friends do not “host” students as far as providing housing or any type of financial assistance. There is also no cost to the student as community friends are all volunteers.

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