Providing community, hospitality and friendship to international students at The University of Iowa

Friends of International Students

A proud sponsor of FIS

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Have you noticed the many international students who live and study in the Iowa City area? Have you ever wondered what it would be like to befriend one of them and learn about their American experience?

Friends of International Students (FIS) is an independent, non-profit community organization of people who provide friendship and support to international students and scholars attending the University of Iowa.

FIS has a goal of seeing that every UI international student has the opportunity to meet an American and share a valuable intercultural friendship. If this sounds interesting to you, look inside this brochure to discover how.

For more information or to become an FIS Friend:
- Visit http://international.uiowa.edu/international-students/make-connections
- Send an e-mail to iowa.fis@gmail.com
- Call UI International Student & Scholar Services at 319-335-0335
- Complete the application that is a part of this brochure

Preferences in student match(es)

- Male 
- Female 
- No preference
- Undergraduate 
- Graduate 
- No preference
- Married 
- Single 
- No preference

Other requests you would like considered when matching you with a student

Are you willing to be matched with more than 1 student? Yes: how many

How did you learn about FIS?

Please provide two reference we can contact

Name ____________________________
Relationship ______________________
Telephone ________________________

Name ____________________________
Relationship ______________________
Telephone ________________________

As an organization affiliated with the University of Iowa, Friends of International Students (FIS) has a duty to protect students who participate in FIS programs. FIS does not release student information to third parties under any circumstances except as part of the Friend-Student matching program. FIS reserves the right to screen potential Friends. This screening process may include phone interviews, reference checks, and background checks. FIS provides an orientation program to Friends when they are matched with a student.

Signature __________________________
Date ______________________________

Return form to: 1111 University Capitol Centre, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242
Who can be an FIS Friend?

Anyone genuinely interested in international exchange on the personal level is encouraged to become a Friend. There is no typical Friend—they are young and old, single individuals and married couples, young families and senior citizens. Like Americans in general, participants come from all walks of life and have all kinds of experiences.

How do I get matched with a student?

Fill out a Friend Application. This is attached to the brochure. We try to match the interests and other requests made by applicants, but do ask that you be open to the variety of students that come to UI. We usually have single students as well as students with families, and you can ask to be matched with more than one student.

Contact your student when you are informed of your match. It is important to make that first connection as soon as you can, as often students have been here for several weeks before we can arrange an FIS match.

Attend our New Friend Orientation. Orientation for new FIS Friends normally take place early in each academic semester. During orientation you will be provided more information about FIS, ideas on things you might do with your student, as well as resources to answer questions that will inevitably arise. And the FIS Board and Office of International Students and Scholars staff are available to assist members in any way necessary.

What is expected of FIS Friends?

Once Friends and students are matched, they can decide what they would like to do together, depending on their time and mutual interests. Some guidelines and suggestions:

- Friends are encouraged to meet with their students at least once a month.
- Consider normal activities, whether it be family gatherings, going to the movies, or outdoor activities, as a way to get to know your student.
- Many students also enjoy inviting their Friends to their activities—perhaps cooking a meal, going to a UI event, or some other similar occasion.

- There are also occasional FIS-sponsored events to which all Friends and students are invited. You don’t always need to arrange a special event to meet with your student. Like other friendships, just spending time together with everyday life can be rewarding.

What will I gain from the experience?

As a Friend, you—and your family—will enjoy the personal pleasure of getting to know a student who may come from a different background, yet who will share the value of cross-cultural friendship. You will have the opportunity to learn about the cultural, religious and political beliefs and personal background of your student in a way that comes only from an ongoing relationship. Your student may be far from home and in a different culture, often struggling with the English language and the demands of academic life and will appreciate having an individual who offers hospitality and friendship. Many Friends maintain contact with their students long after the student has returned home.

Application to be a Community Friend

Primary Contact

Family Name ____________________________
First Name ____________________________
Address ________________________________
City_____________________ Zip________
Phone _________________________________
E-mail _________________________________
Gender___________ Age____________
Occupation ____________________________

Other members of household

Spouse/Partner Name__________________________
Gender___________ Age____________
Occupation ____________________________

Child Name ________________________________
Gender___________ Age____________

Child Name ________________________________
Gender___________ Age____________

Child Name ________________________________
Gender___________ Age____________

Other Name ________________________________
Relationship ______________________________
Gender___________ Age____________
Occupation ____________________________

(please list any other family members on an additional piece of paper)

What languages do you or others in your household speak? ________________________________

What are your family’s special interests and hobbies? ________________________________

(please fill out other side)