

HOST FAMILY SIGN UP SHEET

Centre College is going to have over 60 international students this year on campus. Over the last 3 years we have built relationships with the director for international students and over 25 students, this relationship has opened the doors for us as church community to host over 30 students from various parts of the world. This opportunity is a great cross-cultural experience for the host families and the students. Because we can do it as a church family it offers even more support for both the students and the first time host families.

Here is what is required:

Like most relationships you get out of them what you put into them; HOWEVER in this case we need a minimum commitment of a host family for the following:

1. Commit to 1 school year for your student (2 semesters)
2. Attend training during the Sunday School hour on Aug. 9th and for 1 hr. after church
3. Attend a reception "meet and greet" on Centre campus on evening of Aug 25th to meet your student for the first time!!
4. Reach out to your student during the semester with cards, txt messages, etc. to see if they need anything
5. Invite them to dinner at your home or restaurant 1 -2 times over the semester
6. Take them on a fun activity or cultural experience 1 -2 times a semester (trick or treat, Thanksgiving meal at the church, etc., are great events!)

Host families are **NOT** responsible for the following:

1. To house or keep students over breaks or during the year
2. Financially support students with school or other items

FAQ

- 1. Do the students all speak English?**
 - a. Yes. They got into Centre College. No foreign language is needed.
- 2. I don't know what to do, what to talk about, how to even be a host family**
 - a. Perfect. Come to the training on Aug 9th., we'll teach you everything you need to know! Plus you have the support of the Marra family and others in the church, we'll grow together!
- 3. How are students paired up with families?**
 - a. Pete Marra and the International team at Centre will work to put the right families and students together based on the host family, student's likes, gender, and other factors.
- 4. Can I bring them to church?**
 - a. Yes. You are encourage to invite your student to experience many things about American culture. Students should always feel free to say NO, but often want to check it out.
- 5. Will they stay at my house**
 - a. No. Students will not being staying at your house. Many are very busy with school work, but they do enjoy coming and hanging out a few hours to get off campus, eat a meal, and hangout from time to time.

Host Family Program Expectations

Expectations for students

Your host(s) may invite you to visit their home and participate in numerous activities that provide opportunities to learn about the way of life in the U.S. and to make friends with people in the community. Your host(s), however, are not expected to help you with problems such as, for example, finding a place to stay during the academic year or vacation periods, taking you and picking you up from the airport, financial needs or difficulties, legal matters, any kind of immigration matters, or serious medical or personal problems: for these issues you are to see Stephen Swan, your international student advisor.

The four main expectations of students in this program are designed to help you make your relationship with your host(s) as fulfilling as possible. These expectations are:

Make and respond to phone calls and invitations · Spend time either on or off-campus with your host family on a regular basis · Share your perspectives and ideas with your host family · Be open to ideas, activities, styles, and customs of your host. Your host family may invite you to church or other religious gatherings. You may choose to attend religious gatherings or not, you should not feel pressured to do so, but if you do attend please be respectful of others' customs.

Expectations for families

-To facilitate the first meeting between you and your student(s), we will have a "Meet and Greet" meeting on campus at the beginning of the fall term. Further information will be provided when you receive confirmation of your student pairing.

-We'd expect you to take them on a local excursion (Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, Central KY Wildlife Refuge, somewhere in Lexington or Louisville—the choice is yours) sometime in the first couple of months.

-Occasionally have them over to your home for a meal.

- For the first several months, we'd like you to contact the student at least once per month. **We do not expect you to feel pressured to take students to the airport (or to pick them up), to host them during the Christmas break, or to support them financially.**

- If you would like to host your student during holidays that is entirely up to you. We understand that this is an option not everyone feels comfortable with, but you can choose to host a student during the school/holiday breaks.

Host Family Advice

Reading a book(s) about the country of the student as soon as possible after being assigned would be extremely helpful. This is especially true for Asian students because of the political background in China and the cultural background of all the countries. It is hard for most of us to grasp how deeply these things affect contemporary thinking.

For those hosting Japanese students, I would recommend *Learning to Bow* by Bruce Feiler. For those hosting Chinese students, *Chinese Lessons, Five Classmates and the Story of the New China* by John Pomfret and *Fried Eggs with Chopsticks* by Polly Evans. These books are easy reads and give good insight into the culture.

If someone wants to do a more in-depth read on Chinese culture, *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China* by Jung Chang is excellent but could be described as a tome!

Hosts need to remember that the students may be longing for food from home so taking them to the Asian market on the corner of Waller Ave and Harrodsburg Road to pick up some familiar treats or to buy things for the student to cook at your house might be exactly what they need.

Before you cook for them, find out if they like spicy or more bland foods—you might be surprised! If you have them over for dinner, send them home with leftovers of things they liked.

Ask them to join you in regular activities your family participates in as well as special events. Ask if they'd like to go to church with you sometime, especially if food is involved! Keep in mind that not all cultures conceive religion in the same manner as Americans, and that there should be no pressure on your part for the student to participate in religious activities or accept your religious beliefs and views, however we do expect them to be respectful.

If they'd like, grab a pizza and watch an American event (such as the thanksgiving day parade, sporting event, movie, or awards show). Take them to a Civil War re-enactment. Maybe they need a ride to Lexington for shopping. Ask if they'd like to study at your house, or have friends come to your house for a cookout.

Introduce them to other people when they're with you and remember that you are modeling American life for them. In a sense, you are an important American Ambassador.

Keep in touch via emails just to say hi, how are things going, do you need anything? Don't get upset if you don't always get a response. Remember they're busy with classes and that they have to have time to become accustomed to you. Don't be afraid to let them see your house messy or you in gardening clothes; help them to feel like a family member by "keeping things real." Let them help in the kitchen etc if they want to. Be consistent with them and don't "drop" them—they need the affirmation of having someone who genuinely is interested in them.

**Host Questionnaire
Class of 2019**

First Name:

Last name:

Family members:

Phone number(s):

Email:

Address:

What inspired you to want to be a host family for Centre's new international students?

How many international students are you interested in hosting?

Would you be interested in opening your home to your student(s) during Centre breaks?

Do you have any pets? If so, please list.

Do you have any concerns about hosting a student or students?

Is there any other information that you think might be relevant to your hosting a student or students?

Please return the completed form to Stephen.Swan@Centre.edu or mail to

**Stephen Swan
International Student Advisor
Centre College
600 W. Walnut St.
Danville, KY 40422**