Friendship Family Program - Guide for Families

Ivanhoe International Center at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology

Guidelines & Responsibilities for Families

1. The Friendship Family program is a visitation program for international students attending the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology (SDSM&T). It is not a home-stay or live-in program.

2. Students and families are matched for a period of up to one academic year. Although the relationship may continue well beyond that year, we hope families will make themselves available to another student at the end of that period.

3. Should the student and family be incompatible, it is reasonable to make a change. Please call SDSM&T or ISI and relate the situation and we will make other arrangements.

4. Families and students are asked to make contact at least once each month. It may be only to inquire about health and well-being, or it may be for an invitation. Keep in contact to show your interest and let your student know you are available. The thought is the important thing. Additionally, international students appreciate the opportunity to practice their English skills.

5. A number of activities are planned during the academic year. We hope that both students and Friendship Families will take advantage of these opportunities to get acquainted with other families and students, as well as the staff from the international office at SDSM&T & ISI. We will send announcements to you. Your support of these activities is very much appreciated.

6. Religion and religious institutions constitute an important aspect of our culture in the United States which the foreign student should have an opportunity to learn about and observe if s/he so wishes. Students should know that they are welcome to attend services with you, particularly during religious holidays, but you should clearly indicate the nature of the event as well as its sponsorship. When students have questions regarding religion, we strongly encourage an open discussion. The policy of the Friendship Family Program, in accordance with NAFSA: Association of International Educators policy, is that proselytizing (or recruiting) must not be carried out.

7. We suggest that, whenever possible, you invite your student for Thanksgiving dinner as well as some activity during the Christmas season and semester breaks. These can be a very lonely times, especially for the student who does not have the resources to travel. Other suggested activities might include children's birthday parties, school activities, sports events, lectures, and special holiday celebrations.

8. Should your student have difficulty in adjusting to the U.S., university life, etc., you may want to contact SDSM&T or ISI.

9. Encourage your student to explain his/her customs, country, food, etc. to you. It may be that the student would enjoy preparing some traditional food for you in your kitchen if they do not have facilities.

10. **Most importantly, relax and enjoy your affiliation!**

Thank you in advance for your involvement in this rewarding program.

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