

**Stony Brook University**

**Host Family Program**

**2011-2012**



### *What is the Host Family Program?*

The Host Family Program provides a new international student with continuing friendship and involvement with a family in the United States. The Host Family Program was developed to offer hospitality to international students by a group of community residents. Both students and host families can have the enriching experience of a cultural exchange and gain a new perspective about the world. A host family may be a retired couple, a large family group, a newly-married couple, or a single individual. The only pre-requisite is the desire to make an international student feel comfortable in a strange and new setting.

### *Who are international students?*

The majority of international students are in graduate programs with high academic aspirations and achievement. They are bright, talented young men and women from different countries who will generally be in positions of leadership upon return to their home country.

### *How do host families get involved?*

Host families can make every effort to share family occasions, outings and special holidays with the student. They can also provide an initial introduction to the communities around the University and help the student settle in, to begin a new life. Host families may also wish to introduce the student to various aspects of U.S. culture or to help the student celebrate aspects of the student's native culture. The Host Family Program is a friendship program and is not meant to be a home-stay program.

### *Why join the Host Family Program?*

Just imagine how you would feel in a foreign country, not being accustomed to the language and the culture! You can fulfill the mission of a private ambassador for a better future when international students experience your warmth, and acceptance in the community. Many times students who are so far away from home simply need a warm smile and a listening ear. By joining the Program, host families will be invited by the international students to a welcoming reception, as well as other programs that may be provided by the University in the course of the year. Our lives are always enriched by contacts with people from other cultures. Long-time host families will tell you that some of their warmest memories are of times spent with their international students. These students help us to look at our environment with new eyes and a new sense of excitement. Children who have contacts with international students are more aware of the world around them and will be able to use such experiences to their advantage as they grow.

### *When does the program begin and how long does it last?*

You may join the program at any time, but most new international students arrive in August for the fall semester. The program lasts for as long as you wish to keep in contact with a student. Often, there are warm, ongoing friendships after the students return home. Although you may discontinue the Program at any time, we would appreciate knowing why you choose to leave the Program. You may request to host one or more new international students each year, if you wish.

***How do families contact new international students?***

After you are assigned to a new international student by the Director of the Host Family Program, you are advised to write or call the student in order to arrange a first meeting. This assignment, including contact information, will be mailed to you by the Director of the Host Family Program. Host families are always invited to participate in the annual International Student Host Family Reception. Announcements are mailed to the families.

***How fluently do these students speak English?***

The fluency with spoken English varies greatly among the students, although they are all required to prove college-level proficiency in reading. They are generally eager to practice English conversation whenever possible.

***Are all international students included?***

We assign host families only to those students who request a host family.

***What level of commitment to the program is expected?***

The number of outings and events you share with your student depends upon your expectations and those of your host student. Students and circumstances result in different amounts of contact.

***It sounds wonderful! How do I join the Host Family Program?***

Please complete the attached application form and email to our host family program Director Rhona Goldman at Rhonamg@optonline.net

***Questions?***

Call RhonaGoldman(**Director**-Host Family Program)

631-751-7257/631-689-7482(fax)

Call or email an International Student advisor at

Stony Brook University

Visa and Immigration Services

E5310 Frank J.Melville Memorial Library

Stony Brook, NY 11794-3393

Ph# (631)632-4685

Fax # (631)632-7064

Visaandimmigrationservices@notes.cc.sunysb.edu