



AMERICAN VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Office of International Education offers Americans the chance to befriend international students studying at Virginia Commonwealth University. More than 75% of all international students in the U.S. never enter an American home during their entire stay. This can be a difficult and lonely time for students as they adjust to a new culture and language while being far from family and friends.

Previous participants, adults and children alike, have enjoyed learning about other cultures and languages. Through this enriching experience, deep friendships have developed and continue long after students' formal education has been completed.

Open to singles and families, the volunteer program provides several options to suit the needs of student and host. Ongoing support from Student Services will be offered.

A. Conversation Partner

The student meets for one hour each week with the American volunteer in order to practice his or her English-speaking skills. No foreign language or tutoring skills are required.

B. Friendship Partner

A student and single individual or family are matched for the school year. Frequency of contact may vary, but in most cases, the student will visit the individual or family once a month. This is a casual time and may include dinner in the volunteer's home or an outing together. Phone contact between visits is encouraged.

C. Host Family

The student lives with the host family for eight to 16 weeks, while acclimating to this new environment. Expenses for room and board will be paid by the student. Entry dates for new students in the English Language Program are January, March, June, August and October. Academic students begin their studies in either August or January.

D. International Coffee Hour

Students, staff and community visitors gather weekly for socializing and refreshments. It is a time for students to meet and develop friendships with classmates and Americans in a casual setting.

E. Holiday Visit

A student is invited into a home for the day in order to experience a "typical" American holiday, such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, Fourth of July, etc. This activity is more comfortable if two students join the festivities together.

F. Holiday or Emergency Housing

Students living in the dormitory must vacate during the holidays and require temporary housing for this time. Also, students sometimes need emergency housing for a few days up to two weeks.

For more information, contact Wick Stansbury (wwstansbury@vcu.edu) or Jaime Bennett (bennettjm@vcu.edu) at 828-0808 or visit our office at:

916 West Franklin Street
Office of International Education
Room 106

**VCU's Office of International Education
American Volunteer Information**

Name(s): _____ Date _____

Address: _____

Occupation(s): _____

Phone:

Residence: _____ Business: _____ - _____ E-mail: _____

Names and ages of children (if living at home): _____

Hobbies and interests: _____

Countries in which you are interested and why: 1. _____

2. _____

Do you prefer one or two students? ___1 ___2 ___no preference
(Conversation may be easier and more comfortable with more than one student.)

Student Preference: ___male ___female ___married couple
___with children ___no preference

List pets (kind of animal): _____

List any other information which might be helpful in matching you with an international student:

Area(s) in which you would like to be involved:

___Host Family ___Friendship Family ___Holiday Visit ___Conversation Partner
___Holiday Housing ___Emergency Housing ___International Student Coffee Hour

**Please refer any questions and/or return this form to: Pam Haney, Bob Wood and Wick Stansbury,
Office of International Education, Virginia Commonwealth University, P.O. Box 843043,
Richmond, VA 23284-3043, (804) 828-0808**

Office Use: Assignment

Student: _____ Country: _____ Date: _____