Light the Way!

International Friendship Family Program

International Student Information Packet

2017-2018
International Friendship Family Program

What is the International Friendship Family Program?
The International Friendship Family Program is a new program run by International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS), which seeks to link international students with local Cincinnati/Highland Heights area families. Based on the belief that proximity, inclusion and friendship are key to successful cultural exchange, the program provides unique cultural experiences for community members and helps international students experience true Ohio/Kentucky culture, with guidance from American families. The goal is to make the Cincinnati/Highland Heights community a home away from home for international students.

The program involves matching an international student, both undergraduate and graduate students studying at Northern Kentucky University (NKU), with a local friend (a family, couple or individual). International students applying during the fall are matched with a local family for one academic year and are invited to join ISSS for cultural events and activities throughout that year. Beyond attending ISSS events (optional), International Friendship Families are expected to invite their student to family events and outings at least once a month. The program does not require a lot of extra time and effort; rather it mainly involves families welcoming students into their normal, day-to-day family life.

How do I join?

The first step in joining this program is to fill out an application which can be found on the ISSS website. Once you have filled out the application, we will do our best to match you with a local family according to the preferences listed on your application. Before you arrive at NKU, we will share your information with your international friendship family so they can arrange your arrival. Having an international friendship family will be very helpful during your initial adjustment at NKU. If possible, they will pick you up from the airport and have you stay with them at their house for the first few days before the residence halls open.

If I join, what will I be doing with my family?

When you first arrive, your international friendship family will strive to create a smooth adjustment for you by showing you around the Cincinnati/Highland Heights area- showing you where to shop and helping you move into your residence hall. Throughout the year, your international friendship family will invite you over for family dinners, holidays, and other various social activities. The main purpose is to create a sense of home for you at NKU, while also providing local families a great opportunity to bring a different culture into their home. ISSS will also be in communication with you throughout the year to check in and invite you to special events.
Expectations & Guidelines

Local Families participating in the International Friendship Family Program are expected:

- To attend the International Friendship Family Program orientation at the end of the summer.
- To maintain regular communication with their student throughout the year - returning phone calls, emails and other forms of communication in a timely manner.
- To meet with their student at least once a month.
- To facilitate the student’s adjustment to a new cultural and academic environment.
- To introduce the student to American culture.
- To participate in special events organized by ISSS (if able).
- To be excited and open to learning about a new culture.
- To respect the religious and political beliefs of the student, as well as his/her cultural traditions.
- To complete participation surveys/evaluations.

International Participants of the International Friendship Family Program are expected:

- To maintain regular communication with their International Friendship Family Program - returning phone calls, emails and other forms of communication in a timely manner.
- To meet with their family at least once a month.
- To respect traditions, religious and political beliefs of their International Friendship Family Program.
- To facilitate a cultural exchange.
- To be flexible, open and excited to learn about American culture.
- To complete participation surveys/evaluations.

Your International Friendship Family will not be:

- Asked to serve as an ATM for you.
- Required to have you stay with them.
For more information contact:

Northern Kentucky University
International Student and Scholar Services
University Center, 305
100 Nunn Drive, Highland Heights, KY 41099
1-859-572-6517 – isss@nku.edu