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Global Friends
Find out more about a unique opportunity to make international friends.



Annual Picnic
Take a peek at our recent "Welcome to Madison" picnic event.



Thank You
MFIS tribute to volunteers who have passed away.

October 2015

MFIS

Madison Friends of INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Thanksgiving in America

– At Your House!

In America, as in countries around the world, the holidays mean gathering with family and friends for a delicious, traditional meal accompanied by warm and lively conversation. It's comforting. It's part of our shared history and we look forward to the traditions our families have built around these holiday celebrations. But what if you are far from home and away from family? What if you are new to America and unfamiliar with the customs that define that most American holiday of all: Thanksgiving? Wouldn't it be nice to be welcomed into a Madison home, to sit at the family Thanksgiving table, and share in the celebration?

Madison Friends of International Students work hard to match international students with Madison families interested in opening their home to share Thanksgiving with a student who is far from home. Our volunteers show incredible generosity and American spirit by offering to host one or more students at their Thanksgiving table each year, benefiting both the students and themselves through the shared experience.

How about you? Would you like to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to share your family tradition, and promote international friendship and goodwill? If you have space to host one or more students for Thanksgiving please contact:

MFIS Office (608) 263-4010 info@mfismadison.org



Thank You

Your Global Friends Program is really fantastic! I am writing to say thank you to my English partner Adam Blatter for his kindness and helpfulness, and to you for providing such a great opportunity for us to know each other.

Adam Blatter is a cool, kind, approachable, and considerate guy. He told me a lot about Madison's culture & features, helped me in language issues, and is always willing to provide help. Tonight he gave me a gift that touched me the most. Mid-Autumn Festival is an important, traditional festival of China, when families get together to enjoy moon cakes. Adam knows that I miss my family, so he made me moon cakes and wrote "Happy Mid-Autumn Festival" on a piece of paper in Chinese.

As international students we are far from home, far from families. I used to feel very sad. But now I don't because I know Madison is also my hometown, and a lot of my American friends are also my family. I really thank you for giving me such a great friend and for your efforts to improve international friendship.*

*Edited copy of an email sent to the MFIS office. The author wishes to remain anonymous.

Finding Global Friendship

Global Friends pairs international students with Madison volunteers for purposes of conversation and friendship. For international students, it provides an opportunity to meet new people, practice speaking English, and learn more about American culture through informal conversation with a friend.

Sun Yue, a 20-year-old Chinese student currently studying at the UW, refers to her experience in Global Friends as "magical." Sun Yue is proud of her increased English fluency and is now learning idioms.

Global Friends offers a wonderful experience for community volunteers,

too. Our volunteers take great pleasure in connecting altruistically with individuals from abroad, learning about their culture, and helping them become more comfortable with American culture. Friendship pairs set up their own schedules, meeting with one another as often as they both agree.

As one of our most popular programs, Global Friends is always in need of community volunteers. *What about you?* Are you available to make a difference in the life of a student who is far from home?

To volunteer, contact our office:
(608) 263-4010 info@mfismadison.org

Memorial Tribute

MFIS would like to remember those long-time volunteers who have passed away this past year and been recognized through Memorials:

Elaine Murphy

Mollie Sager

Kay & Baxter Newton

Mary Sobota



Temporary Homestays

Spring classes at UW-Madison and Madison College will begin on January 19, 2016. For incoming international students, a temporary homestay with an MFIS volunteer family provides a welcome opportunity for rest, comfort, and initial adjustment while they seek long-term housing in dormitories, and/or apartments.

Are you interested in providing short-term welcome and friendship to a new international student? While we are unable to offer funding for this unique program (there is no charge to students), the personal rewards are bountiful!

To volunteer, contact:
MFIS Office (608) 263-4010
info@mfismadison.org

2015 Welcome Picnic A Grand Success!

MFIS celebrates the start of every school year with a picnic to welcome new international students to Madison. August 29th dawned damp and chilly this year, but our good-natured MFIS volunteers were undeterred and worked hard to orchestrate a successful event at the Brittingham Park shelter. "They'll come," one volunteer was overheard to say.

And come they did! Just as we completed setting up tables with bus schedules, maps, community info pamphlets, and a wealth of other resources to ease transition into a new culture and city, the skies cleared, temperature rose, and smiles came out as students and scholars from all over the world began to arrive. By the time lunch was served over 200 happy, smiling international students, scholars, and families stood in line to sample a traditional American picnic menu of chicken sandwich-

es, veggie burgers, corn on the cob, cole slaw, and watermelon.

After lunch, students and volunteers gathered in the field to practice tossing an American football, hit a softball, and engage in traditional picnic games like water balloon toss and the 3-legged race.

Forty-seven MFIS volunteers, guided by the experienced program chair Sherry Caves, served as table hosts and event organizers for the 2015 Picnic. The voice of Wynn Davies rang out loud and true as event emcee, guests thrilled to entertainment by the UW Alumni band, and guest appearances by Bucky Badger and MATC's Wolfie provided ample photo opportunities for all. *See you next year!*





Madison Friends of International Students

Room 233, University of WI-Madison, Red Gym
716 Langdon Street, Madison, WI 53706-1400



Please Volunteer • Your Help is Needed for Upcoming Events!



NOV 2015

Event: Thanksgiving Dinner with an American family

How You Can Help: Invite one or more international students to join your family.

To volunteer, contact:
MFIS Office (608) 263-4010
info@mfismadison.org



DEC 2015

UPDATING RECORDS

We'd like to make sure we're efficiently communicating with all our volunteers and donors.

Please go to <http://iss.wisc.edu/mfis/secondary/forms.html> to provide us with updated information and tell us how you prefer we communicate with you.



JAN 2016

Event: Capitol Reception (date TBA)

How You Can Help: Volunteers needed to help with this exciting winter event!

To volunteer, contact:
MFIS Office (608) 263-4010
info@mfismadison.org



MFIS Furniture Program needs your help!

Our Furniture Program provides gently used furniture for international students at prices they can afford.

Mike von Schneidemesser has generously administered this program for a number of years, but we are now seeking additional help:

- Warehouse Space
- Administrator

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