

Middlebury



International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)

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Friends of International Students (FIS)

Host Program Newsletter

September 2009- Notes from ISSS; Important Dates; Upcoming Events; FIS Story Corner

Notes from ISSS

Fall greetings! The College is bustling again with excitement and the chatter of students catching up and sharing stories of their summer adventures away. The students are well into their second week of classes and, as I've been told, the work is starting to pile up! The beginning of the term is an ideal time to check-in with your student to reconnect after a break away from the College.

New students! During the first week of September, ISSS welcomed over 80 new international, exchange, and U.S. students from abroad from over 35 countries. In an effort to help our new students prepare for winter, we are seeking gently used winter coats, gloves, and mittens. If you have any of these that you would like to share with a new international student, please let us know. In October, we will give the donated items to our 20 highest need international students. Many come from very warm climates and are eager to see their first snowfall in Vermont. Donations of new and/or gently used coats/jackets will be accepted until October 6.

Important Dates

FIS Annual Matching Event: Saturday, October 3

On October 3rd, we will match over 60 new students with local hosts. If you submitted a questionnaire to be matched again this year, please save the morning to meet your new match. If you are interested in being matched with a new student, but have not yet submitted a questionnaire, please contact ISSS. **We are still in need of 20 more hosts! Please spread the word!**

Fall Family Weekend: October 3 & 4

Although there will be many families on campus, the majority of international students will not have family visiting during this time. This is where YOU come in – as their local family. We invite you to join your student for the many activities/events planned during Fall Family Weekend:

http://www.middlebury.edu/campuslife/events/fall_family_weekend/Fall+Family+weekend+2009+Schedule+of+Events.htm

Fall break: October 12 & 13

Fall break is a great time to check-in with your student(s) to see if he/she needs an off-campus break. It is often a time when students go away, but many stay on campus to relax after five intense weeks of class work. A hike up nearby Snake Mountain or a stop at the local orchard could be the perfect way to enjoy the break and fall foliage.

ISO Cultural Show: Friday, November 13

A “not-to-miss” show and in the opinion of ISSS the best show of the year! Save the date!

Upcoming Events

There are too many exceptional events planned for this fall to choose just a few to share with the FIS community. Find out what is happening at the College by clicking on the following links:

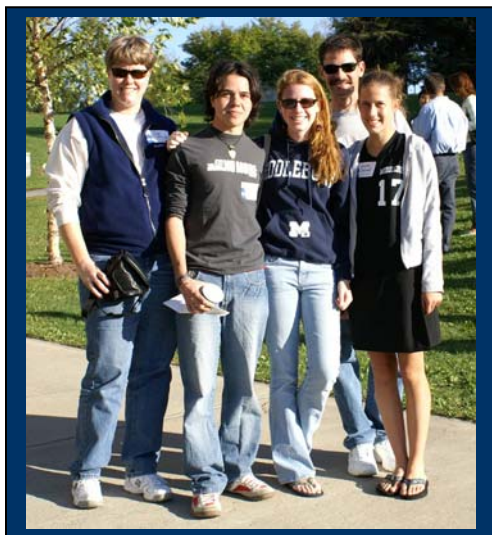
The College Calendar: <http://cat.middlebury.edu/events/>

Rohatyn Center for International Affairs: <http://www.middlebury.edu/administration/rcfia/events/>

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

FIS Story Corner

The FIS Story Corner is a chance to share pictures and stories within the FIS Community. If you have pictures or a story you would like to share, please send us an e-mail. We always enjoy hearing ‘match’ stories and feel the rest of our community would as well.



The DeGraff's: Lyn, Peter, Aly, Kristen, and Lorrie have hosted six students since their first match seven years ago. Their matches include students from Kuwait, Turkey, Palestine, Thailand, and two from Mexico. A special FIS thanks to the DeGraff family!

What Being a Host Family Means to Us

We love being a host family. In fact, our family grows every year with new members, “adopted” from all over the world. Through this experience we have learned so much about world cultures, have a greater geographical knowledge of the world map, and basically have learned how to love, through food, stories, and friendship, people from all around the globe.

We got involved in hosting with academic-year programs eight years ago where we hosted high school students in our home. Seven years ago, we learned about the Middlebury College host family program. This program is as unique as the students and families that decide to participate in it. Every pairing with students is different due to needs and desires of each participant. Some students look forward to having a Vermont family to connect with regularly, while others need very little, but love a home-cooked meal periodically. Either way, the sharing of lives is informative and fun.

The connections we have made with “our kids” have been special. We have introduced Vermont customs (you carve a pumpkin and don’t eat it?) and American holidays (Thanksgiving). We have taught skiing and shared cooking recipes (how about those Easter potatoes?). We have taken kids to the doctor, the store, the bus station, and airport. And if you have an empty attic...well every summer it is full! We feel needed and fill a need, yet we are grateful for the opportunity to make their stay in the U.S. special. Who knows, some day they may pass this hospitality on to an American—hopefully us!

We have celebrated birthdays and attended special College events like their parents would if they were here, and feel very honored to be introduced to their families when they finally make the long trip to Vermont for graduations. The warm appreciation between real family and host family is reciprocal, as we all win in these relationships.

We have had three of our kids graduate so far, and we have been visited since by two of them post-graduation. We e-mail, Facebook, and basically stay in each others lives, as they grow personally and yet still hold on to things that are true, like the caring between friends.

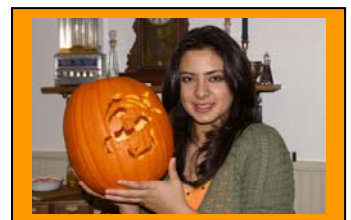
Lastly, we attribute much of our own daughters’ interest in culture and traveling to what we made common in our home...love of those different from us, and how we got where we are today. From a small, less diverse state...this program is a godsend of openness. *Lyn and Peter DeGraff*

A few words from Aly, FIS host sister:

"I think that the host family experience to our international students means not just a place to store a box over the summer or a friendly face during fall family weekend, but, if they take advantage of this opportunity, a mother/father/sister/brother who want to see your photos from home and hear your stories, who will bring you chicken noodle soup (an American tradition!) and a box of tissues when you are too sick to go to class, who take you apple picking and for a hike in the gorgeous Vermont foliage, who let you pick your own pumpkin to carve and show you how to roast the seeds in the oven, who make you wear bunny ears at Easter and find chocolate eggs, who send a care package during exams and are always willing to give you a home-cooked meal, and who take you up to Burlington when you realize you only have one sweater and no boots when the snow starts to fall! As a seventh year host sister, I cannot even begin to share all of my experiences with you, but I can say I would not trade them for the world."

A few words from Elsa, Class of 2012...

"Lyn and her family have the greatest smiles even in the coldest of days! They are always there to help, give a good word of advice or simply to joke around. I have carved pumpkins for Halloween with them, gone apple picking and baked with Lorrie (grandma) on a beautiful winter day (yes, I was one of the lucky ones!). They have given my Middlebury experience a very special touch. I do hope they come visit me in Mexico soon."



As always, thank you for being a part of this valuable program!

Thank you
Danke
Xie xie
Khawp khun
Yum
Gotta
Salamat
Juspa
Spacibo
Arigato
Mahalo
Obrigada

ISSS Staff

Kathy Foley-Giorgio, Associate Dean and Director of ISSS
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