

## **The Friendship Family Program North Central College 2017-2018**

The Friendship Family Program at North Central College helps international students meet and maintain connections with local families. It is a great way to welcome students to the area!

Students are officially matched with families for a period of 3 months, 6 months or 9 months, depending on how long the student will attend NCC, but often the relationship continues beyond. We have families that continue to write us about past students, trying to remain in contact and to share with us good news from the students. Some friendship families are still in touch with their students from years ago and have visited them in their country.

The matching is done on the basis of requests by the volunteer families. The families may be traditional families, or they may be retired couples, singles, or single-parent families. They come from all walks of life, economic levels, and religions. They all have a common interest to learn about other cultures and share the American way of life.

The friendship families are not sponsors and should never be expected to provide financial assistance, nor should the families expect to be paid for their time. They do provide caring support and/or practical assistance in settling in and making one's way in the local community.

The number of contacts per term (3 months) and the kinds of activities done together vary greatly from one family to another. These matters are between the student and the friendship family. We ask that at a minimum you plan one event, dinner, or outing with the student per term.

Students do not need to feel obligated to accept every invitation. If students have class work to prepare, or if they do not wish to attend religious activities, for example, they are free to politely turn down an invitation. However, they should accept enough invitations (or initiate them) to develop a good relationship. If the families do not make contacts, students should notify the coordinator of The Friendship Family Program.

The Friendship Family Program does not have to involve students actually spending nights at the families' homes, but if both parties agree on a short stay, that could be discussed with the Center for Global Education. All students have on-campus housing during their stay in the U.S. and have no need for additional housing while school is in session. See below for between-session times when a homestay could occur if both parties were interested. Many times, however, students like to travel the U.S. during these breaks.

## 2017-2018 North Central College Terms

**Classes Begin** - Sept 11

**Fall Term** - Sept 11 – Nov 22

**D-Term** - Nov 27 – Dec 15

**Christmas Recess Begins** - Dec 18

**Winter Term** - Jan 2 – Mar 14

**Spring Break** - March 14 – March 25

**Spring Term** - Mar 26 – June 9

**Commencement** - June 9

Here are some ideas to help you get started. Remember that just knowing someone in the area is a relief for new students. The activities you plan with them do not need to cost extra money or be extravagant!

- Every student has a birthday. Find out when it is and celebrate their day.
- Is your student involved in any extra-curricular activities? They would love to have someone in their audience.
- Is job shadowing permitted at your workplace?
- Going food shopping? Students on campus don't get to traditional supermarkets very often because they don't drive.
- Going to a high school activity?
- Having a holiday get together?
- Going to a campaign rally?

### What have other Friendship Families experienced?

*"It was very nice to have [the students] this weekend. They are very nice boys. They are polite and easy-going. We showed them how our family spends our normal weekend. We took them to see our son's friend's playoff baseball game. They also played sports (baseball, basketball and of course soccer) with our 15-year-old son and his friend. Of course, they also played PS3 games! We went out for ice cream and concluded with a miniature golf game that they both enjoyed a lot. We think they not only learned a lot about English and American baseball but also French! Both of them and our son are studying French in school. They had a good time talking to one another in their limited French. We also learned their culture and language as an exchange. It was a great experience for us to see all teenagers think the same no matter what country you are from!"*

*"Our family picked up Lily tonight & took her out for dinner. Then, the 3 kids and I went for a quick tour of her dorm room..... Also, we are in the process of making arrangements for her to visit my daughter's social studies class and speak to the other 8th graders about life in Kenya and Nigeria."*

*"We very much enjoyed the weekend with the students and feel we know much more about Qatar than we did. Thanks for the opportunity."*

*"We ended up taking him with us to the Kuipers Family Farm on Saturday. We had a great time and he enjoys spending time with us on family stuff. Our son really likes him, too."*

*"We had a fun, relaxed, educational weekend with our two young men. Towards the end, they had become best buds with our pets, and were huddled around the computer checking out our sixteen-year-old's Facebook page."*

**If you are interested in becoming a local Friendship Family, please fill out the application and return it to Michelle Weber, Graduate Assistant at Fax: 630-637-5295 or [mrweber@noctrl.edu](mailto:mrweber@noctrl.edu)**

Please find additional information at our website:

<https://www.northcentralcollege.edu/international-student-services/friendship-family-program>