

## WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP FAMILY?

Families are expected to:

- Build a relationship with your international student for an entire academic school year. Ideally, families and students meet at least once a month, but communicate with one another on a more regular basis.
- Take the opportunity to learn about the international student's culture and/or country and vice versa.
- Attend campus wide events, such as sporting events, student government activities and coffee hour, just to name a few.
- Be willing to share your home during holidays and school breaks including fall break, winter break and spring holiday.
- Be able to set clearly defined rules and expectations within your household when the international student visits.
- Notify the Office of International Engagement if you observe any out of the ordinary behaviors from the international student.
- Notify the Office of International Engagement if you are unable to continue in the International Friendship Program.



**Wilkes  
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**OFFICE OF  
INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT**

**International  
Friendship  
Program**





Wilkes University has taken great pride in providing a global education. We are committed to diversifying our current student body and giving them the opportunity to make cross cultural connections. We want to ensure that we are providing the necessary resources for our Panama students to be academically successful. To meet the needs of connecting Panama students to the campus and community, Wilkes University's Office of International Engagement has developed the International Friendship Program.

#### **WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP PROGRAM?**

The Wilkes University International Friendship Program is designed to connect Panama students, whose homes and families are far away from our campus, with local families. Each student will have the opportunity to be introduced to a family in the community that has shown interest in helping the Panama student adjust to American culture. This program is a great way for students to build a support system in the local community, as well as a great way for local families to expand their cultural horizons.

#### **WHO CAN BECOME AN INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP FAMILY?**

In order to become part of this program:

- A person in your household needs to be at least 30 years of age.
- Be single, a couple, or a family with children.
- You must be able to provide the international student a bed for any overnight stays.
- You must be able to provide three references.

#### **HOW CAN YOU START THE PROCESS OF BECOMING AN INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP FAMILY?**

1. Complete and return the International Friendship Program Application.
2. Sign release forms and provide three references.

If accepted into the International Friendship Program, Wilkes University will invite you to attend an Orientation/ Meet & Greet with all Panamanian students. At this event, you will have the opportunity to review student portfolios and make recommendations for a potential Panamanian student.

#### **WHAT RESOURCES DOES WILKES UNIVERSITY PROVIDE TO ENHANCE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FAMILY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENT?**

We encourage families and students to try and attend some campus events together. We will also host one scheduled event per semester for the entire International Friendship Program, like the thanksgiving potluck dinner and spring cook-out).

## **YOU MAY BE WONDERING...**

#### **WHAT ARE THE AGES OF THE STUDENTS AND FROM WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?**

The students range in age from 18 to 20 years old and they come from the country of Panama.

#### **DO I GET TO CHOOSE ANY STUDENT?**

Yes, you can choose your student from their profiles. You have the choice of a male or female.

#### **CAN I HOST MORE THAN ONE STUDENT?**

Yes, you can host up to two students. However, we strongly encourage building a relationship with one student.

#### **WILL THERE BE ANY LANGUAGE BARRIER?**

English is not their first language, therefore students may have limited English proficiency.

#### **DO I NEED TO BE BILINGUAL IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE?**

It is not necessary for a member of the host family to be bilingual. In fact, we encourage all families and students to speak English.

#### **DOES MY STUDENT COME WITH HIS/HER OWN SPENDING MONEY?**

Students have their own spending money for personal expenses.

#### **DOES MY STUDENT HAVE MEDICAL AND HEALTH INSURANCE?**

Yes, they have medical and health insurance. If you have to take a student to the hospital or any medical facility, we ask that you please call us as soon as possible.