



United States Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Washington, DC 20547

Dear American Host Family,

On behalf of the U.S. Department of State, thank you for volunteering to host a Secondary School Student Program exchange visitor. This is a unique opportunity for you to experience the richness and diversity of a culture different from your own. Through this program, you are among thousands of American families who volunteer to serve as citizen ambassadors of the United States.

High School programs have been a part of U.S. public diplomacy efforts since 1949. Approximately 25,000 high school students from around the world participate in this program each year. The good will of American host families in opening their homes to these young international visitors is vital to this program's success.

The health, safety, and well-being of the young people who participate in this program are our highest priority. A host family has many responsibilities, the most important of which is properly caring for an international student during the course of his/her program. The student is a guest in your home and in our country and you may be the first "real Americans" this young person meets. How you relate with this student will create a lasting image of our country and its people.

I hope this will be a rewarding experience for you and the exchange student. It is extremely important that you notify your program sponsor if you have any concerns or if the student's personal health, safety, or well-being is threatened in any way. If the sponsor is not responsive to your concerns, please contact the Department of State directly at the 24 hour toll free number (1-866-283-9090) that has been established for this purpose. In addition, the program sponsor provides each student with an identification card, which lists your address and telephone numbers, separate telephone numbers for immediate contact with the sponsor organization and the sponsor's local representative, and the Department of State's toll free phone number and email address (jvisas@state.gov). The student should keep this card with him/her at all times and contact us if s/he has any concerns about his/her health, safety, or well-being.

The Department of State is deeply appreciative of your kindness and generosity in making this educational and cultural experience possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robin J. Lerner".

Robin J. Lerner
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Private Sector Exchange