

## Share Your Table for Thanksgiving

### Host Frequently Asked Questions

**1. When should hosts expect to hear back from BSOS with updates about the program and information about pairings?**

Starting in mid-October, Kathryn Hopps will contact hosts weekly with various updates and information leading up to Thanksgiving. Pairing with students will be emailed to hosts the week of November 11th.

**2. What are best practices regarding contacting paired students\* about the date, time and location of host family Thanksgiving dinner?**

We suggest that once you have been paired, that you reach out to your pairings confirming the date, location, and time of your Thanksgiving dinner within 48 hours.

If you have indicated that your dinner is on a date other than Thanksgiving, we have made sure to only pair you with students who are available on those dates.

**3. Are hosts able to request international students or American students\* attending their dinner from a specific country or state?**

We cannot guarantee preferred pairings.

The coordinators of similar programs at peer institutions tell us that randomized pairings have been a great success as they allow students from a variety of countries, departments, and cultural backgrounds to meet outside of their normal classes and university events.

**4. What about dietary restrictions?**

When we pair students\* with you, we will ask them to notify hosts if they have any food allergies or restrictions. As host, you are also welcome to initiate this conversation.

**5. If hosts do not live in the College Park area, or are not Metro accessible, are they required to provide transportation?**

Hosts are not *required* to provide transportation. There was a question regarding transportation in the registration survey. Most members of our international community *do not have cars*.

**6. MOST IMPORTANT: HAVE FUN! TAKE PICTURES! Enjoy yourselves! And THANK YOU!!!**

### Intercultural Communications

- Some of our international students have lived in the United States for several years. Some came to the US and Maryland for the first time in August. Therefore, American customs may be new for some guests.
- Some guests may not feel comfortable being singled out. It's best to include them in your conversations and activities without making them the focus.
- While Americans value egalitarianism, your guests may be more familiar with hierarchical social structures. Don't be surprised if they are very formal in their interactions. You are the host, so they may wait for you to invite them into conversations and activities.
- Not all cultures are as expressive as American culture. If your guests are quiet, that doesn't mean they aren't having a good time. Handshakes are plenty in the physical contact department.

\*The program may pair some hosts with international scholars if we have a larger than anticipated response from prospective hosts.

**Questions? Contact Kathryn Hopps at [khopps@umd.edu](mailto:khopps@umd.edu) or 301.405.1631**