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## AIRPORT PICKUP INFORMATION SHEET

### VISION

Our larger vision is to see international students return home equipped to be effective witnesses among their people or wherever the Lord leads them. A key element of fulfilling this vision is winning a hearing for the gospel by serving the physical and social needs of internationals. The sooner the international student is served by Christians the better, since the window of time that internationals are most open is usually during their first year in the USA. Airport pickup provides a vital first point of connection. If this step is missed, future contact may be delayed or not made.

### WHEN WILL I BE NEEDED?

Although there are opportunities throughout the year, most volunteers are needed during July and August. The peak time of arrival is the last week of July through the second week of August. Usually we are able to let you know about an opportunity for pickup within 1-2 weeks of the student's arrival, although we occasionally have "last-minute" arrivals.

### PROCEDURE FOR AIRPORT PICKUP

1. You will receive an email from IFI asking your availability for a particular date and time. If available, you will be given all pertinent information via email: arrival date, student name, airline, flight number, destination of home-stay or temporary housing, and an "IFI Welcomes..." sign (in which you can fill in his/her name).
2. You should email the student as soon as possible to introduce yourself, set the student's mind at ease, and verify all details of the student's arrival. You should verify with the airline the arrival time on the day of the pick-up. You can also find up-to-the-minute info through an online tracking site such as [www.FlightView.com](http://www.FlightView.com).
3. Hold the "IFI Welcomes..." sign and look for your international student at his/her baggage claim (that is where he/she has been told to meet you). In your emails to the student prior to arrival, let him/her know what color of clothes you will wear or include a photo to help identify you. If no one approaches you, circulate with your sign and look for someone who appears to be searching for a contact person.
4. If you still do not find the student, attempt to page him/her. Finally, you may check with the airline office to see if the student was actually on the flight (they will not always release this information).
5. If you are unable to make the connection, do not be discouraged, but realize that you have given yourself in service to God. Please contact the temporary housing host if applicable, and also please inform Pat Durst of International Friendships at 513-324-1268. You may then go ahead and return home.

## AN ADDITIONAL NOTE ON FLEXIBILITY...

Serving people can bring great joy. It can also bring frustrations. Sometimes planes are unexpectedly delayed, and the student has misplaced your phone number. Sometimes students miss a connection and are not on the plane. Sometimes the student has communicated to his nationality club about his arrival, and they also send someone to the airport. One must learn to be accepting of these unexpected events. Please do not be discouraged, but know that you have offered yourself in service to God.

## TAKING THE STUDENT TO HOUSING

You may first check to see if the student has not eaten, and if you have enough time you may take him/her to a fast food restaurant. Then, you will either take the student to temporary housing or to the UC campus. If temporary housing has been arranged, you will be notified by IFI prior to your going to the airport. If going to campus, ask the student where he/she would like to go (e.g., UCIS, Department Office). Some families choose to spend more time with the student, helping him/her locate grocery stores and/or get to campus departments and offices, as needed. This is not expected, but you are encouraged to do so if you wish.

## IMPORTANT FOLLOW-UP INFORMATION!

If you take the student to campus housing, please communicate the address to International Friendships. Please give the student an invitation to the Friday night Bible and life discussion groups or the International Friendships student website so we may be able to help the student in other ways.

If you feel good about your interaction with the student, you may want to exchange full contact information and addresses with the student. You may want to call on the student for a get together at another time. If you decide to do this type of follow-up please be sure to let IFI know.

## WHAT ABOUT SHARING MY FAITH?

Volunteers must be willing to serve without feeling the necessity of sharing the gospel during the short visit, but realize they are part of a larger ministry taking place to these students of which this is just the start. It is not expected that you hide being a Christian. It is expected that you not have an agenda that says that you must share with everyone you pick up at the airport. Being very sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit is key. Sometimes, the Holy Spirit will use a short expression or even a single word or example to leave a deep impression on the student's heart. If a good conversation takes place, a further meeting with the student could be considered (but not expected).

## THANKS!

Thank you for giving of yourself to serve international students and demonstrate the love of Christ. For those students who are wondering, as they travel on the plane, "Who will meet me when I arrive?" your presence (in Jesus' name) will be most welcome and appreciated. You will be one of their first US American friends.