

# Airport Pickup Information Sheet

International Friendships, Inc.

## Vision

Our larger vision is to see international students return home equipped to be effective witnesses among their people. 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 August and September. The peak time of arrival is the last week of August through the second week of September. 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 a call from the IFI office asking your availability for a particular date and time. If available, you will be given all pertinent information: arrival date, student name, airline, flight number, from what city, plus destination of home-stay or temporary housing with the phone number and contact's name. (You can then call the contact if you need directions to the destination).
2. You should verify the arrival time and flight number the day of the pick-up. Airline 800 numbers will be on the back of your "New Student Arrival Information Sheet". We also recommend getting up-to-the-minute info through an online tracking site such as [www.FlightView.com](http://www.FlightView.com).
3. **Due to security measures you will have to welcome the student outside the security check point.** Hold an "International Friendships Welcomes: student's name" sign.. Look for an international student who is looking for someone! If you email the student prior to his arrival, let him know what color of clothes you will wear. If no one approaches you, go to the baggage area and try to find the person. 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 paging him/her. Finally, you may attempt to 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 the International Friendships Office at 294-2434, or 975-5686 (emergency only). 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 bring him/her to a fast food restaurant. Then, you will either take the student to temporary housing or to the OSU campus. If temporary housing has been arranged, you will be notified by the International Friendships office prior to your going to the airport. If going to campus, you may take the student first to the Office of International Affairs. This office is located in Oxley Hall, at 1712 Neil Ave. (at the intersection of 12th Ave.). There is metered parking on 11th Ave. or Neil Ave. south of 11th. This office will give the student further instructions. Some families choose to spend more time with the student, helping him/her get to campus departments or 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 the International Friendships office. Please also give the student an invitation to the IAF or the number to the International Friendships Office since we may be able to help the student in other ways also.

If you feel good about your interaction with the student, you may also want to exchange your own name and address 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 Rich Mendola know at 294-2434, ext. 1.

## **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 their first American friend.

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