Consider becoming a Mount Mercy Academy Host Family to an International Student

At MMA, we believe that the heart and soul of our programs is our Catholic tradition of ensuring educational excellence, promoting knowledge and justice to serve others, and preparing each student to go forth and make a difference in the world. This holds true for our international programs, which have grown over the last few years. To more fully learn and understand other cultures and traditions, MMA families are invited to host an international student. We are seeking families from within the school community who see this as an opportunity to develop new perspectives while providing a loving and suitable home for one of our international students.

As a host family, you will have a direct and long-lasting influence on the young person who will live with you. Your family will also benefit from the experience of hosting in tangible ways, from gaining a broader perspective on world issues to increasing your knowledge of another country, to gaining deeper insight into the values and patterns of your own family and culture. Hosting an exchange student is a tremendous experience; it is also a significant commitment to welcome a young person from another culture into your home for a full year. That’s why we match the students to households with great care, taking into account several factors to ensure a wonderful experience for both the student and your family.

What are the primary responsibilities of a host family?

At MMA we expect the following of all host families:

- Provide the student with a safe, welcoming, and supportive home environment.
- Welcome the student as a member of your family and try to integrate him into all aspects of family life.
- Provide room and board for the student and a place to study. All students must have their own bed, and if sharing a room, it should be with your daughter of a similar age.
- Provide transportation to and from school.
- Help your student learn about American culture and show interest in your student’s culture.
- Work with the MMA’s consultant of International Studies to be available to discuss the student’s progress.
What support does MMA provide to host families?

It will not surprise you when we suggest that not every day will follow flawlessly the previous one. Intercultural exchange, and opening your home to someone previously unknown to you, will require adjustment, and you may find yourselves in need of the academy’s assistance. Please think of the Consultant of International Studies and staff at MMA as your partner throughout the time your student is in your home. Most host family experiences do not require our help, but please know that we stand ready to help if the situation arises!

In addition to the physical support throughout the host experience please know that Cleert agency will also provide a financial stipend selected to host an international student.

We realize that hosting a student can be very intimidating and that you may have questions. Here are a few Questions & Answers that might help you in your decision making:

Q: We are interested in hosting, but our house is not very big. Does it matter?

A: No. It does not matter as long as you are comfortable. Also, remember that the students will not spend much time at home and that children don’t usually care what the house looks like.

Q: What if the student gets sick during his stay in the U.S.?

A: All international students who are participating in an exchange program are required to have international travel insurance.

Q: What about transportation to and from school?

A: Your exchange student will take the same transportation as your daughter. If your daughter takes a yellow school bus, she will ride along with her.

Q: We are a very busy family. I don’t think that we have time to host an international student.

A: Please remember that the student comes to the U.S. to experience the true life in an American family. The lifestyle of many families is usually a very busy one. But that’s exactly what the student would like to experience. Bring her with you when you go to your activities and let her observe your daily life. She does not expect to be entertained at all times.

Q: Our daughter plays a sport after school. What will the exchange student do during that time?

A: Many sports coaches at the MMA allow the student to either participate in the sport or just watch. In addition, the academy offers many afternoon clubs, and all exchange students are welcome to join them. As long as she gets a ride home in the evening, she will be okay.

Q: Is the host student allowed to participate in the academy’s sports and club activities?

A: Yes. Our exchange students can participate in sports and clubs like our American students. However, they can only play on varsity teams, and they must provide the PIAA Physical Health Form. The form can be found here PIAA Health Form or on our academy’s website in the Athletic section. The student has been provided with this form prior to her arrival in the U.S.
**Applying to be a host family**

The consultant of CLEERT is responsible for the initial recruitment of host families. All families will be asked to submit host family application materials that provide a detailed summary of the family and living environment. The international students also provide detailed information about themselves, which includes a questionnaire and essay. All approved host families will have an opportunity to review the student’s information prior to accepting the student. We will also ask each family to undergo criminal background checks for each household member age 18 and over because recent changes in the Child Protective Services Law require all volunteers who have direct contact with students to obtain the following three clearances: A Child Abuse Clearance, a New York State Police Criminal Background Check, and an FBI Clearance (fingerprinting). All clearances are now available electronically on our school’s website. Here is the link: [Clearances](#).

Prospective families will also be interviewed by Cleert LLC.

If you are committed to hosting an international student, please sign the [Host Family Agreement form](#) together with the [Host Family Application form](#) found below and return it to Lily Ni at [Lni@mtmercy.org](mailto:Lni@mtmercy.org).

For further information or questions, please contact Lily Ni, Consultant of International Studies, at 484-999-0068 or at [lni@mtmercy.org](mailto:lni@mtmercy.org).

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**
Host Family Agreement Form

Thank you for your interest in hosting an international student. This application process is meant to formalize our agreement and outline key aspects of our relationship with you. As a host family, your role is to provide the international student with a safe and nurturing environment during her stay in the U.S.

As a host family, you agree to the following:

- Complete the attached application form.
- Participate in an interview, conducted by Cleert LLC, who will explain the different aspects of the hosting experience to you.
- Have monthly contact with the consultant to share information about your student and your family’s exchange experience.
- Notify the Consultant of International Studies should the following circumstances occur:
  - ✔ Any time you are planning to travel outside the United States with the international student.
  - ✔ In the event the international student is seriously injured, seriously ill, or hospitalized for any reason.
  - ✔ If the international student develops any behaviors which are potentially dangerous or harmful to himself, herself or others.
  - ✔ If the international student needs dental care, eyeglasses, immunizations, or a physical examination, as these may not be covered by the student’s international medical insurance and need to be paid for by the international student’s natural parents.

Statement:
We understand that as host parents we are not the legal guardians of the international student living in our home and that our student’s natural parents or legal guardians in his or her home country always retain this authority. We agree that as host parents we will not sign any document for our international student that requests the signature of his or her natural parents except for school permission forms, for participation on school sports teams, or participation in other school-related activities or field trips. When signing such school forms, we will cross out the words parents/legal guardians and write in “host family” so that our relationship with our international students is clear.

We understand that the host family is NOT responsible for any medical costs. In addition, every international student is required to obtain an international medical insurance prior to her arrival. This insurance will cover all emergency medical expenses outside of the academy for the duration of her stay in the U.S.

We understand that MMA/Cleert does not provide any liability insurance for us or for our international student and that MMA/Cleert is not responsible for any damage caused by our international student or for any claims for damages or injuries brought against us by our international student or her natural family.

We agree, to the fullest extent permitted by law, to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend MMA/Cleert and any of their affiliates, subsidiaries, boards, commissions, committees, employees, officers, directors, servants, agents, contractors, and assigns, whether past, present, or future (collectively, “Indemnified Parties”), from any and all claims, demands, actions, liabilities, losses, damages, settlements, judgments, costs, and expenses (including reasonable attorneys’ fees), alleged or incurred by third parties which are related to or may arise directly or indirectly out of the Indemnified Parties’ performance of this Contract, but excluding claims arising from the gross negligence of the Indemnified Parties. Nothing in this Contract will restrict or limit the Indemnified Parties’ general obligation at law to mitigate a loss that they may suffer or incur as a result of an event that may give rise to a claim under this indemnity and duty to defend. This provision will survive the termination of this Contract.

We acknowledge that we have read the information concerning our Primary Responsibilities as host families, the support that we can expect from MMA/Cleert while hosting an international student, and the Application Process.
Signature: Click here to enter text. Date: Click here to enter a date. *(Host Father)*

Signature: Click here to enter text. Date: Click here to enter a date. *(Host Mother)*
Host Family Application Form

Hosting Dates: Start date: Click here to enter a date. End date: Click here to enter a date. (Please fill in approximate dates if unsure.)

Name Host Parent 1: First: Click here to enter text. Last: Click here to enter text. Employer: Click here to enter text.

   Job: Click here to enter text. Title: Click here to enter text.

   Home Phone: Click here to enter text. Cell: Click here to enter text.

   Work Phone: Click here to enter text. E-mail: Click here to enter text.

Name Host Parent 2: First: Click here to enter text. Last: Click here to enter text. Employer: Click here to enter text.

   Job: Click here to enter text. Title: Click here to enter text.

   Home Phone: Click here to enter text. Cell: Click here to enter text.

   Work Phone: Click here to enter text. E-mail: Click here to enter text.

Home Address: Click here to enter text. Number/Street City/Town State/Province Zip code

Children’s Name(s) DOB Gender Relationship

1. Click here to enter text. Enter date. Choose Daughter 2. Click here to enter text. Enter date. Choose an item. 3. Click here to enter text. Enter date. Choose an item. 4. Click here to enter text. Enter date. Choose an item. 5. Click here to enter text. Enter date. Choose an item.

Other Resident’s Name(s) DOB Gender Relationship

1. Click here to enter text. Enter date. Choose an item. 2. Click here to enter text. Enter date. Choose an item.
Please answer each question below with a YES or a NO:

1. Is your residence the site of a functioning business? *(ex., daycare, farm)* Choose an item. If answered with YES, please explain:
   Click here to enter text.

2. Have you ever hosted an international student before? Choose an item. If yes, please tell us his/her country and dates:
   Click here to enter text.

3. Has anyone in the family participated in a student exchange program? Choose an item. If yes, please indicate who, when, and the type of program:
   Click here to enter text.

4. Does anyone in the family smoke? Choose an item.

5. Does anyone in the family have any dietary restrictions? Choose an item. If yes, please describe them:
   Click here to enter text.

6. Do you expect your international student to follow any dietary restrictions? Choose an item. If yes, please describe them:
   Click here to enter text.

7. Would you feel comfortable hosting a student who follows a particular dietary restriction *(ex., vegetarian, vegan)*, or who needs to give himself insulin shots? Choose an item.

8. Will the family provide three complete, nutritious meals each day? Choose an item. If no, please explain:
   Click here to enter text.

9. Do you have any pets? Choose an item. If yes, how many, and what kind:
   Click here to enter text.

10. What languages are spoken at home? Click here to enter text.

11. What other languages, if any, are studied or used by members of your family?
   Click here to enter text.

12. What is the approximate distance between your home and the school?
In miles: Click here to enter text. Travel time: Click here to enter text.

13. How will your student travel to/from school and extracurricular activities? *(ex., bus, carpool, walk)*
   Click here to enter text.

14. Which of your children are attending the Academy? Click here to enter text.

15. Do any members of the family of your household work for the school in a coaching, teaching, or administrative capacity? Choose an item. *If yes, please describe:*
   Click here to enter text.

16. Has any member of your family been charged with a crime? Choose an item. *If yes, please describe:*
   Click here to enter text.

17. Please tell us about your family. How would you describe the personality of your family? Do you have any special interests you pursue together (ex., sports, the arts, travel, religious activity)? Click here to enter text.

18. Please describe your daily routine as a family. Is there one time of the year that is particularly busy for your family? What are your expectations regarding the responsibilities and behavior of the international student while in your home? (ex., homework, household chores, curfew (school nights and weekend), access to refrigerator and food, computer, e-mail).
   Click here to enter text.

19. Please upload a picture (or pictures) of your family.

20. Please describe your physical home environment. In what type of home do you live? (ex., single-family home, condominium, duplex apartment). Please note the number of primary bedrooms and the number of bathrooms. Will the exchange student share a bedroom? Describe the amenities to which the student will have access. If you have a picture of your home, please include it if possible. Click here to enter text.
21. Please list any additional comments about your family that will help us to know you better, to make a strong match between your family and an international student, and to help your international student get to know you.

Click here to enter text.

Special Note! The U.S. Department of State and CSIET mandate that all families interested in hosting an international exchange student must submit to a criminal background check and that the criminal background check is for all family members living in the home who are 18 years of age or older. We ask that you download all forms at our website Criminal Background Checks and that you send the NY State Criminal Record and NY State Child Abuse History Clearance.

Statement: My signature below acknowledges the host family agreement requirements and gives permission to MMA to conduct criminal background checks as a part of the Host Family Application process.

Name: Date: Date of Birth (M/D/Y) Click to enter text. Enter a date. Click here to enter text. Signature:

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