International students across the U.S. report that participating in friendship family programs are a highlight of their experience in the U.S., as an opportunity to form lasting friendships with American community members.

The goal of **FACE** is to promote friendship and cultural exchange between members of the local community and international students and scholars at Georgia Southwestern State University. Administered by GSW’s Office of International Programs, this outreach program matches new international students or scholars with a local family or individual for the duration of the students’ or scholar’s stay at GSW.

Local FACE participants are encouraged to invite their student/scholar into their homes for sharing a meal, celebrating holidays, especially to participate in everyday family activities that frame your life such as your children’s sports activities or attending local community events. International students miss their own families, so having a host family provides a supportive connection for students as well as an excellent opportunity to experience U.S. and Georgia local culture!

In return, FACE U.S. participants get to enjoy the cultural exchange and develop international friendships while gaining a greater understanding of other countries, cultures, and customs. FACE does not involve home stays, but operates simply as a friendship program for cultural exchange.

**What are my responsibilities as a FACE program participant or host student?**

Participants are expected to:

- Get together at least once a month (or more often if you’d like!)
- Maintain regular contact via phone or e-mail
- Respect the other person’s culture, beliefs, religion, customs, etc.
- Treat that person as you would want to be treated if you were in their country

**What is the length of commitment?**

Participants are paired for the length of a students’ or scholar’s stay at Georgia Southwestern.

**How do I know when I’ve been matched?**

Once we match families/local participants with students/scholars, you will be contacted with information about how to connect with your student or scholar.

All new FACE participants must complete a 3-step application process:

1. Complete and submit the "FACE Application" form.
2. A member of the OIP will call you for a phone interview.
3. Attend a FACE Orientation: Sunday, Aug. 23, 2-3pm ACE Building, room 106 (Academic Center for Excellence, adjacent to the Marshall Student Center and faces the parking lot for both Jackson Hall the Science Building).

FACE orientations are held prior to the beginning of each semester at the OIP facilitated by OIP staff and FACE volunteers. A “Welcome Picnic Potluck” will be held on Tuesday, August 25 at 6:00pm in the old faculty dining room for FACE families to meet their students (adjacent to the Student Cafeteria in the Marshall Student Center).
While mutual inquiry into each other's religious beliefs and practices is an acceptable part of sharing cultural values and friendship, respecting and appreciating the right of others to hold different beliefs and practices is extremely important. **NOTE:** FACE hosts are not to assume responsibility for financial, immigration, academic, employment, health or serious adjustment problems. The OIP has trained advisers to assist students with these issues. Please contact our office at any time if you have questions or concerns about your student or this program at (229) 931-4627.

We can achieve global peace through building person-to-person connections and friendships across cultural borders. Thank you for extending southern hospitality and being a friendly FACE 😊 to our international community!

**Apply to participate in FACE:** Complete and submit the GSW *FACE Host Application*

For more information or questions, please contact the Office of International Programs at (229) 931-4627 or email Sarah Speir at windows2world@gsw.edu