

Why IFI?

International Friendships, Inc. (IFI) is a community of Cincinnati area Christians who **offer friendship and hospitality to international students and scholars** who come from a variety of countries, cultures and religious backgrounds. IFI goals are to help international students and scholars meet practical needs and develop relationships around social, cultural and spiritual interests.



**International Friendships, Inc.
Cincinnati, OH**

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(Friday group):**

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Welcome!

**IFI welcomes
international students
and scholars
to Cincinnati!**

IFI Activities

Social Events

As people do in every culture, US Americans celebrate numerous holidays throughout the year. IFI participants are no exception; in fact, we find that holidays are great times to get to know one another and develop friendships. IFI large group activities often include an October Harvest Party and a December Christmas Party. Small group activities include Thanksgiving with a host family, Festival of Lights at the Zoo (at Christmastime), an Easter musical drama, a picnic on July 4 or fireworks the night before Labor Day in September.

Possibilities for social and cultural activities in Cincinnati are endless – sporting events, picnics, motor boating, outdoor concerts, the symphony, opera or ballet, museums and so on.

You may be invited to a potluck dinner. US Americans often get together with friends for a meal, and each person brings a dish of food to share with others. Sharing makes lighter work for the host and a more interesting variety of food!

And... US Americans in IFI enjoy learning about the social customs, holidays and events of other cultures, so don't be shy about inviting a US American friend to your student association holiday gathering or cultural experience, or to your place to eat your kind of food!

Friendship Partners

IFI invites international students and local people to participate in this fun and enriching program. IFI matches one or two UC international students or scholars with a local individual, couple or family who would like to develop a relationship throughout the year.

What is required? Your Friendship Partner would like to keep in touch with you once a week and get together with you once a month. Getting together for a meal, holiday or cultural event is common, but you could also explore the city, meet your partner's family or friends, get help with some aspect of English or the US American culture that you don't quite understand, or share aspects of your language and culture.

Trips

IFI Cincinnati organizes trips for the benefit of international students and scholars. A typical trip would be to visit the Air Force Museum near Dayton, a horse farm/park in Kentucky or Amish Country in eastern Ohio, the Smokey Mountains in Tennessee or Red River Gorge in Kentucky. Perhaps another international student organization will invite Cincinnati students and scholars to attend a conference that includes a spiritual component as well as touring activities. These conferences allow students and scholars to explore spiritual issues in the context of thoughtful and respectful dialogue.

In the past we have participated in a Florida Christmas Conference and a Memorial Day Conference at Niagara Falls.

Friday night dinner and small group Bible study or LIFE group

The heart of IFI Cincinnati is our regular Friday night meetings, which are usually hosted by a staff member or someone in the community. We offer a dinner together with US Americans and other internationals, a place to relax, converse and have fun after a busy week. There may be a culture lesson for learning about US customs and/or singing together. Bible study groups take a look at a short section of the Bible to see what it has to say to us about Life. There are opportunities for you to ask questions in a small group setting.

Those who wish to meet individually with an IFI staff person or volunteer may do so in order to develop a friendship or improve their communication skills in English or investigate Christian faith and experience in a more detailed fashion. These one-on-one investigative meetings may include reading the Bible, discussions about the contents of a book, article, DVD or discussion of more difficult questions than can be addressed on a Friday evening.