

## PREFACE

The success of a student's year in GRSP is directly dependent on how successfully the Host Family and Host Club has met ALL their responsibilities with the student, from Pre-Arrival through Departure.

- This conclusion is based on statistical data gathered over several years from the annual Host Family & Host Club Evaluation Form, completed by each student.
- The "foundation" of a successful year is built upon three essential, fundamental functions:
  - Pre-Arrival communications;
  - Meeting the student at the airport, hosting prior to his/her departure for college and assisting the student in setting up his/her new dormitory "home"; and
  - Hosting the student during weekends and ESPECIALLY DURING HOLIDAYS AND SEMESTER/QUARTER BREAKS WHEN THE DORMITORIES ARE CLOSED.

The following information is provided by the Georgia Rotary Student Program to help ensure that you, your student and your club have an outstanding, rewarding experience in our quest for "world peace through understanding". Therefore:

- **Bold-type items are guidelines established and strongly recommended by the Trustees.**
- Standard-type items are suggested by the Trustees.

**YOU ARE THE KEY TO A GREAT YEAR FOR THE STUDENT. MAKE A COMMITMENT OR BAIL OUT NOW BEFORE YOU READ ANY FURTHER.**

## JOINT SPONSORSHIPS

**When more than one club sponsors a student, the club presidents and/or host family representatives must meet and select one host family who will accept the "lead" responsibility for all the clubs.**

- Clubs can agree on rotating the "lead" during the year or annually, but a designated "lead" host must be known and agreed to by all participating clubs.

**The "lead" host must work with the other hosts to:**

- **Coordinate scheduling between the hosts/clubs to prevent the student from having to choose between two or more invitations for the same date.**
- **Maintain equity in scheduling between ALL clubs, meeting the student's needs, handling host responsibilities, etc.**

- **Determine what items in the "Rotary Suitcase" are being provided by each club.** (See Pre-Arrival; page 18)
- **Determine how the costs for agreed-upon expenses will be divided and handled.**
- **Establish an effective communications network between hosts/clubs.**

The "lead" host should be identified and undertake his/her responsibility, preferably before the clubs are notified of the selected student's name, but not later than six weeks before the student arrives.

Upon initial notification of the student's acceptance, EACH host/club is responsible for communicating by letter with the student.

## **PRE-ARRIVAL**

**Send a detailed letter WITHIN FIVE DAYS following your initial notification of the selected student's acceptance.**

- In your initial letter, be careful not to use colloquial/regional terms or phrases, especially if your student is from a non-English-speaking country.
- See the suggested Sample Host Family's Initial Letter in the Supplements Section.

**The initial letter should address the following topics in detail:**

- **Introduce each of your family members.** Include a family picture(s).
- **Discuss pertinent information about the college or university -- size, location, etc.**
- Identify website for the college
- Send some "goodies" from the school's bookstore that have the school name/logo on it -- T-shirt, banner, bumper sticker, etc. Students enjoy such items in advance of their "big trip".
- Elaborate on what the student might expect academically and socially.
- **Provide available literature about your city/town and a Georgia map with your home, club, and college locations highlighted.** Your local Chamber of Commerce is an excellent source.
- **Provide some general insight into Georgia (geographic, historical, etc.).**
- **Describe your Rotary Club including it's size, special projects, etc. Be sure to include the club's meeting day, time, and location.**
- **Identify all items your Club(s) provides in the "Rotary Suitcase"** (Details page 18).

- **Request a travel itinerary. Recommend that the student arrive a minimum of one week (or more) prior to enrollment.** This allows the student to recover from traveling and to adjust to his/her new environment.
- Sightseeing, traveling, and family visitations should be planned activities.
- **The student should attend at least one club meeting, prior to leaving for college, so he/she can become "friends" with the club.**
- The schedule should be based on the amount of activities and hosting by other club members that can be arranged.
- **Describe Georgia's climate. Be specific about the weather the student will encounter in the area where he/she will be attending college. Stress the need to bring both summer and winter clothing.** Some students have heard that Georgia is very warm and don't realize that it also gets cold. Use Centigrade Scale.
- Recommend he/she bring some dress clothes which are appropriate for Rotary functions.
- **Explain the student's GRSP responsibilities, based on your Club's expectations. Be specific!**
- **Describe your Club's requirements for the student's presentation to the Club. Identify specific topics you want to be covered.** (See Club Involvement & Activities)
- Suggest materials they might use such as slides, maps, videotapes (NTSC standard for U.S), etc.
- Encourage the student to bring and wear his/her national costume/dress for the presentation. The student will also be able to wear it at the Conclave and District Conference.
- **Invite the student to spend both Thanksgiving and Christmas with your family if possible.** This advance invitation shows the importance of these holidays to your family along with your sincerity to have the student be one of your family.
- Ask the student to refrain from making/booking any trip plans over these two holidays until after his/her arrival when you can jointly discuss his/her intentions.
- **Provide home and work telephone numbers, fax numbers and e-mail.**
- Suggest that the student bring family photos to show their new friends. Also, they might want to bring some posters from home to brighten their dorm rooms.
- **Ask the student to assemble his/her questions and either:**
  - Send them in a letter to you, or...
  - Identify the date and time you will place an international telephone call to the student to answer his/her questions.
  - Be sure to calculate the time the call will be received in that country.

**Send a copy of your initial letter to the GRSP office in Savannah; it will be retained in the student's file.**

Your initial letter can be followed by an international telephone call to the student and their family.

- The date and time of the call should be clearly defined in your first letter.
- Placing the call may take several attempts. (Some countries have limited phone service.)
- In addition to "meeting" the student, it allows you to answer the student's questions.
- When talking, speak slowly but not loudly; avoid using regional slang.
- Speak with the parents and answer their questions. This raises their comfort level and begins to develop bonds of friendship.
- Extend an open invitation for them to visit their son or daughter while in the U.S. and request they stay with you if possible.
- The student and family often consider this call to be very "special". And it's a lot of fun!

**Assemble the student's "Rotary Suitcase". Since the student can only bring two suitcases for their year in Georgia, the Trustees **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** the listed items. GENERALLY, CLUBS ASSUME THE FULL COST OF PROVIDING THESE ITEMS WHICH ARE RETURNED AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.**

- **Two sets of bed linens**
- **Pillow & pillow cases**
- **Bed spread**
- **Blanket & comforter** (Europeans enjoy comforters)
- **Two to three bath towel sets**
- **Sleeping bag** (for GRSP gatherings, weekends, & traveling)
- **Waste paper can**
- **Desk lamp**
- **School Year Appointment calendar**
- **Electrical extension cords**
- **Alarm clock and Iron**
- **Bicycle**

- **Laundry bag or basket**
- **Wire & wood clothes hangers**
- **Umbrella**
- **Small coffee/tea pot**
- **Basic set of plates, glasses, silverware, knife, scissors, can and bottle openers, food storage containers, etc.**
- If permitted by the college:
  - **Telephone**
  - Telephone answering machine
  - Toaster oven
  - Small refrigerator
- Bicycle (if student doesn't plan to buy a car)
- Study/arm rest pillow
- Curtains (determine after student moves into dorm)
- Small television
- Radio, with built-in audio cassette and/or CD
- Portable typewriter and computer
- Hairdryer
- Initial supply of hand, bath, and laundry soap.

Learn as much as you can about the student's country, prior to his/her arrival.

- Travel books, such as Fodor, Baedeker, or Frommer are excellent sources of historical, cultural, social, and geographic information.
- Purchase a map of the student's country. Use it to locate points of interest, including the student's hometown.
- Advanced reading is a great help in developing an initial understanding of the culture. It also demonstrates your sincere interest in the student.

Notify your Club's recent past GRSP students of the new student's name and address.

- Encourage them to write, congratulate the new student, and provide any information they feel the new student might find beneficial. This helps build the "GRSP Family" and continues their involvement with the program.

## **CLUB INVOLVEMENT & ACTIVITIES**

**As the host Rotarian, you are responsible for "proactively managing" your Club's involvement with its student by:**

- **Coordinating and scheduling Rotarians to pickup and return the student to and from campus when he/she can attend your weekly Club meetings.**
- **Coordinating and scheduling the hosting of the student by club families for dinners, weekends, outings, short vacations, etc.**
- **Informing the Club, almost on a weekly basis, about the activities and status of the student.**
- **Recognizing, at Club meetings, each Rotarian involved with the student.**
- **Making Rotary a meaningful part of the student's life.** They want and need to be involved!

**Prior to the student's arrival, actively publicize information about the student to your Club.**

- **Use your club bulletin to "profile" the student.**
- Distribute to the Club copies of his/her initial letter(s) to you.
- **Coordinate the scheduling of family/student weekends for the first several months.**
- **Identify and schedule specific dates for Rotary families to host the student for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. You need to communicate these specific arrangements with the student within the first few days after he/she arrives.**
- Invite a trade council or consulate representative from your student's country to speak to your Club.
- Most countries have representatives in Atlanta who are eager to speak to Rotary.

**Purchase a small, pocket-size school year appointment calendar for the student to manage Rotary & school activity dates.** This reduces scheduling conflicts. As host, you should maintain a similar calendar and update it based on your weekly telephone conversations.

Prior to the student's arrival, identify any Rotarian and/or family member who speaks the student's native language. Regardless of their proficiency, these families should be involved at the beginning of the

student's year. This helps make the student feel more "at home" and helps in his/her adjustment to our culture.

Prior to the student's arrival, inform Club members that when they meet him/her to be specific in making their invitations.

- A suggested approach is, "We would like to have you come for a weekend. Let me check our schedule at home and I'll call you so we can set up the date."
- Avoid: "We would like to have you over to the house. Call me when you have a weekend free."
- Students from other cultures perceive this as "courtesy conversation" rather than as a sincere invitation.

Be sure your student attends at least one Club meeting to meet the members before making his/her initial Club presentation. This helps the student to become a part of your Club "family" and reduces his/her anxiety about the presentation.

**The Club should ask the student to make two formal presentations -- one shortly after arrival and another before departing.**

- **The first program should be four to six weeks after the student arrives. For joint sponsorships, the "lead" host should coordinate the student's speaking schedule with the other hosts/clubs.**
- Generally, the program should consist of an orientation to the student's country, its culture, customs, political, economic, and social systems as well as an introduction to his/her family. **Slides are recommended.**
- **The second program, held in late spring, usually deals with the student's perceptions of the U.S., Georgia, and the GRSP program.**
- **As host, you should be specific with the student in defining the presentation content.** It's the only way the student will know what the Club expects.
- Be sure to coordinate all audiovisual requirements for the presentation.
- Take steps to put the student at ease.
- Some clubs make these GRSP programs a special spouses event which helps build Club understanding and involvement in GRSP.
- Invite the local newspaper. It makes a great story and keeps Rotary in the headlines.

In multiple sponsorships, when possible, arrange for a joint assembly of all participating clubs when the student delivers his/her presentation. This reduces the number of presentations the student must make. But more importantly, it's an excellent way to bond all clubs together -- through fellowship -- with GRSP as the focal point.

Select a fellow Rotarian to spend time with the student, explaining Rotary and its work including the Avenues of Service, Four Way Test, Rotary Foundation, etc.

- This is an excellent opportunity for that Rotarian to host the student for an afternoon or evening.

**Assist your student in attending all Club functions, including weekly Club meetings when he/she can attend.** Students WANT to be involved with their sponsoring club(s). Such involvement makes it interesting for both the student and the Club members.

- **Special Club functions such as Christmas parties, spouses nights, picnics, barbecues, etc.**
- **Club projects**

**Purchase a club badge for your student that includes his/her name and "GRSP Student".** This makes the student feel he/she is an important part of the club when attending meetings and functions. And it's a nice memento to take home.

**Occasionally your student will need to miss a class to attend a specific Rotary function. If his/her professor requires a permission statement, provide the student with a statement, on Club letterhead, detailing the function and Rotary requirement. This is to be given to your student before he/she returns to campus or sooner, if necessary.**

**Include the student's college address and phone number in the Club's membership directory.**

**Actively solicit your Club members to invite the student for an afternoon or evening, weekends, outings, sightseeing, and/or short vacations. After all, it's their student!**

Throughout the year, include information about your student in the Club bulletin. Include photos when possible.

- On a weekly basis, publish and update the student's calendar of activities and availabilities for the next eight weeks.
- Include the names and dates that Rotarians will be hosting, weekends committed to GRSP functions, etc. as well as weekends the student is available to be hosted.
- This promotes the idea of Rotary families scheduling time with your student.
- Occasionally, send copies of the bulletins to the student's parents and his/her sponsoring club at home.
- Invite your local newspaper to profile your student.

Establish communication with the student's sponsoring club at home.

- The host should work through the Club's Director of International Service to foster communications and even establish a joint project. This is a Club/GRSP opportunity that is seldom tapped.
- Involve your student in the project, if possible.

**Provide the student with two Club banners -- one for the sponsoring club at home and one for the student to keep.**

**The Club should select a special Christmas or holiday gift that the student will find meaningful and will keep.**

- Some clubs prefer to give a monetary gift to assist the student in traveling during the winter break.
- The Club should send the student a Christmas or holiday card signed by all Rotarians. Send the card so it arrives before the holiday break starts.
- The Club also should send a holiday greeting card to the student's parents.
- Encourage Club families who have hosted the student to send Christmas or holiday cards to the student's college address before the end of the quarter/vacation period.

**The Club should acknowledge the student's birthday with a gift.**

- A birthday card should be sent for arrival on the student's birthday. It should be signed by as many Club members as possible.
- Some clubs celebrate the birthday with a club dinner, picnic, etc.

Club officers should call the student periodically to make sure he/she is well.

Prepare a map/directions to the student's college dorm and distribute it to all Club members; include the student's phone number. This is a good way to get members involved with the student and also is an excellent way to eliminate the old excuse, "Golly, I'd like to have them over but I don't know where they are on campus".

**When the student achieves a special accomplishment such as making the Dean's List, be sure to inform the Club and also have the Club recognize the student.**

If your student's parents are able to visit, a Club function in their honor is most appropriate. Such hospitality builds international goodwill.

**In conjunction with your Club's Public Relations Committee, work with your local newspaper to do an interview/story on the student. Include photos.**

- Send copies to the student's parents and his/her sponsoring club at home.
- If there are several GRSP students at the same school, suggest that the article be about the entire group.

Each year, a beneficial Club project is to produce a videotaped interview with the student documenting his/her beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions about the year.

- This should be done near the end of the year. Take care to make it a non-threatening experience.
- The Club should provide the student with a copy of the tape. Be sure the copy is converted to the TV standard of his/her country.

- Avoid showing videotapes of previous students.
- This documentation effort should not replace the student's second Club presentation.
- It's suggested the tape be shown during the summer after the student has returned home.

**During the student's second (farewell) presentation, the Club should present the student with a departing gift to acknowledge the completion of a successful GRSP year.**

## **ARRIVAL & INITIAL DAYS**

**The host family MUST WELCOME the student at the airport.**

- **On the day of arrival, call the airline to learn of any changes in the flight's arrival time.**
- It is appropriate to wave the flag of the student's country and/or a Rotary flag.
- A welcoming banner is also appropriate.
- Female students enjoy receiving a small bouquet of flowers.

**If you are unable to meet your student at Hartsfield International Airport in Atlanta but will meet the student's connecting flight at another airport, please contact the Rotary Club of Clayton County.**

- Members of its Airport Hospitality Committee will meet your student and help him/her get to the proper gate, insuring that he/she makes the connecting flight.
- Please coordinate well in advance of the arrival date by calling:
  - The Club's president as listed in the current District Directory or...
  - The GRSP office in Savannah at **1-800-732-4167** or by E-mail at **grsp@grsp.org**
- After arrangements have been made with Clayton Co., please be sure you tell your student that they will be met and assisted by a Rotarian at the Atlanta airport.
- This special service is available to your student **throughout** his/her year. As host, you should handle all the coordination with Clayton County.

On arrival day after reaching your home:

- Encourage the student to call his/her parents to let them know that he/she arrived safely.

- Prepare a light family dinner for the student.
- Suggest that the student go to bed early.

For the first two days after arrival, allow the student to adjust to his/her new home, family, Georgia heat, language, etc. Don't overdo travel and other activities.

- Learn as much as you can about the student so you can better anticipate and meet his/her needs and expectations.
- Afterward, have specific daily plans for sightseeing and visiting other Rotary families or host families, **as well as attending your Club's meeting.**
- If the college is nearby, take the student for a "sneak preview" of the campus.

Rotarians/Americans tend to be very overt in welcoming students to this country and to GRSP. Students from other cultures tend to be more reserved and may appear to be hesitant. Don't worry; they generally adapt within a couple of weeks -- and even start saying, "y'all".

After the student has unpacked, offer to take any clothes that need pressing, like suit coats or good dresses, to the cleaners.

- Based on cultural differences, some students are not accustomed to having non-washable clothes dry cleaned. This may require your tactful handling upon their arrival and throughout the year.

**At the very outset, establish a solid understanding about one-to-one communications:**

- **If either you or the student doesn't understand what the other person said or meant, ask for clarification. Don't be hesitant!**

**Reiterate that GRSP is a cultural and scholastic scholarship program. AS SUCH, ROTARY INVOLVEMENT TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER ALL OTHER ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.**

- **Although a minimum academic average of "C" in each class must be maintained, Rotary involvement comes "first".**
- **The student is responsible to you, the host, for communicating his/her intentions before scheduling upcoming weekend and holiday activities that might conflict with Rotary activities.**
- **You must promptly call the student as soon as activities are scheduled so he/she can plan accordingly.**
- **Discuss the specific hosting arrangements that you have made for the student for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday periods.** For any remaining time, help the student make his/her travel plans.

With the student, go through all items in the "Rotary Suitcase".

- **Communicate clearly that he/she is responsible for returning all the Club's items, in good**

**condition, at the end of the year.**

- **Find out if the student has any questions or if there is something important the student feels he/she needs.**

Take the student shopping before he/she goes off to school. They enjoy seeing grocery, department, specialty, and especially discount stores. This is a good chance for them to buy any items they forgot to bring.

**When referring to and introducing the student, identify the student as "international" rather than "foreign"; the word "foreign" has a negative connotation to some people.**

- **Also avoid referring to the student or to GRSP as an "exchange" since it is not in the traditional sense.**

**Verify the students understanding and use of our:**

- **Money system**
- **Weights and measurement system**

**Remind the student to send Thank You notes to families and individuals who have befriended them.** They need to know this is an important American social tradition. This requires your discreet follow-up.

- **Provide the student with your Club's membership roster so he/she has addresses to facilitate writing.**
- A photographic roster is preferable, if available.

Purchase and give the student a small flag set containing his/her country's flag along with the U.S., Georgia, and/or Rotary flags.

- These can be purchased from a flag shop such as:

Atlas Flag Inc.  
2010 Weems Road  
Tucker, Georgia 30084-5283  
(404) 493-4083 or 1 (800) 999-FLAG

In the first full day "at home" show the student all the household facilities (kitchen appliances, utensils, laundry, linen storage, etc.) and how to use them.

- Be sure the student feels free and at ease to use your facilities.
- Since the student is in a new country, acquaint him/her with using and answering the telephone and answering the door.

Before the student goes off to college, offer to store winter clothes, etc. since dorm storage tends to be limited.

Offer to store large suitcases, after they have been unpacked at college.

If you have hosted other GRSP students, introduce your new student to them through pictures, etc.

- Avoid excessive talking about former students and their activities.
- **Avoid any kind of student comparisons. Each is an unique individual.**

## COLLEGE

Establish and maintain contact with the international student advisor. The advisor is an excellent source of information about how your student is adjusting to the school and to our culture.

**Through the international advisor or administrative office, determine when the student is to report to campus.**

- **Take your student to the campus and help him/her move into the dorm.**
- **Most colleges have a special international student orientation prior to classes beginning. Be sure your student attends.**

**Be sure your student understands that GRSP REQUIRES its student to live in on-campus student housing. Off campus rooms or apartments are not acceptable.** A primary objective of the Program is to foster exposure to and understanding of American campus life. For most international students, on-campus living is a unique aspect and a major difference from their home universities.

**Tell your student you must be called in case of an emergency. Be sure he/she carries the home and work phone numbers for the following at all times:**

- **Host family**
- **Club president**
- **Trustee**

**When the college permits, the Club should purchase an inexpensive telephone unit. This makes communication between the student, the host family, and the Club much easier.**

- Some clubs pay telephone installation costs. However, the student should be responsible for paying all monthly charges.
- Some clubs also provide inexpensive answering machines. This makes it much easier to get in touch.

**The host family must maintain weekly phone contact.** This allows the host to determine if the student is having any problems. It also strengthens the GRSP bonds.

- If such telephone calls result in long distance charges, some clubs defray these expenses.
- If your student must rely on a hall phone, encourage him/her to initiate the call.
- Provide the student with a "restricted calling card". These are available from the telephone company and allow the student to call only your home number direct, at a rate less than a reversed call charge. This also is very beneficial when the student is traveling.
- Be sure the card is returned to you at the end of the year.
- When your student is traveling on weekends, vacations, etc. request he/she call so you know he/she is safe. When a student knows this is to insure his/her safety and well-being, he/she will not be reluctant to keep you informed.
- Also, when you are traveling be sure your student knows how to get in touch with you. If necessary, select a backup host family and tell your student.

**The host family is responsible for transporting the student to and from campus when the student visits the host.**

- The host should try to assist the student in other travels until the student obtains his/her own means. However, the host should avoid being at "beck and call".
- When the student attends college in another town, sometimes he/she can commute on weekends to your home with other students from your area.

**The host family, along with the Trustee, is responsible for transporting the student to and from the GRSP Orientation Conclave in August. THE STUDENT IS NOT PERMITTED TO DRIVE HIS/HER CAR OR ANY RENTED VEHICLE TO THIS FUNCTION.**

**If your student wants to buy a car, assist him/her in its selection and purchase. Also, help arrange insurance so he/she has adequate coverage. IMPORTANT: The club and host family are discouraged from providing a car to the student.** At year's end, you also may need to oversee selling the vehicle.

- **Verify that your student's parents are aware of and are in agreement with his/her purchase of a car.**
- Any financial assistance by the sponsoring Club(s) is strictly a club decision.
- Assist the student in getting his/her Georgia driver's license and insurance.
- Be sure your student knows to have his/her driver's license, car registration, and proof of liability insurance at all times when driving.
- Be sure the student understands routine automotive maintenance such as tire pressure, oil level, fluid levels, belts, etc.
- **Verify your student's understanding of all laws governing "Driving Under the Influence" and**

**the consequences.**

- Before loaning your car to the student be sure your insurance will offer coverage.

Visit your student on campus during the year. Attend sporting events, special activities, go out for dinner, etc.

- Invite other GRSP students or close friends of your student to occasionally join you.
- Encourage other Club members to visit the student on campus but be sure they call first.

## **FAMILY INTEGRATION**

**As host, YOU are the "secret" to the success of the student's year!**

- Students critique their GRSP year each spring and report that:
  - **THE HOST FAMILY IS THE "KEY" TO A GREAT YEAR.**
  - Good hosts are those who "want the opportunity to host" rather than those who "are assigned and accept the obligation" because they are a Rotarian.

**All efforts should be directed toward making the student feel like "one of the family" and not a guest. You are the new family!**

**Communicate openly with the student that you want him/her to come home for weekends, holidays -- anytime!** They need to know you sincerely want them to be part of your family and that your invitation/request is more than a mere formality.

- Due to cultural differences, this usually needs to be stated over and over until the student understands your sincerity.

**When discussing political, social, and religious thought and/or issues, be sure ALL conversation is directed at understanding and is not perceived as attempted conversion.**

- This is essential for achieving GRSP's mission.
- As a Rotarian, you need to demonstrate to the student that knowledge, respect, and tolerance is the foundation for understanding.

After you have established and confirmed a trust level with your student, you may choose to give the student a key to your house. How better to say "you're one of the family" and "come home...whenever you can."

For periods when your student is in your home, be sure the student knows your "ground rules" about long-distant phone calls.

Host families are discouraged from loaning money to students. Students are instructed at the Conclave to notify their Trustee or the GRSP office in Savannah if financial difficulties arise.

- If you learn of such difficulties and your student is reluctant to speak with his/her Trustee, then you should discuss it with the Trustee.

Shortly after your student has enrolled in college, write to his/her parents and express your pleasure in having their son/daughter as part of your family.

- If a club bulletin is available that "profiles" your student, please send it to them.
- Request the parents provide you with several of the student's favorite recipes. Ask that they keep this a secret so you can prepare a favorite dish on a special occasion, holiday, birthday, etc.
- Encourage them to visit their son/daughter and extend a sincere invitation for them to stay with you, if possible.

Invite your student to cook a dish or even an entire meal typical of their country. This is a great way to demonstrate your interest in their culture.

- Depending on the country, you may need a Metric-to-Imperial (American) measurement conversion table for ingredients.

When possible, encourage your student to invite other GRSP, international, and American students to come "home" for the weekend. Any minor inconvenience is outweighed by the fun and new friendships.

If there are younger children in your family, invite the student to speak to their school class about the student's country. It helps create a special bond between the children and the student. Also, when done early in the year, it helps prepare the student for his/her initial presentation to your Club.

Loan the student your monthly copy of THE ROTARIAN to read. Often, they will find articles about Rotary at work in their home country.

When your student achieves a special accomplishment such as making the Dean's List, be sure to recognize it by going out to dinner, etc.

**Throughout the year, be alert for signs of depression, discontent, or personal problems. If this occurs, please handle it with the student and make the Trustee aware, as well.** The Trustee will want to intervene in serious situations.

- Be especially alert at the end of the semester when grades come out.

Send the student and their parents holiday greeting cards.

Explain the American holidays to the student such as Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Halloween, Thanksgiving, M. L. King's Birthday, Valentines Day, President's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Mother's Day, Memorial Day, and Father's Day.

- Have the student explain the holidays celebrated in his/her country and celebrate the ones that are special to the student.

Subscribe to local events bulletins and/or weekend newspapers. They are excellent sources of upcoming events that might interest your student.

- Example: Atlanta Journal/Constitution's Weekend Edition.

At your local bookstore, there are many excellent publications that contain valuable information about Georgia and the many things to see and do. Along with your student's help, select and purchase one or two books that he/she can use..

When home for weekends, many students enjoy renting videos. This enables them to see many movies they have heard about but would not otherwise be able to see. After all, movies are a reflection of our culture!?!?!?

- Generally, the host handles the rental costs.
- Encourage the student to rent programs about their country and international movies. Join your student in watching and learning. Enjoy!

Be sensitive to the student's dietary laws/restrictions. Prior to arrival, the student has been instructed to alert you if he/she has restrictions due to cultural, religious, or medical conditions.

- You may find your student is not fond of American fast foods. Also, you may find that he/she prefers foods that are not fried. Don't be surprised if this occurs!
- After experiencing the college cafeteria day after day, your student will find that coming home for a good "home-cooked" meal becomes real IMPORTANT. Be prepared!
- Your student will probably cherish fresh fruits, raw vegetables, and peanut butter!

If your student's parents are able to come to the U.S. for a visit, help coordinate their arrangements along with your student.

- Be sure the student knows you would like as much advance knowledge of his/her parent's arrival as possible and of your interest in having them spend time with your family.
- A special Club function in their honor is very appropriate.

## HOLIDAYS

Be sure to inform the student that if he/she wants to send gifts home for Christmas, they be sent U.S. Postal Air Mail no later than December 1 for arrival before Christmas Day.

**During Winter and Spring breaks, many dormitories are closed. THEREFORE, IT IS THE HOST FAMILY'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE HOUSING DURING THESE PERIODS.**

During the Winter break, the student will probably want to do some traveling in Georgia and/or the

Southeast. **However, your Club's hosting schedule for the student takes precedent.**

- **GRSP strongly discourages students from going back to their countries, especially at Christmastime. This defeats the cultural objectives of the Program. As host family, you should strongly discourage international travel as well.**
- **However, the student may be reluctant to accept your invitation to be "home for the holiday" since Christmas tends to be a family-oriented celebration. Make sure the student feels like and is a part of your family.. and joins you for this special holiday.**
- **If your student wants to travel within the United States, be sure it will not conflict with any hosting by the various club members. And your student should be at your home for the days around Christmas.**
- **If your student will be traveling during the break, be sure you have his/her travel itinerary, along with phone numbers.**
- Christmas can be a time when depression or homesickness sets in. Be alert for such signs.
- Family gifts to the student are most appropriate. One special gift should be given that will remind the student of his/her Christmas with you.
- Consider giving the student an ornament they can hang on the Christmas tree and then take home for their future Christmas trees.
- Exchange Christmas traditions. Adopt at least one of the student's traditions for the holiday.
- Surprise the student by preparing one of his/her favorite foods for Christmas dinner.
- If the student's faith is different from yours, be sure he/she has an opportunity to attend a worship service of his/her denomination, if possible.

## **COLLEGE VACATIONS**

When possible, assist the student in arranging his/her vacation plans.

- Often they fail to realize the vast distances involved. Beware of plans like visiting New York City one day and planning to camp the following night in the Grand Canyon -- while driving a 1986 VW!!!

Request your student to call "home" periodically when he/she is traveling so you know he/she is safe.

## **BIRTHDAY**

**The host family should make a special effort to celebrate the student's birthday.**

- **A birthday present from the family and the club is appropriate.**

- Arrange for a birthday cake decorated with their country's flag or another appropriate theme that personalizes it for the student.
- Share any family traditions you have for celebrating birthdays.

If the student's birthday occurred in the summer before they arrived, arrange to celebrate it sometime during their year with you. They appreciate the thoughtfulness.

- Your Club should be involved.

## **CONCLAVE, CONFERENCE & GATHERINGS**

**An Orientation Conclave is held in late August for all GRSP students. Attendance at this informational/social weekend is MANDATORY.**

- **The Trustee MUST take the student to the Conclave or coordinate the travel with the host.**
- **YOUR STUDENT IS NOT PERMITTED TO DRIVE HIS/HER CAR OR A RENTED VEHICLE TO THIS FIRST CONCLAVE. Your student will be hosted by a Rotary family of the club(s) sponsoring the Conclave.**
- As host family, you and your Club president, are **strongly encouraged** to attend this weekend event. It is very informative... and a lot of fun meeting the entire GRSP Class and other involved Rotarians.

From November to May, six clubs will each invite all students for special weekends of fellowship. These are GRSP-sanctioned functions. Students and their sponsoring clubs are notified in advance, with ample time for scheduling. Students are strongly urged to attend these weekends.

- **As host, you need to ASSIST your student in getting to these meaningful GRSP weekends but you are not responsible for driving them to the actual function..**

During the year, GRSP students will have weekend get-togethers at colleges throughout the state. These are "unofficial", informal gatherings.

- When possible, assist your student in attending if it doesn't interfere with other activities. Most students coordinate their travel with other GRSP students in the same school or area.

**Student attendance at his/her respective District Conference is MANDATORY.**

- **As host, be sure you or a Club representative submit the required District Conference pre-registration form and make the necessary hotel room reservation for your student.**
- **It is strongly recommended that you take your student to the District Conference.** This reinforces the importance of this function.
- If you cannot take your student, coordinate with another Rotarian in your Club, another host family, or

your Trustee.

- Generally, several students from the same school prefer to travel together. However, this circumvents the opportunity for direct Rotary involvement with the host or a Club member.
- During the Conference, request that your student eat at least one evening meal with your Club.
- If the Club holds a social hour or any club activity, be sure the student is included.

**Your student is not to attend the District Conferences for the other two districts unless the student receives a personal, written invitation from that District Governor.**

- Be alert to his/her possible intentions during your weekly conversations.

## **DEPARTURE**

**Six weeks before the end of school, determine what the student's plans and needs will be when school is over.**

- **Based on the type of airline ticket, determine when your student must make return reservations. You may need to intervene since this is often a point of misunderstanding!**
- Many students like to spend several weeks after school traveling in the U.S. before returning home.
- Determine if housing into the summer is required.

**Remember -- attention to details for their departure is just as important as it was for their arrival. Make it "special"!**

Arrange for your student to spend his/her final days, prior to departure, with you. Both the student and host family need some time for closure of their year together.

You may need to assist your student in shipping some things home.

- U.S. Postal Surface Mail is less expensive than Air Mail; however, it can take 4 to 6 weeks to arrive.

Several days prior to departure, prepare the student for what to expect returning home after their special GRSP year.

- Initially, the student will be very excited about returning home to family and friends.
- **Later, it is normal for depression to set in during the readjustment period; the duration varies with each student.**
- **Be sure he/she knows that you "want to be there" by letter or by phone to help during this period.**

- Students shouldn't expect their friends to have changed as much as they have.

The evening prior to departure it is appropriate to have a special dinner to celebrate the year you have had with your student.

- It should be a festive occasion.
- Consider inviting some of their close friends to share in the celebration.
- A gift from the family is also appropriate.
- A photo album with copies of the student/host family pictures (along with some spare pages) is generally "quite a hit".

**The host family must take the student to the airport to say "Goodbye".**

- Invite other Rotary families who have hosted through the year to go.
- Keep it upbeat and positive!

## **FOLLOW-UP**

**Periodically, correspond with the student to keep the GRSP ideals alive:**

- A form letter may become a necessity after you have hosted several students.
- If possible, telephone occasionally.

Remember to send cards for birthdays and Christmas.

When visiting abroad, try to coordinate your travels to visit your student, his/her family, and the sponsoring club.

Encourage the student to keep you and the GRSP office in Savannah informed of changes in address and phone number through the years.

