

Forte International Exchange Association



Local Representative Handbook

529 14th Street NW, Suite 270
Washington, DC 20045

Toll-Free: 1-888-893-6783
Tel: 202-628-8226 Fax: 202-296-8685

www.orgsites.com/dc/forte

Table of Contents

I.	Introduction	2
	How to use this handbook	
II.	FIEA Policy for Local Reps	2
	Duties	
	Discontinuing Work	
III.	Recruiting Host Families	3
IV.	Evaluating and Interviewing Host Families	4
	Financial Cost	
V.	Host Family Orientation	5
VI.	Preparing for a Student's Arrival	6
	Enrolling a Student in the Local School	
	Student's Arrival in the US	
VII.	Maintaining Communication	7
	The First Month	
	After the First Month	
VIII.	Problem Solving	8
IX.	Local Representatives Appendix	10
	a. Monthly Report Form	
	b. Home Inspection Form	
X.	Host Family Appendix	15
	a. Host Family Application Form	
	b. FIEA Q&A for Host Families	
	c. Host Family Responsibilities	
	d. Exchange Student Responsibilities	

I. Introduction

Forte International Exchange Association fosters understanding and cooperation between United States and other countries worldwide through international academic exchange programs at the high school level. Such programs enable teenagers from both countries to gain new perspectives and insight into the everyday life in a foreign country. Following the exchange experiences, students share their impressions and foreign experiences in their home country and are also able to make new contributions to their work and daily life. This ultimately plays a tremendous role in the future relations of our countries.

How to use this handbook

Every year Forte International Exchange Association (FIEA) brings high school students from various countries to the US for one academic year (approximately 10 months) or one semester (approximately 5 months). As a local representative, you will serve as the primary contact person for students, host families, and local schools. Lifelong friendships will be made as you help guide the exchange students through the memorable and exciting experience of living in another culture.

This handbook will give you an overview of the FIEA program, FIEA guidelines/rules, as well as your duties and what is expected of you as a FIEA local rep. If you need advice or tips, this guide is a useful reference. The Forte International Exchange Association staff in the Washington DC office is also available to answer any questions or offer advice. Working together as a team, we can ensure a successful and memorable experience for all parties involved!

II. FIEA Policy for Local Representatives

Duties

FIEA Local reps play an instrumental role in the success of a student exchange experience. FIEA seeks local reps that are enthusiastic about our student exchange program and are willing to serve wholeheartedly. A local rep needs to be compassionate and patient with young people and ready to share his or her culture while learning new cultural perspectives. Local reps are also ideally involved in their community thereby having contacts with different organizations.

1. Recruit Host Families
2. Interview and evaluate each prospective host family before student placements are finalized (each family must be interviewed in their home).
3. Organize two orientations with the host family (pre and post student arrival orientation for host families in the local area).
4. Contact the school and handle paperwork for the student's enrollment.
5. Work as a liaison between the school, the student, and the host family and FIEA's national office.

6. Help the students and host families with cultural differences, culture shock, and school related issues.

7. Help the student and host family in an emergency situation.

8. Maintain frequent contact with the student, host family, and school. Local reps must contact the family/student at least once (but preferably twice a month) and the schools at least once a month.

Discontinuing Work

If a local, for whatever reason, is unable to continue work, FIEA requires at least two weeks notice. Forte International Exchange Association will take responsibility for finding a replacement (recommendations for a succeeding local rep are greatly appreciated).

III. Recruiting Host Families

Local representatives can still play an active role even if no students are currently placed in their area. As an involved member of the community, a local representative can coordinate outreach activities to recruit potential host families. The following places and organizations are possible starting points for recruiting host families:

- Family friends and contacts
- Neighborhood gatherings
- Schools
- Church or Temple
- Local Parent Teacher Association meetings
- Recreation or Community Centers
- Local library
- Book clubs
- Child's sport teams (Little League, Soccer team, etc.)
- Local newspaper

Some local reps may have close contact with neighbors or friends whom they know may potentially be interested in hosting a student. These contacts are easiest to work with first. Through these families, contact may be made to other families as well (whom the local rep does not know directly).

Another way of reaching out to prospective families is placing an ad in the local paper or posting flyers in the local library, school or church. Interested parties should contact FIEA staff in Washington DC for more information.

While you are recruiting host families, it is a good idea to keep a record of any leads. This record should include the following information: Name; address; family members; how you made contact to the family and any other observations. Keep FIEA staff in Washington up to date with any leads. Frequent contact with FEIA staff in Washington will help us prepare the necessary materials to send to a family when the time is right.

IV. Evaluating and Interviewing Host Families

Once a family has expressed interest in our program and hosting, the next step is to send a Host Family information packet and application to the family. Filling out and mailing the application does not commit a family to hosting a student as they will still learn more about the program and the selection process in the coming months.

On the application, a host family tells briefly about its background and home and also indicates when they want to host and whether they would like to host a boy or a girl. After receiving the application, we begin communication with the family. FIEA encourages the local rep to keep in touch with the family on a frequent basis in order to get to know them better. This process allows you to get an idea about how the family is and what their expectations are.

After initial contact and review of references, a host family is ready to be interviewed and evaluated. Every host family must complete a mandatory interview in their home with an FIEA representative before student placements are finalized. Visiting a family in their home is the best way to get a feel for a family's home life and whether their home will be a suitable place for an exchange student. Take note of space and comfort; tidiness; pets; and smoking. Also take note of the neighborhood. Does it seem like a safe place? Does it seem isolated in the sense that transportation to the school could be a foreseeable problem?

Families that *will not* be considered for hosting include those with:

- Financial problems
- Poor living conditions
- Bad intentions for hosting our students
- A record of domestic violence
- Any other record of misconduct

When meeting a family, it's important to learn about their interests, expectations and daily life. Here are some suggested questions:

Interests

- What are your interests - sports; arts, etc?
- Are you involved in any community activities?
- Do you go to church? If so, how often?
- Do you like going out a lot?
- Do you partake in a lot of activities with your neighbors?
- Do you enjoy traveling?

Daily life

- How is a typical day in your family?
- How are chores divided among family members?
- When do you typically eat dinner and do you eat together as a family?
- Do you have any special dietary lifestyles (i.e. kosher, vegetarian, vegan)?
- How do you normally spend your weekends?
- Do you ever have houseguests?

Expectations

- Are you willing to let your student partake in your family activities?
- What chores would you have your student help out in?
- How will you set rules for the student such as curfew, phone use and transportation?
- How do you feel about your student having friends over?
- How will you handle the situation when a student is homesick?
- Are you aware of the financial costs of hosting a student?

Financial Cost

The last item in the list is very important. Make sure that you have a clear understanding from the family that they are aware of the financial costs of hosting a student. Costs incurred from hosting a student include meals (the added cost for feeding an extra person), gas mileage for transporting the student to school or other activities as well as other miscellaneous costs. Depending on the area where the family lives and other factors, hosting a student can cost approximately \$100-250 a month. If a family is unable to accept the added costs, then we cannot further pursue student placement with them.

These steps will help ensure that each student is aptly matched with the right host family. Once we receive an accepted student's full profile, we can begin to make student/host family matches.

When meeting families, it's important to convey to them that they are an essential part of an exchange program success and that they will be playing the role of an educator. Hosting is a rewarding and enriching experience from which all of them will be able to benefit. The Home Inspection Form (which is in the appendices) will help you in the interviewing process. Feel free to add some of your own questions as well.

V. Host Family Orientation

In the weeks prior to the student's arrival, it's important that you keep close contact with the host family as they make preparations in their home for the student. All families should be briefed about hosting their student in an orientation session. If there is more than one family in the area, it may be easier to coordinate an orientation session with all the families in your home or another central location. This will allow you to establish a network among the host families. Families may welcome the opportunity to meet other host families so that they can know someone going through a similar experience. Some host families also plan occasional social gatherings together once their students have arrived.

Each host family will be presented a copy of the Host Family Handbook. As a local rep, you should be familiar with the contents of this handbook, as it not only explains to a family their relationship with you but also how to handle other situations. You may use the handbook as a guide during the orientation meeting with the family.

In addition to knowing how to prepare their home for the student, a host family needs to understand how to handle certain situations. It's important that every family has an

understanding about their responsibilities and how they should set guidelines for their student. In order to set these guidelines, families need to understand the responsibilities of the student as well. The orientation session is therefore an ideal time to discuss these responsibilities and answer any questions related to them.

It is important for the local rep to be aware of all of the responsibilities in case any problems do arise. A list of both host family and student responsibilities can be found in the Host Family Appendix section of this handbook.

The most important host family responsibilities for the local rep to be aware of are #9-12. Families need to be made aware that their contact with the local rep is very important, even if everything is going well. Local reps should understand that you serve as a liaison between the family, student and school. They will contact you for your assistance in a number of matters including:

- Most local reps are familiar with the students' culture and are therefore aware of cultural differences. Many misunderstandings between students and host families are caused by these differences. In situations like this, your local representative will act as a mediator and provide guidance and support to prevent further conflicts from happening.
- Any misconduct of the student should be reported to the local rep and FIEA staff in Washington DC in a timely manner.
- If the host family has planned a vacation and cannot bring the student along, the local rep should be notified in advance. The local rep should be informed of the family's schedule so that arrangements can be made to place the student in a temporary home while the family is away.
- If there is a change of circumstances in the host family, such as early termination of hosting, the host family should inform the local rep and FIEA as soon as possible. We will then make arrangements to place the student with another family.

In addition to covering the major responsibilities of both the student and the host family, the orientation session is a chance to discuss other issues such as phone and computer use; transportation, and curfews. It's important to also discuss cultural differences and the different stages of culture shock and social acceptance. Detailed information about all these aspects can be found in the Host Family Handbook.

VI. Preparing for a Student's Arrival

Enrolling a Student in the Local School

When we know which students will be coming to the US, we can begin to make matches with host families. Once we make a match, we will communicate with the family about the student and share his or her profile with the family. If there is enough time before the student arrives, a family will be able to correspond with the student and be all the more prepared for his or her arrival.

At this time, preparations should be made at the local school for the student's enrollment. It's important that the school knows who you are and that you will be the key person representing the student and FIEA during the school year. Introduce yourself by phone and find out who will play a major role in the student's affairs during the school year (typically a guidance counselor). If possible, make an appointment with this person so that he or she can get to know you; learn more about our program and how to contact you when necessary.

FIEA staff will have already established contact with the school district and obtained approval for student placement in its schools. With this approval, as well as the identification of the student who will be placed in the town, steps can be made towards enrolling the student. Each school will have its own enrollment procedure. Bring along the student's entire profile so that the school can start a file for the student. This will make the enrollment process easier.

Student's arrival in the US

Once we are aware of a student's travel itinerary, we will share this information with his or her host family and local rep. Expect that plans could change according to visa status and rates effected by peak travel time. Students will typically fly to Washington, DC where they will spend one or two days for orientation. Unless you live close to this locations, the student will then be placed on a domestic flight to your location after the orientation session.

Ideally, the local rep meets the student at the airport with at least one member of the host family. When he or she first arrives, it may be a little confusing. Be sure to hold a clear sign with his or her name on it so that s/he can identify you easily. Make sure the student's luggage has been collected and that the student gets off with the host family okay.

VII. Maintaining communication

The first week and days will be very exciting for both the family and the student as they experience a variety of emotions. During this time, it is very important to keep the line of communication open. All parties should know how to contact you at all times. Additionally, you should be in frequent contact with FIEA staff in Washington, DC. In the first month, we recommend that local reps call students and families at least once a week. Check in on how things are going. Find out how the student is coping with his or her new home and also how things are going at school.

The first month

You should have a post arrival orientation to review rules/expectations and answer questions with the host family and student. In the first month, it is also crucial that you have frequent contact with the school. Although students will have already learned about their required coursework at the orientation session, they will need to work out their class schedule with the guidance counselor. Make sure that the student has been registered for classes without any problems. Contact with the school and with the student will help answer any questions on whether the student is being attended to enough and how he or she is making the transition. Therefore, if there are any problems, we will be able to solve them quickly and efficiently.

After the first month

Keep in touch with the students and host families at least twice a month but more often if possible. In order to ensure that both the host family and student can more comfortably raise concerns about each other, separate contact with both the host family and student is required. Schools need to be contacted only once a month unless there is a problem. Whenever there is the opportunity, meet with the students, host families and school contacts at social events such as a school Open House nights or holiday festivities such as Christmas parties.

Remember to keep an accurate record of all communication with students, families and host families. This will be helpful if any problems are to arrive in the future. FIEA reps will be sent an evaluation form on a monthly basis for each student to be completed and returned. A copy of the Monthly Report Form is in the Local Rep Appendix of this handbook.

VIII . Problem Solving

Frequent communication with students, families, and schools will help ensure a satisfying experience for all parties involved. However, problems may occur during the exchange year. The following steps will help a local rep deal with problems and find a solution.

1. Avoid risks

Again, communication is the key to avoiding any risks. A successful and responsible local rep communicates with all parties frequently and is aware of all issues. He is or she is able to take note of any situations that could develop into problems and deal with them promptly.

Typical situations that could develop into problems include:

- a. Misunderstandings between a student and host family due to cultural differences
- b. Student depression due to homesickness
- c. Student's mismanagement of personal funds and money
- d. Student struggle with school work

When any of the situations (or any situation) above occurs, it's important to talk each issue through. Meet with each individual involved and discuss all points of view. For example, a particular student may spend a lot of time studying in his or her room. The host family may perceive this as a lack of interest and anti-social behavior. Chinese families usually place great value on education and he or she may therefore be accustomed to dedicating a lot of time to his or her studies. Additionally, the student will be making the transition to the English language and the American education system in the first couple of months. This will be time consuming and emotionally exhausting for the student. This needs to be explained clearly to the host family so that they understand where the student is coming from. The student should understand the host family's point of view as well and make an effort to be more involved with the host family.

Communication and time will usually resolve most problems.

2. Transfer Risks

If communication and meeting with the individuals doesn't resolve the problem, contact FIEA staff in Washington to make them aware of it. FIEA will also contact parties involved and let them know that they are aware of the problem. As problems escalate, they must be dealt with properly. This may mean contacting FIEA representatives overseas as well as the student's natural parents, if necessary.

If differences between host families and students are irreconcilable, a student may have to be moved to another home. This is *only* an option, however, if differences cannot be worked out.

Situations where Forte staff in Washington should be involved include:

- a. Unresolved problems between host families and students
- b. Student has run out of money
- c. Student needs to return to his/her home country for a personal emergency
- d. Host family must terminate their home-stay contract
- e. Host family is going out of town and can not bring the student along
- f. Student has displayed misconduct

If a student should break any rules or display any misconduct, there are different ways of dealing with the problem. Depending on the severity of the problem, a student will likely be warned at first. Multiple offenses may be cause for sending a student home.

Local Representative Appendix

Monthly Report Form

Home Inspection Form



Forte International Exchange Association

529 14th Street NW, Suite 270
 Washington, D.C. 20045, U.S.A.
 Tel: 202-628-8226, Fax: 202-296-8685
 Email: info@forteintl.com
 Website: www.orgsites.com/dc/forte

FIEA Monthly Report

Please complete this form at least once a month and return to Forte National Office.
 The contacts can be conducted over phone.

Report for the month of:

Local Rep Name:

LR Telephone:

Student's Name:

Home Country:

Host Family Name:

Date Contacted Student:

Met with the student in person Yes No

Date Contacted Host Family:

Met with the host family in person Yes No

Did you contact the School this month Yes No

Date Contacted School:

Did you contact this student, host family, or school more than in normal situation? If Yes, please explain:

Evaluation Rating: 1 = poor; 2 = fair; 3 = good; 4 = super

Rating

Comments
 (necessary for ratings of fair or poor)

Student understands and follows rules

Student participation in school/community activities

Student's academic performance

Student's overall conversational language abilities

Student's level of comfort and ease with host family

Student's interaction with host family

Host family's interest/participation in student's personal welfare

Host family's interest/participation in student's education

Host family's interest/participation in student's extracurricular activities

Overall relationship between host family and student

CONVERSATION NOTES

Please use the space below to record your conversation notes.

STUDENT:

HOST FAMILY:

SCHOOL:

Signature: (type if sending electronically)

Date:

Forte International Exchange Association

529 14th Street NW, Suite 270
Washington, D.C. 20045, U.S.A.
Tel: 202-628-8226, Fax: 202-296-8685
Toll-Free: 1-888-89-FORTE
www.orgsites.com/dc/forte

Host Family Interview Form

Please fill out and sign the form and return
to FIEA national office

Family Name:

Representative Name:

Date Visited Home:

Why would you like to host an international exchange student?

Have you traveled outside of the USA?

If yes, where?

Do you have any family rules?

How are the family rules enforced?

What household rules do you want your international student to know (i.e. telephone; computer; TV; dating)

What type of household chores do your children do?

What type of chores would you assign to the student?

Do you agree to treat the student as your own son or daughter and to provide appropriate parental supervision?

Curfew for your children (if applicable) Weeknights

Weekends

How did you hear about Forte International Exchange Association?

Do you have any friends or neighbors who may be interested in hosting:

Names

1.

2.

3.

Phone/Email

Representative use only

Please describe condition of the home:

Please describe the neighborhood:

Do all members of the family agree to host?
Describe:

I certify that I conducted an in-person interview with the above family to host an international exchange student.

I have reviewed the host family responsibilities with the family, and they understand the duties of hosting an exchange student with Forte International

Representative Signature:

Date:

Host Family Appendix

Host Family Application Form

FIEA Q&A for Host Families

Host Family Responsibilities

Exchange Student Responsibilities

Forte International Exchange Association

National Press Building
 529 14th Street NW, Suite 270
 Washington, D.C. 20045, U.S.A.
 Tel: 202-628-8226
 Fax: 202-296-8685

HOST FAMILY APPLICATION FORM

Please type or print clearly

Student's Name:

FIEA ID # (FIEA use only)

General Information**Mother****Father**

Name:

Name:

Date of birth:

Date of birth:

Social Security #:

Social Security #:

Home
AddressHome
Address
(if not same)

Phone:

Cell:

Phone:
(if not same)

Cell:

Email:

Email:

Occupation:

Occupation:

Have you ever been convicted of a crime or
felony (If yes please explain):Have you ever been convicted of a crime or felony (If
yes please explain):

Child/Children Name

DOB

Sex

Grade in
SchoolLiving at
home?Social Security Number
(if over 18 while hosting)

Primary language spoken at home:

Other languages spoken:

Religious Affiliation (if any):

Frequency of attending religious services:

Apply to host for (5-10 months):

I can host a boy girl or either

Would you accept a vegetarian student?

We live in a: _____ (Single House, TH, Apt)

What chores would you have for your student?	Please describe your families eating habits.
Family activities at leisure time: 1. 2. 3.	Describe your family in three words: 1. 2. 3.
Is the student going to share a room?	If yes, who with?
Do you have pets?	If yes, what kind(s)?
Does anyone in your family smoke?	If yes, where? <input type="checkbox"/> Inside <input type="checkbox"/> Outside <input type="checkbox"/> Both
Please describe a typical weekday for your family.	What are some points of interest in your community?
Have you hosted before?	If yes, what country?
What is your expectation from hosting:	
If selected as a host family, do you agree to treat the student as your own son or daughter and to provide appropriate parental supervision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
How did you learn about hosting with Forte International?	
Name of airport(s) you prefer the student to arrive at:	
Distance to Airport:	
May we give your email and phone number to the student?	

Local High School Information		
Name:	Principal:	
Address:	Phone:	
	Fax:	
Attending school by: <input type="checkbox"/> School Bus <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	Website:	
The next school term start and end date Starts from: _____ Ends on: _____		
References		
(For Security reasons, we need two references who have known your family for at least 12 months)		
Name:	Name:	
Address:	Address:	
Home phone:	Home phone:	
Work phone:	Work phone:	
Cell phone:	Cell phone:	
Do you have any friends who might be interested in hosting a student?		
Name:	Contact Information:	
Name:	Contact Information:	
Application Procedure	Authorization	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the application form and send to Forte representatives. • Choose a student that matches your family. • FIEA Representatives will contact the local high school and apply for acceptance. • FIEA Representative will contact you to arrange interview with your family. • Welcome the student at the airport! 	Host Mother:	Signature:
		Date:
	Host Father:	Signature:
		Date:



Forte International Exchange Association

Questions & Answers

FIEA Answers Your Questions About Hosting An Exchange Student

We understand when a family considers opening its home and heart to an international exchange student there will be a lot of questions that will be asked. Here is just a few that have been asked most often:

How will our family benefit by hosting an exchange student through FIEA?

There are many reasons why hosting is a wonderful experience for the whole family. You and your family have a chance to learn about another culture and language – all in the comfort of your own home. You have the opportunity to start a life-long relationship with your new “son” or “daughter,” and when your student returns home you will have a special friend in another country. Members of your family will feel closer to each other through sharing your daily lives with an FIEA student. If you have children, they will gain a global perspective of the world – learning more about geography, communication and international cultures. If your children are young, they will love to have a big brother or sister from another country. Most of all, you all will have a lot of fun.

What are the requirements for being a host family?

Host families are as different and diverse as Americans themselves. They come from all ethnic, racial and economic and religious backgrounds. They live in cities, small towns and rural communities.

You don't need to have teenagers in order to host. We encourage single parent families and retirees alike to apply. Regardless if you have young children, adult children or no children at all – your open home can serve as a supportive environment for our exchange students adjusting to a new culture.

How much time should we expect to host our exchange student?

Most of our students live in the US for one academic year – 10 months – approximately from mid-August through June. Some five-month hosting opportunities are available for semester students arriving in either January or August. Occasionally we seek short-term host families for 3-4 weeks during the summer to help us with students who come to learn English and expose themselves to American culture.

We ask our host families to greet their student at the airport and make them feel welcomed. If possible, an area representative will be there as well.

Will our FIEA student speak English?

All of our students who come to the US have studied English for five years or more in their home country – practicing both written and spoken English. They also have to pass a basic English proficiency exam administered by FIEA before we accept their application.

However, some students would like a special emphasis on learning English with a personal tutor. As a host family member, you are welcome to accept the role of English tutor and will be compensated by our organization \$200/month.

How much does it cost to host a FIEA student?

There is no charge. The only expenses for your family will be the costs of including another person in your regular activities, including three meals a day. Although during the school week, the student will have his/her personal funds for lunch money. You are eligible for a \$50 per month federal tax deduction for hosting an exchange student.

Are we responsible for our student's medical bills or spending money?

No. FIEA students are fully covered with medical and accidental insurance once they enter the US. The insurance card with policy information will be sent directly to you as a host family member prior to the student's arrival.

Our students are expected to pay for school lunches, tourism expenses during exchange period and additional spending money for everyday items.

Where would our FIEA student attend school?

Once you have been approved as a host family, FIEA contacts the local high school in your district to begin enrollment procedures. While at the high school, he/she will take courses typical of an American his or her age, and is welcomed to participate in extracurricular activities.

Does FIEA require that we have a separate bedroom for our exchange student?

No, you don't need to have a separate room for your FIEA student. He or she may share a bedroom with a same-sex child. All you need to provide is a bed and quiet study area.

How are FIEA students and host families matched up?

The first step is for your family to complete a “Host Family Application” and be interviewed in your home by a FIEA area representative. After the interview, we also perform criminal background checks on potential host families. Once approved, our area representative will assign you an exchange student, taking into consideration a number of factors to help make the best possible match. Oftentimes, there are several matches available from which the host family can choose.

Variables include your family’s values, the kind of activities you’re involved in (sports, arts, intellectual pursuits, etc.), your religious preferences, whether you’d prefer a student who is quiet or outgoing, what part of the world you’d prefer your student to be from and so forth. Our national office does our best to make matches based on availability and common factors before making recommendations to area representatives.

How will FIEA prepare us to be a host family?

FIEA provides each family with a Host Family Handbook, which serves as a reference guide throughout the exchange year. Also before your student arrives, you will receive an orientation by either the area representative or from our national office. This is an opportunity to get answers to any last-minute questions – and learn how to support your new family member through normal adjustments such as culture shock and speaking a new language.

Please keep in mind that your FIEA area representative and our national office are always ready and able to answer your questions and help you out all year long.

What will happen if we have problems while hosting?

At FIEA, we believe in sustaining an environment for students and family members to feel safe to discuss what is troubling them. We partner with host families to resolve conflict. Our area representatives will do their best to help you resolve any difficult situations that arise during the year. While we don’t anticipate any major crisis, if the situation is severe, please don’t hesitate to call our national office directly. Our national office can issue severe warnings and put the student on probation. FIEA students can be sent back to their home country at the discretion of the national office. Occasionally, FIEA will find another home for the student, although this usually isn’t necessary.

What is the purpose behind the exchange program?

FIEA, began in 2000 as an educational non-profit from our parent company, Forte Group International, Inc. Our parent company was founded with the purpose of fostering good business relations between the US and China. With the same spirit, Forte wanted to offer the two countries an

opportunity to appreciate and learn from one another. Today we represent students all around the world. Recently we have placed students from South Korea, Thailand, China, Malaysia and India.

FIEA is designated by the US State Department to facilitate the Fulbright-Hayes J1/Exchange Visitor Program. The J1 program was initiated in the 1960s by an act of US Congress to expose foreign students to American culture, society and values. FIEA is also a certified member of the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET).

We consider our host families to be citizen-ambassadors. Our families play a unique role in representing what America is truly about to these students whose idea of the US is sometimes formed only by what they see on television or are taught in their schools. Our students look forward to improving his/her English as well as experiencing American culture first-hand.

What other kinds of activities will our student participate in while in the US?

The intention behind hosting is to have your FIEA student participate in any activities your family is involved in – from household chores to family outings. FIEA students come to the US expecting a family living experience, not a travel program. However, many families enjoy showing their student what makes our country special – everything from historical places to natural wonders, from sporting events to the arts.

No doubt your FIEA student also will make friends in school and in the community, and will be involved in activities through these networks.

Who do I contact for more information about hosting an FIEA student?

If you’re interested in hosting an FIEA student or if you simply have other questions, please call us toll free 1-888-893-6783 or visit us online at www.orgsites.com/dc/forte. Hosting will be a wonderful educational experience for your entire family. Please feel free to share this information with others who may be interested in hosting an exchange student as well.

Forte International Host Family Rules and Regulations

1. A host family should provide love, moral support and basic needs to the exchange student as if he or she were a member of the family.
2. While the student's natural family still serves as his or her legal guardian, the host family is expected to supervise the student's academic performance, social conduct and health during the entire duration of his or her stay in the US. Any misconduct of the student should be reported to the local representative and Forte International staff in Washington DC in a timely manner.
3. The host family should do its best to help the exchange student adjust to American culture, and take him or her to as many social activities as possible.
4. The host family is expected to pick up its student from the airport upon his or her arrival, and see him or her off upon departure.
5. Except for food and lodging, the host family is not expected to cover any other expenses for the student. The student brings his/her own spending money.
6. Each host family and student are expected to work out an agreement regarding the student's extracurricular activities like team practice, social gatherings, parties, movies, etc. The host family shall only provide assistance to the level it feels comfortable.
7. All FIEA students are under medical/accident insurance coverage. In case of any medical emergencies, the host family is expected to send the student to a hospital and sign any required documents with the rights pre-approved by the student's biological parents.
8. If there is a change of circumstances in the host family, such as early termination of hosting, the host family should inform FIEA and its local representative as soon as possible. Forte International Exchange Association and the local representative will arrange for another family to host the student.
9. If the placement of the student doesn't work out satisfactorily, Forte International will take the responsibility to place the student with another family. Many conflicts between students and the families are caused by cultural misunderstandings. We will provide guidance and support to both the student and the family to prevent further conflicts. If conflicts remain unresolved, FIEA will make arrangements to find a new family.
10. If the host family has an emergency, the local rep should be notified immediately. The local rep should be informed of the family's situation so that arrangements, if necessary, can be made to place the student in a temporary home during the family crisis.
11. Host families are also required to talk with the local representative at least once a month.

Forte International Exchange Student Rules and Regulations

1. All activities of the student must be approved by his/her Host Parents. The student shall keep the host parents informed about where and with whom the student is at all times and the expected time of his or her return home.
2. A student may not purchase, possess or consume alcoholic beverages unless he or she is twenty one years old. FIEA students shall not drink any alcoholic beverages including beer and wine while in the United States.
3. Purchase, possession, or use of any illicit drug or association with anyone involved with drugs in any way, shall be cause for any FIEA Student to be returned to his/her country.
4. FIEA students may not drive cars or motorcycles or other motorized vehicles at any time during his or her stay in the U.S. If a student drives any car or motorized vehicle under any circumstances, the student will be returned to his/her home country.
5. School attendance is mandatory. If the student fails to follow school rules, exhibits behavioral problems at school, or fails academically he or she may be sent home.
6. FIEA students are not allowed to travel outside the local area either alone or with other teenagers. The local representative of FIEA will define the local area. Over-night traveling is allowed only with an approved group, such as a school or church-sponsored group approved by FIEA, or with an adult approved by the host family and FIEA.
7. FIEA discourages students from visiting their family members living in the United States unknown by the natural parents and/or the American host family. Written permission from natural parents, permission from the Host Parents and a letter of invitation from the family the student wishes to visit are required. A student found to be in violation of this condition will be returned to his or her home country.
8. FIEA students are discouraged from visiting their home country during their stay in the United States, with the exception of a medical emergency within the immediate natural family. Students returning to their home country during an FIEA program MUST obtain permission from the FIEA Office in Washington, DC.
9. If a student travels outside of the United States with his/her host family, he/she must always check first with U.S. immigration officials to make sure he/she will be allowed to re-enter.
10. Students are forbidden from hitchhiking while in the United States. In many states, hitchhiking is illegal and hitchhiking is also considered to be very dangerous!
11. Students are not permitted to take a job during their stay in the United States, except intermittent jobs in the neighborhood such as lawn care or baby-sitting.

12. If in the student's application he/she said that he/she does not smoke, the student may not smoke during his/her stay in the host country. If the student is a smoker, he/she must discuss his/her smoking habits with his/her host family and follow their regulations. At all times, state laws regarding tobacco purchase, possession and use by minors must be obeyed.
13. Violation of any local, State or Federal Law in the U.S. will cause the student to be sent home.
14. Students are not allowed to remain in the United States after the FIEA exchange program is completed. All students shall return to their home country as a group. Students who do not leave upon program completion will be reported to Immigration and Naturalization Services as required by law.
15. Students must respect and obey all decisions made by FIEA officials. Failure to abide by these rules and decisions may result in return home without warning or a second chance, and any additional expense that are incurred shall be the responsibility of the student and his or her natural parents and or legal/guardians.
16. FIEA students participate in the student exchange program to learn about the United States, both culturally and academically, therefore all FIEA students need to be willing to make adjustments accordingly to adapt to their host family, community, and school.

If any of these rules are broken, we have different ways of dealing with the problem. Any misconduct of the student should be reported to the local rep and FIEA staff in Washington DC in a timely manner. We will contact the student to discuss the problem. Depending on the severity of the problem, the student will likely be verbally warned first. Multiple offenses are a possible reason for sending a student back home .