

Meet five International Exchange Students



September 8, 2015

Mayor Mim McConnell and Assembly Members:

Please welcome Sitka's international exchange students representing the AFS and Rotary International exchange student programs. This year, we have students from Germany, Tajikistan, Thailand, Paraguay and Denmark living with host families.

2015-16 International Exchange Students

AFS- USA works toward a more just and peaceful world by providing international and intercultural learning experiences to individuals, families, schools, and communities through a global volunteer partnership in more than 40 countries and a network of volunteers. Students live with one family for the school year.

Student. Tessa Schindler, Germany

Host family. Karen, Ed, Carrie, and Minh Iwamoto

Tessa, 16, is a recipient of the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange Scholarship (CBYX), a program inaugurated in 1983 by the U.S. Congress and the German Bundestag. This public diplomacy initiative is designed to strengthen ties between the youth of Germany and the U.S. by facilitating international dialogue and cooperation. CBYX scholars return with an expanded global perspective and awareness of each other's culture, society, history and politics.

Tessa has joined the volleyball team and loves handball, plays the guitar and enjoys singing. She is considering 3 possible careers; diplomat, UNICEF, or a scientist. In any event, she wants to improve the world.

Student. Anisabonu (Anisa) Salieva, Tajikistan

Host family. Julie, Tim and Angelina Doggett

Anisa, 17, is a recipient of the FLEX scholarship (Future Leaders Exchange Program,) a US State Department funded program for students from the countries of the former Soviet Union, originating in 1992. FLEX students come from: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Ukraine.

Anisa loves spending time with her large, extended family. They often go on picnics. She loves to run and has joined cross-country. Anisa's name means "friend" and she is proud to say she has indeed a lot of friends.

Student. Palin (Khim) Boonma, Thailand

Host family. Melissa, Tom and Alyssa Henshaw

Khim enjoys drawing and painting and spending time at the library exploring books and comics. Palin is on the volleyball team. She wanted to come to the U.S. because she heard it is a land of equality and independent people. She wants to improve her English because she hopes to be a businesswoman. She likes to cook and hopes to do some kind of business related to food.

Student. Victor Hugo Quintana Ortega

Host family. Kelly, Chad and Josh Goeden

Victor, 17, comes from a family of AFS'ers. He enjoys math and wants to be an engineer like his father. In his spare time, he goes to the gym, plays soccer and trains in mixed martial arts. Victor plans on joining the wrestling and soccer teams.

Rotary Youth Exchange Since 1929, Rotary International has sent young people around the globe to experience new cultures. Currently, about 9,000 students are sponsored by Rotary clubs every year. Typically, students are sent to another country for a year-long stay, stay with multiple families and are supported by a local Rotary Club.

Student. Jes Waldemar, Denmark

Host family. Kris, Brett, David and Olivia Wilcox

Jes, 16, is from the Jutland (pronounced yutland) region in Denmark. He enjoys soccer in his home country, but is having fun trying out lots of new things in Sitka: kayaking, boating, fishing, cross-country, hiking, vegetarian dining and DDF so far. He saw his first whale from a kayak, with host dad, and has already climbed Mt. Edgecumbe.