

A.C.E.

Host Family Update

Volume 1, Issue 1

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Introduction	1
About Me	1-2
Pay increase	1
Communication	2
Tips for hosts	2
Energy Conservation	3
Summer programs	4

Hello Everyone!

I hope this host family newsletter finds everyone in good spirits today! This is the first newsletter that I have sent out as the new A.C.E. home stay coordinator. Yes, I am the new Tana! I would first like to say **thank you** to all of the host families who found time to come to the host family party on April 25th, 2007. For those of you who missed it do not worry! There will be another one soon.

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep families updated on current and "arriving soon" programs as well as to help me keep in contact with all of my families. This particular issue is dedicated to the topics that were covered during the host family party and for all of you to get to know me.

I will be trying to send out two of these newsletters a year. But only if there are vital tidbits that must be communicated. I love suggestions so feel free to write or call if you have any good advice for me or good advice for other host families.



Some of my wonderful host families during the meeting.

About Me.

I wanted to give just a bit of background information about myself for those of you who have not met me yet.

My name is Alicia Jo Briones. I am twenty-three years old and graduated from the University of Washington with a Law, Societies and Justice BA. My sub fields were in "Rights, Resistance and Reconstruction of Law" as well as "Crime, Social Control and Justice".

I was an Intern for A.C.E. during the summer when Tana Lewis decided to leave. I interviewed for the Home Stay Coordinator position on the Friday that I graduated and started the job the next Monday. Many of my host families do not know that I am not only the Home Stay Coordinator but I am also the Office Manager as well as the Accountant for the Seattle Pacific University branch of A.C.E. It keeps me very busy!

I grew up on the eastside of Washington State in the Tri-Cities. I played soccer for 14 years (on one of the top eight teams in the state).

About Me Cont. Pg. 2

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YAY! COMPENSATION INCREASE FOR ALL HOST FAMILIES!

I am happy to make the announcement that there will be a compensation increase for all of our host families! It is well earned and deserved. I hear many stories of host families going above and beyond for their students and we at A.C.E. would like to show our gratitude! In staying competitive with other home stay groups, we have been able to raise the Home Stay fee.

five meal plan, students will be charged **\$745** instead of the previous \$725. For the other meal plan the fee will rise from \$525 to \$545 respectively.

I will be sending out new home stay agreements and host compensation forms at that time so everyone is up to date. If you do not receive them and wish to, please contact me.

Starting on September 1st, 2007 for a

About Me Cont.

I also used to box (competitively) , play volleyball (for school) and spent much of my time volunteering in various places (including coaching a young kids' soccer team and, yes its true, being a candy stripper).

I am madly in love with my family which consists of my dad, a brilliant electrical designer, my mom, who works at the Hanford site regarding safety, my brother, an ex Marine, his wife, an aspiring nurse, my niece who is 5 and my 9 year old nephew who I call Teek.

A few other points of interest include:

- I am very detail oriented
- I love to talk to people
- I am looking forward to getting to know all of my host families
- I value honesty and loyalty



After the party, many host families came to speak with me. The Toepels and me.

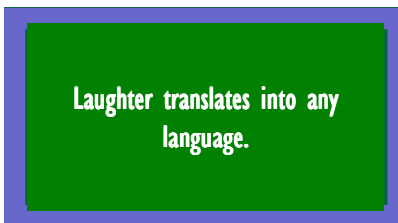
- I am very straightforward and to the point
- I am engaged to a wonderful man, Bryan.
- I plan on going back to school to get my Masters.
- I want to teach law.
- I love bad horror films
- I don't smoke
- Bryan and I just rescued two Terrier Mixes!
- Their names are Danzig and Mad Mardigan
- I love my job
- I recently got back from Peru and plan on going to Ireland next

Please contact me if there are any specific questions you would like to ask me. I look forward to getting to know all of you better!

Communication Barrier Between Hosts and Students

Communicating, even when attempting to share with a person who speaks the same native language, can be difficult. We have all had our days where we could just not get the other person to understand what it was we wanted or felt. It is even more difficult with someone who may not speak our native language fluently, or share the same cultural norms. Yet the intercultural exchange is worth all the extra effort. Just to make it a bit easier, we had a long discussion and some great suggestions on how to deal with the one or two students who just don't get what we are trying to say.

Below you will find some host family provided tips on how to make communication a little easier. If you have any of your own please contact me and I will include it in the next newsletter. There are never enough suggestions and ideas, as we all learn in different ways.



TIPS FOR HOSTS FROM HOSTS AND THEN SOME.

- Keep rule lists short and to the point. If they are too long students won't read them or will get frustrated by the length.
- Have a past student write up a rule list in their own language; save it for when a new student comes who also speaks the same language. This way the new student will not be confused because the rules are in their native language!
- Borrow a picture dictionary from the public library.
- Post rules around the house that are relevant to that part of the house.
- Role play so students can physically remember what should be done (such as locking the front door behind them).
- Get onto the internet and Google: "Babelfish" or "free translation" so you can translate rules yourself.
- Do not assume that the students know what you are expecting from them! Tell them directly.
- Explain to them why the rules are important (ex. Family safety, conservation etc.)
- If all else fails come speak with me and I will talk to them.



David Woodward , A.C.E. president, and me opening up the meeting.

Energy Conservation

Energy conservation is a very important matter. Not only is it expensive when we waste energy but it depletes our resources. There were many complaints about the amount of energy students used when they cranked up the heat or left the water running. This can be very frustrating.

One of the first issues mentioned during the students orientation for home stays, is the importance of not wasting energy. We tell them to turn off lights, water, T.V. and radios when they are not in use. We also address the necessity of short showers. Unfortunately students either forget, do not understand or choose to ignore these new rules.

For our part, A.C.E. intends to start regular orientations for our students. Every few weeks we will have general meetings and remind them of the importance of saving energy. We want the students to know that we are on the same page as our host families when it comes to this matter and it is unacceptable to act otherwise. Sometimes, students just need a little reminder. We are hoping that this refresher on our expectations of their conduct while in your homes will help alleviate some of the problems.

Some specific problems included the students spending too much time in the shower, doing a load of laundry that consisted of one shirt, leaving the front door unlocked, turning the heat up too high, and long distance calling.

During our meeting we had some really great suggestions. If you have had any of these problems here are some of the ideas we came up with to help you find a suitable solution:

Laundry:

- ◆ Be very clear about your rules. Please see *TIPS FOR HOSTS FROM HOSTS AND THEN SOME*. If you are having a difficult time communicating your rules to the student.
- ◆ Have a schedule set up so the student knows when and how frequently they can use the laundry.
- ◆ Require full loads only.

Conservation means the wise use of the earth and its resources for the lasting good of men.
Gifford Pinchot

Long Showers:

- ◇ Thoroughly explain why short showers are important. For example, hot water comes from hot water heater which means that the hot water is in limited supply so one must be careful not to use it all. Express how everyone in the house has the right to a warm shower not just the student in question.
- ◇ Putting a timer in the shower so either a light turns off or the water turns off. Many students, and people in general, do not realize how long they are actually in the shower. An egg timer is also a good tool to use.
- ◇ Ask that when not directly under the water that the student turns the water off (ex. When shaving legs or soaping up). Please consider doing this same routine if water usage is a concern in your home.

Heat and Lights:

- * Put signs by the thermostat and mark where the maximum point of the thermostat dial should be placed. (Please adjust this maximum accordingly to colder weather and where the bedroom may be (ex. If in the basement the rooms get much colder then on the main floor).
- * Suggest (and lead by example) that the student put on warmer clothes or more layers. After all we are in Seattle and layers are always in!

If these do not help, please come speak to me. Students want to please you but they may need direction from multiple sides.





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A.C.E.

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Unfortunately, we did not cover all of the topics that we discussed in the meeting nor all of the topics that I wished to address. In the next issue we will examine the rest of the ideas discussed. I urge you to contact me with any questions, suggestions or issues that you may have. I hope this newsletter has been informative and wish you all the best!

Sincerely,

Alicia Briones

Host responsibilities (at the \$725 rate)

Just a little reminder:

- ⇒ Five meals a week (at least)
- ⇒ A room with a door, dresser, closet, desk, lamp and own bed.
- ⇒ Utilities, bath towels, toilet paper and groceries.

SUMMER PROGRAMS!

The following programs are our Short Term programs for the summer. All of them need home stays. Because they are short term programs we can double them up in one room but each person needs their own bed. **Please contact me immediately if you have a preference for a short term, are mainly a summer family (as I have yet to be in contact with you and may not think of you as quickly as others I have been in contact with) or just want to let me know you have a spot open.**

JR. Institute

Roughly 20 kids will be coming for about three weeks in August. They are between the ages of 12-15 years old. This group may not be handled by me but if you are interested I can give your information to the Central office (the person who will be handling the Jr. Institute is located there). This group does require being driven to and from school. There is reimbursement for gas and time (\$10-\$15 per student).

M.O.E (Ministry of Education: Korea)

We have about 50 teachers coming from July 24th to August 23rd who will need home stays. They tend to be older and female.

ISU

Around 5-10 students will be coming in. The tentative dates are July 12th- August 17th. They tend to be on the younger side.



Our Ministry of Education Teachers (Korea)