Continuing Thanks
Thanksgiving hospitality program a success

MFIS’ Thanksgiving Hospitality Program experienced another successful year. In 2010, MFIS placed 91 students from 14 different countries with 39 area families. We placed all students who requested placement. Janet Wood, who worked diligently to make the program such a success, deserves praise for her organizational efforts. Thanks also goes to the office staff for their contribution to the program, and to those who helped spread the word to Madison community members. And of course, thank you to all who hosted students.

MFIS Cares
Volunteers help injured student with recovery and more

In February of 2010, an international student – “Joe” – came into the MFIS office. He played soccer on campus and had injured his knee recently. His doctor recommended surgery to repair the damage to his knee, warning him that if he did not have surgery now, he might face resulting problems later in life. Joe had scheduled the surgery for March 2010, but he could not get himself to the UW Health Research Park clinic for checkups, nor to his rehabilitation sessions on Science Drive. He wanted to know whether MFIS could help.

MFIS volunteers were happy to help. They drove him to and from his checkups and rehabilitation sessions. They also regularly took him to the grocery store and any other locations too far to walk. Volunteers kept this up for the four weeks after his surgery until he was well enough to walk on crutches to the Rehab facility at the East Campus Mall. This all happened during a cold and icy Wisconsin winter. Joe lived in a second-floor apartment in Eagle Heights. Without the help of MFIS volunteers, he would not have been able to get around on his own, and he might not have recovered as well as he did. Besides the physical help of transporting him wherever he needed to go, the volunteers were surely a great emotional help as well. They encouraged him and kept his spirits up as he healed.

I am writing to you to thank you and MFIS for your continual support and help. My doctors tell me I am doing OK and I know that MFIS and its members play an important role in it.

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MFIS has extraordinary support from its members, who freely give their time, creativity, and energy. We do not have dues. By supporting MFIS in any way you become a member. We receive professional assistance from community members, as evidenced in the “Volunteer Spotlight” article.

Our organization is also supported in its mission by financial donations for all incidentals, including printing, insurance, park shelter rental, programming costs, and technical support. If you meant to make a contribution to MFIS and didn’t get around to it yet, please do so. You can send a check to MFIS at Rm. 223, 716 Langdon St., Madison, WI 53706-1400. Thank you for all the ways you help.

The University League created the Madison Friends of International Students (MFIS) in 1952, with the help of friends and colleagues from various community organizations. MFIS furthered the University League’s goal of increasing the number of international students coming to Madison; it also developed new programs to address specific needs of international students. Students did not bring everything they would need for the school year, so MFIS created the coat loan program, which provided students with warm winter clothing. They created a similar furniture loan program for furnishing students’ apartments. To help students feel at home, especially around the holidays, MFIS began several hospitality events, including an annual picnic and a Thanksgiving party. Many male graduate students brought their wives (known within MFIS as International Women) and MFIS designed social events for them. To make sure students were able to understand their classes and communicate more easily, MFIS provided English-language instruction. Some of these programs have remained beneficial to students and still exist.

For all its services, MFIS remains an organization fueled by volunteers and run at a grassroots level. Its members work hard, and they each have a substantial number of duties.

Kristin Novak

MFIS would like to thank Kristin Novak for her volunteer work redesigning our website. Kristin is the owner of Graphic Juice, a graphic- and web-design firm based in Dane County. Check her out on the Web at www.graphicjuice.net.

David Fayram

MFIS would also like to thank David Fayram for his hard work improving our financial matters. David provided ideas for improvements we could make to our financial controls, many of which we are currently implementing. David is an enrolled agent and his website is www.madcitytax.com.
Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed for the following positions

**English Classes Coordinator:**

English classes have been a part of MFIS for more than 45 years. Classes meet Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9 – 11 a.m. during the fall and spring semesters. These classes are important for our international students because the classes help students develop language skills and gain confidence in a language with which they are not native speakers. MFIS is now seeking an English Class Coordinator.

The English Class Coordinator, a position that could be shared by two people, is responsible for publicity, ordering supplies, and coordinating with teachers. Teacher coordination includes creating teaching assignments for each semester, student placements, collecting tuitions, and balancing the checkbook. If you are interested, please contact Coe Williams, at coemw@att.net or 608-274-1958.

**President or Co-Presidents, MFIS Board:**

MFIS Board is accepting nominations for a President or Co-Presidents for the term of June 2011 to May 2012. Previous experience on the MFIS Board is necessary to hold this position.

**Temporary Home Stay Host/Student Connectors:**

Several volunteers work under a coordinator to place international students with local residents for 1 to 3-day stays when the students first arrive in town. Two more volunteers are needed to assist with this highly-valued service. The busiest time is June into August with a smaller peak in December and January.

**Thanksgiving Host/Student Coordinator:**

Each year MFIS offers international students the opportunity to celebrate Thanksgiving with a local family through the Thanksgiving Hospitality Program. MFIS is now seeking a Host/Student Coordinator to oversee these matches. This position, which is most active during October and November, coordinates the sign-up of host volunteers and students. The Coordinator also oversees two Host/Student Connectors.

**College Receptions Coordinator:**

Several times a year MFIS promotes its activities to international students during daytime receptions at Madison College and the UW. MFIS is now seeking a College Receptions Coordinator. This position organizes the MFIS presence at these events. The past coordinator is available to guide the process.
Fundraising Committee Members:

This committee currently has leaders, but more committee members are needed.

Capitol Reception Coordinator:

Each winter, MFIS invites international students to an afternoon reception in the Senate Chambers of the Capitol for refreshments, conversation with community members, a few words from our senator, and a special tour of the beautiful building. This event is well attended and supported. MFIS is currently seeking a Capitol Reception Coordinator.

To respond regarding all but the ESL vacancy, please e-mail info@mfismadison.org or call 263-4010.