



CELEBRATING FRIENDSHIP

OUR 15TH ANNUAL FRIENDRAISER

Attending the Hospitality Center's Friendraiser will **encourage you more than any other event** or message during our year for two reasons.

First, the international students we love will directly share their hearts, stories, and experiences with you in person all night. During our social hour, you can interact with them and our volunteers and understand the friendships they found through our programs like Hiking Club, Friendship Match, and Host Families. You will hear powerful testimonies during the program and have a chance to chat with them at tables and after the event.

Second, you will be able to see and meet the greater community who shares in our mission—partner churches, people who pray alongside you, Hospitality Center staff and board members, individual volunteers participating in programs, and other supporters from the Twin Cities and beyond.

How great it will be to see the body of Christ gathered together to learn what the different parts of the body are each doing. How wonderful it will be to come together to rejoice and glorify God because of his great work in all of our lives.

We encourage international students with our practical investment into their lives and with the love of Christ. We also encourage each other through this act of fellowship. Therefore, **we are excited to invite you** to Celebrate Friendship this April. Come and celebrate all the friendships—with each other, between us and students, and with our Lord, Jesus Christ!



Thursday, April 20th



6 PM–9PM



7520 Golden Valley Rd.
Golden Valley, MN 55427



Individual Ticket | \$75
Table of six | \$500

Scan this QR to
RSVP for the
Friendraiser!



Hiking Club
group



Two Friendship
Match Partners
Skiing together!



COMMUNITY AND CONFIDENCE

Group photo from Wen's first hike last winter ↪

WEN CHEN'S STORY

Wen first arrived at the UMN as an undergraduate transfer student from China in September 2021. Besides going out for class and food, Wen spent her first semester in her apartment doing homework. In her words, **"I went out zero times."**

Both the transition from attending a university in China and the heavy workload at the UMN challenged Wen. Although Wen had heard about the Hospitality Center via WeChat when she first arrived, she never had the time or the courage to join during her first semester. She didn't know the Hospitality Center and so she didn't trust the Hospitality Center. Would she get taken advantage of? Was it safe to come to a Hospitality Center event? These were some of the thoughts she and her Chinese roommates had.

Finally, in February of 2022 she took a chance and signed up for an Afton State Park hike, even

though her roommates didn't want to come with her. "The thought of fresh air overcame my worries, lol," she remarked in retrospect. That event was the turning point for Wen's time here in Minnesota. On that cold winter day, she made really good friends with another Chinese student and began to trust the Hospitality Center. She says, "Going to this event opened another door for me and has given me confidence that I can build connections with American society. Before that, I just felt like a foreigner and that I didn't belong here. **It was a turning point for me.**"

After this, she got more and more involved. She became a WeChat Specialist intern at the Hospitality Center in the summer of 2022. She joined a summer Hiking Club where she met more new friends and saw more of Minnesota. In the fall she attended Conversation Partners weekly and gained confidence in English.

She came to a Celebration Meal and met two volunteers (Jay and Sandy, her "American parents") who have had Wen and her roommates over once a month since September of 2022!

Coming from a place where she knew no Christians, Wen's involvement with the Hospitality Center has **given her community, confidence, and a small glimpse of what Christianity is.** She's looking forward to graduating this spring, returning to China for the summer, and beginning graduate school in the USA the following fall.



Wen with Sandy, one of her "American Parents"



SHARING CHRIST'S LOVE

HOW TO BE EFFECTIVE WITH INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

How can we effectively share the message of Christianity with international students?

This is a question the Hospitality Center staff talks about often because it is the reason we exist. International students need opportunities to connect with Christians and Christian community. We seek to provide settings where friendships can flourish and conversations about life's big questions can be explored. Questions like:

- Who am I?
- Where do I come from?
- What is my purpose?
- Where am I going?

We believe this will happen most effectively in small groups of Christ followers from our partner churches. Which is why we are looking forward to the formation of **Hospitality Center Communities**.

Hospitality Center Communities are small groups of volunteers excited about the opportunity to connect with international students in meaningful relationships. Our ongoing events and programs provide the means for you to meet international students. And as friendships deepen you can invite your new friend(s) to become a part of a cross-cultural family in your Hospitality Center Community. Friendships and community will deepen as you meet twice a month for food, fun, fellowship and conversations about faith.

Are you interested in being a part of a cross-cultural small group?

Groups will form in May, and training will take place in June and July so that you are ready to begin when new international students arrive in August. Contact Kim at kim@thehospitalitycenter.org for more information.

JOIN THE MISSION VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Weekend Events

Como Park BBQ, River Rafting, Kayak trips

Programs

Hiking Club, Food with Friends, Friendship Match

Overnight and Day Trips

Bemidji, Duluth, Colorado and more

Contact

kim@thehospitalitycenter.org to get involved



WELCOMING NEW FACES

JENNA HERMAN AND MORGEN LINDQUIST

Recently the Hospitality Center has had two new people join the team —Jenna Herman and Morgen Lindquist.

Jenna began her internship in January and will finish in May. She previously has volunteered with her family (and boyfriend). And we are so glad to have her on board this spring!

Morgen was praying about a job in the early morning when our Board President, Heather Holbrook, texted a message to a group chat that Morgen was a part of. This led her to apply to our financial and administrative assistant position. She began in February and is a great addition to our team!



Jenna



Morgen



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NEWSLETTER ISSUE 2 | SPRING 2023

The Hospitality Center is a nonprofit organization that shares the love of Christ through hospitality with international students and scholars.

YOU'RE INVITED

Our 15th annual Friendraiser is this April. Please join us on Thursday the 20th to **Celebrate Friendship!**

Photo from our Lunar New Year Celebration



JOINING US IN PRAYER

BY MORGEN LINDQUIST

What is God's heart and how can we pray like Jesus? Jesus said "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come...'" (Luke 11:2 ESV). And Acts 6:4 says, "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." Paul also tells us to "pray without ceasing," (1 Thess 5:17).

So, how can we pray for the students?



Scan here to join our prayer e-letter!

If you are communicating with a student **you can simply ask** them what they need prayer for. If not, you can pray any and all of these:

- God's love to penetrate their hearts
- That they see God while taking their exams and transitioning back home
- That they develop a deep desire to know and grow in Jesus

Pray God will show you how to stand in the gap for these students. And finally, pray continually for them. There is a battle for their soul; they need our help in the name of Jesus.

Student Snow Tubers



CAN'T ATTEND OUR FRIENDRAISER?

HELP US IN ANOTHER WAY!

Share the event with friends, co-workers and church members

Sponsor a table and have the Hospitality Center team fill it

Donate or pledge before the event