



ICES Blog Index

Our blog is chock-full of all kinds of fascinating information related to youth exchange. Grab a cup of coffee and dive right in!

ABOUT HOSTING

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STUDENT & HOST FAMILY SUPPORT

Already hosting? Here's some great information to help you have the experience you're hoping for.

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ALL ABOUT CULTURE

Lots of fascinating information here to enrich your mind, your family, & your life!

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HOST FAMILY STORIES

True stories from real-life host families

[A Trip Down Memory Lane](#)

[Host Family Spotlight: The Bairds](#)

[Host Family Spotlight: The Boohers](#)

[Host Family Spotlight: The Nordlanders](#)

[Host Families' First Impressions](#)

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[Hosting an Exchange Student Leads to Happily Ever After](#)

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[Road Trip! Kicking off the Exchange Year with a Cross-country Adventure](#)

[Take Two: Hosting after a Storm](#)

STUDENT STORIES

Current and past participants share their experience as an exchange student

[A Lifetime Experience](#) (Marie Langer, France)

[Bringing Hope to Hospice](#) (Benedetta Pasquinuzzi, Italy & Allana Greaff, Brazil)

[Exchange Prepared Me for Independence](#) (Issy Rushton, Australia)

[From Franch to Illinois: A Day in the Life of an Exchange Student](#)

[How Youth Exchange Changed my Destiny](#) (Luca Brambilla, Italy)

[They're Here! First Impressions of the U.S.](#)

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

These people raise the bar of what it means to be an exchange student

2022-23

[May](#), Anna Zavatta, Italy (2023)

[April](#), Marc Barbera-Baltran (Spain) & Nicola Spiga (Italy)(2023)

[Families Share Why They Love Hosting Exchange Students](#)

[March](#), Lucia Nombela-Fierros, Spain (2023)

[February](#), Yago Sureda Sanchez, Spain (2023)

[January](#), Giada Luciola, Italy (2023)

[December](#), Beatrice Patti, Italy (2022)



[November](#), Seoyun Choi, South Korea (2022)

[October](#), Monica Serrano Aguilar, Spain (2022)

2021-22

[May](#), Maria Salatini (Italy) & Myriam Ajmia (France)

[April](#), Paula Martinez Martinez, Spain (2022)

[March](#), Rafael Hormaechea, Spain (2022)

[February](#), Matilde Eleonori, Italy (2022)

[January](#), Olivis Ganbat, Sweden (2022)

[November](#), Leonie Laffitte, France (2021)

2020-21

[May](#), Chihok Gauy, Cambodia (2021)

[April](#), Ivona Vanekova, Slovakia (2021)

[March](#), Jaime Barea Velez, Spain (2021)

[February](#), Jana Dieckmann, Germany (2021)

[January](#), Thomas Schaper, Germany (2021)

[December](#), Cailin Valtink, Germany (2020)

[November](#), Ettore Sabbatini, Italy (2020)

[October](#), Eliska Loubrova, Czech Republic (2020)

2019-20

[May](#), Maria, Spain (2020)

[April](#), Tuva, Norway (2020)

[March](#), Francesca, Italy (2020)

[February](#), Lina, Germany (2020)

[January](#), Ricky, Italy (2020)

[December Student of the Month](#), Elvira, Sweden (2019)

[November Student of the Month](#), Camilla, Italy (2019)

STUDY ABROAD & GLOBAL AMBASSADOR

American teens bring cultures together

[7 Things I Learned on Exchange That Prepared Me for College](#)

[American Students Changing the World](#)

[How Study Abroad Changed My Life](#)

[How Study Abroad Experiences Landed Me My First Job](#)

[Language Learning Through Immersion](#)

[Preparing for Study Abroad: Tips for a Smooth Transition](#)

[Study Abroad: From Minnesota to Norway](#)

[Study Abroad Increases Employability](#)

[Study Abroad: Semester or Academic Year?](#)

[What's It Really Like to Live With a Host Family?](#)

CONTESTS

So many deserving winners here!

[2023 Bridging Cultures Scholarship Winners](#) (2023)

[What I Love About My Host State Valentine's Contest Winners](#) (2023)

[New Things Photo Contest Winners](#) (2022)

[2022 Bridging Cultures Scholarship Winners](#) (2022)

[Our Very American Photo Contest Winners](#) (2022)

[Share the Love Winners](#) (Valentine's 2022)

[Pictures of Gratitude](#) (Thanksgiving 2021)

[ICES Video Contest Winners](#) (2021)

[Meet Our Scholarship Winners](#) (2021)

[Conflict, Peace, and Societal Maturity](#) (Scholarship Winner 2020)

[Giving Thanks: Photo Contest Winners](#) (Thanksgiving 2020)



[ICES Video Contest Winners \(2020\)](#)

HOLIDAYS

Celebrations around the world!

[8 Fun Ways to Celebrate Thanksgiving with Your Exchange Student](#)

[8 Ways to Celebrate the 4th of July with Your Exchange Student from Afar](#)

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[12 Christmas Traditions to Share With Your Exchange Student](#)

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[European Gift-Giving Customs](#)

[Five-star Gift Ideas for Your Exchange Student](#)

[Here's What Makes the Holidays Unforgettable for Exchange Students](#)

[Host Dad Heroes: Father's Day Edition](#)

[How to Have an International Christmas!](#)

[Including Your Exchange Student in the Holidays](#)

[The 4th of July: Top 6 Ways to Celebrate](#)

[Thanksgiving Around the World: A Global Tapestry of Gratitude Celebrations](#)

[Top 10 Fall Favorites in the U.S.](#)

[Why Americans Celebrate Thanksgiving](#)

WORKING WITH ICES

We're making a difference—join our team!

[Educators & Youth Exchange Fit Like a Glove](#)

[Hangin' Loose in Hawaii](#)

[How Local Coordinators are Changing the World](#)

[The Road to Success: ICES Conference 2023](#)