**Elements of the Ask**

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**OUTLINE the Ask:**

1. Intro (you & YFU)
2. Reason contacting
3. Information about the student
   1. Student’s name
   2. Interest which connects to the group
   3. Adjectives about the student
4. What are you asking?!
5. Ask again for help
6. Describe what is involved with hosting and information about YFU \*always attach the more detailed profile\*
7. **Introduce yourself:**

My name is Lisa Hudgens. I live in Metro Detroit. I work with a non-profit foreign exchange organization, Youth For Understanding.

1. **Reason why you are contacting them:**

I am reaching out to you today because I am hoping that you can help me spread the word about 2 Japanese students, Rintaro and Mari, who are coming to the Metro Detroit area in August and we are still trying to find host families for them! I know that your Meet-Up members are interested in Japanese language and culture and I am hoping that maybe someone would be interested in learning more about hosting a Japanese exchange student.

1. **Give appropriate details about the students you are promoting:**

Rintaro, our 16 year old boy, is a wonderful and interesting boy who is unfortunately allergic to cats and dogs so it has been very hard to find a family that does not has furry pets who is also interested in hosting him. Rintaro attended elementary school near Los Angeles for three years when he was little. He's had a passion for experiencing other cultures ever since! His versatile skills include excellent grades, karate training and playing the clarinet. He is also good with his hands and loves to build plastic models (maybe there's a robotics team out there looking for him?). He enjoys figuring out how complex objects, like clocks and instruments fit together, and hopes to incorporate this into a career someday. History, and especially US History, is his favorite subject in school. He also loves nature! Described by his teacher as motivated, mature, and cheerful.

1. **What you are asking?!**

We are looking for anyone who would be interested in helping to give a Japanese teenager an American home for their foreign exchange experience. Will you help pass along this information to your group so they can learn about Rintaro?

1. **Ask again for Help**

I'm not sure what the best way is to get the information on how the program works to your members. But, it's easy to be a host family; just provide a place for Rintaro to sleep and study (he can share a room), set another plate at the table and give him caring supervision. He will attend the local public high school assigned to the host family. Rintaro will have his own health insurance and spending money to cover his personal items and activities; he will adapt to the host family's way of life, follow their rules and help with chores.

Thank you so much for any help you can give to get the word out about Rintaro and help connect him with a family who shares an interest in learning more about Japan – and the cultural exchange between our two countries.

Regards,

Lisa Hudgens

1. **Describe what’s involved in hosting:** (often Lisa has this after her signature)

HERE'S HOW OUR YFU PROGRAM WORKS: The exchange students are thoroughly interviewed and evaluated before being accepted into the exchange program. They are hand-picked by their countries to be ambassadors here in the USA. The students are generally 15-17 years old, they come from 64 different countries, they speak English to varying degrees (but become fluent very quickly), they come with their own health insurance and generally $200-$300 per month in spending money to cover any additional costs (for example activities, entertainment, personal items, etc). Full school-year students arrive in mid August and leave in June. The students will attend the local high school, although we have a some students who are willing to pay tuition to charter and private schools. They agree to live by your family's rules, help with chores etc. and they quickly become a part of your family. This is a real life living experience! These students are not here as guests to be entertained.Host families can take many forms, including traditional families (with or without children of all ages), single men or women, retirees, empty-nesters.Host families are "real" families not "perfect" families. They are busy American families, who work a lot, sometimes have messy houses and squabble with each other etc. just like the natural families of the exchange students! Host families are families who are willing to open up their heart and home to another family's child because they want to make a difference in a teenager's life and get the added benefit of having a rewarding and unique experience for their own family.\*\*\*Host families are asked to provide: food, a place to sleep (they can share a room with a host-sibling), help with local transportation and caring adult supervision.

1. **Provide information about YFU:** Just a little about YFU: Youth For Understanding (YFU) is a non-profit international educational organization with programs in 64 countries. YFU was founded in 1951 in Ann Arbor, Michigan and is now one of the world's oldest, largest, and most respected exchange organizations. Youth For Understanding is regulated by the US Department of State and is the only student exchange organization to be certified in all 3 types of exchange. YFU is committed to preparing young people for their responsibilities and opportunities in a changing, interdependent world. Working in partnership with governments, corporations, foundations, schools, and educators worldwide to create global learning opportunities and international understanding. More information is available at [www.yfu-usa.org](http://www.yfu-usa.org). \*\*\*\*\*\*\*This is the link that you go to in order to fill out the Host Family Application. I know it's a leap of faith to bring a young person into your home but the rewards are incredible and they soon become a cherished family member before you know it. If you or anyone you know who might be interested in hosting, please contact me, I'd be glad to talk with them and answer any questions. Thank you in advance for any help that you can give in spreading the word about Maxime!

Other examples:

**MILITARY PARENTS**

*I called Camp Grayling and I was referred to you in Lansing as someone who might be able to help me. I spoke with Alexandria in your office and she gave me your email.*

*I work with a non-profit foreign exchange organization, Youth For Understanding. We are regulated by the US State Department. My job is to help find host families for high school-aged international teenagers who are coming to America for foreign exchange.*

*The reason I am reaching out to you is because we have a teenage boy, Jonas from Denmark, who is coming on exchange to Michigan. His father is in Afghanistan with the UN as part of the Royal Air Force and his mother is also in the Royal Air Force as an air traffic controller. Jonas wants to be a fighter pilot, himself. He still needs a host family in Michigan and he is anxiously waiting to hear that an American family would like to host him.*

*I was hoping you could help me get the word out to military families and/or veterans about the opportunity to be a host family for Jonas. I'm not sure if you have a way or are able to help but I thought I would ask.*

*He is assigned to come to Northern Michigan, but could be placed anywhere in Michigan with a family that wants him.*

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**SPORTS - RUGBY**

*Maxime is a 17 year old French foreign exchange student who is crazy about Rugby. He is scheduled to arrive in the Detroit Metro area this August for his exchange year at a local high school in Southeastern Michigan. He is being sponsored by our non-profit organization, Youth For Understanding.*

*I am reaching out to you today because I see that you are affiliated with a boys' rugby club. We are looking for a local family to host Maxime for the upcoming school year and due to his love of Rugby, I thought I would try to reach out to families involved in rugby first!*

*Would it be possibly for you to help spread the word to rugby families in your club and community?*

*I just know that there has to be a local family in the Troy area who would think its a great opportunity to host an exchange student like Maxime, the challenge is finding them!*

*I have attached a profile and host letter about Maxime which will tell you all about him. I have also attached a file addressing frequently asked questions.*

**RUSSIAN MEET-UP GROUP/ ORTHODOX CURCH**

*Hello Vadim,*

*I work with Youth For Understanding. I am contacting you because we are sponsoring a 15 year old Russian boy named Mikhail (Misha) who is coming to Metro-Detroit in August for his foreign exchange experience in America and we are looking for a host family for him. I was hoping that you could help us spread the word about Misha to the members of your Russian Meet-Up group. We would love to find a family in the area who is interested to getting to know a boy like Misha. Misha loves many things like soccer, cycling, taekwondo, theater, snowboarding, photography, radio-controlled models and animals. He knows a lot about Russian customs and traditions. He is a very good academic student. His teachers say he is active in class and works well on a team. Misha is Christian Orthodox and he wants to be an air traffic controller when he grows up.*

*Would you be willing to help us? I'm not sure what they best way is to get the information on how the program works to your members. But, it's easy to be a host family; just provide a place for Misha to sleep and study (he can share a room), set another plate at the table and give him caring supervision. He will attend the local public high school assigned to the host family. Misha will have his own health insurance and spending money to cover his personal items and activities; he will adapt to the host family's way of life, follow their rules and help with chores.*

*I have been hosting exchange students for many years and it is a wonderfully rewarding experience for the exchange student and the host family. If you think any of your members would like more information about Misha and our program or if they could also spread the word to their friends about him, that would help us find a family for Misha. Could you give them my email:* [*lhudgens@yfu.org*](mailto:lhudgens@yfu.org) *and my phone is 248-347-8848. (Our website is* [*www.yfuusa.org*](http://www.yfuusa.org)*) Thank you in advance for any help that you can give. Lisa Hudgens, Community Outreach Coordinator for Youth For Understanding. (I must find a host family for Misha very soon so any help is appreciated! He is anxiously waiting in home in Russian for word that he has a host family in America. )*

**TALK ABOUT CURRENT INTERNATIONAL POLITICS–UNIVERSITIES or MEET-UP GROUPS**

*Hello MaryEllyn,*

*We are sponsoring a wonderful exchange student named Mikhail who likes to go by Misha. He is 15 years old and is scheduled to arrive in Metro Detroit soon. Unfortunately, the current political climate between the USA and Russia has been making it very difficult to find a family who would like to host Misha for his foreign exchange year here in America. We have been trying for months. Although Misha has nothing to do with the politicians in Russia, he is unfortunately being penalized indirectly and the daily media coverage isn't helping. Mikhail has been waiting for years for the opportunity to come to America and experience life here. One of the reasons this exchange program is so important is so American citizens can have the opportunity to interact with people of other countries and the youth of other countries come here and learn about life in America and realize that we are all more alike than we are different.*

*It's an important way to " build bridges of understanding" one person at a time, especially between countries who are often in opposition to one another.*

*We really feel that a family in Metro Detroit with an interest and appreciation for Russian culture and its people will be the most open to the idea of hosting Misha; the trouble is finding those families. I thought that maybe an American family who has adopted a child from that region of the world may entertain the idea of hosting an exchange student from Russian/Ukraine.*

*Do you think you could help spread the word about Misha to families in your group? If they are interested they can contact me and learn more about the details and they can see if it is something they want to consider as a family.*

*(Misha enjoys a variety of sports including soccer, snowboarding, volleyball and martial arts, he also is involved in theater, radio-controlled models, photography and loves animals. Misha speaks English and is a very good student.)*

*I am including some information in the attached files regarding Misha (including a letter from him). I am also including information on how the program works.*

*I just know there has to be a family out there that will see that this is a very special and unique opportunity to host a nice boy from Russia.*

*Thank you for any assistance you can give.*