International Education Day

10 international students and 5 study abroad students from Truman went to Jefferson City on February 24th for the International Education Day, a program of the Study Missouri Consortium. Truman students showed their enthusiasm for international education, networked with other international students studying in Missouri, and learned more about the Missouri state government. They also had the chance to meet with State Representative Rebecca McClanahan and State Senator Wes Shoemyer.

The International Hall Hosts Help Students Adapt to Life at Truman

Excited to begin your college life in the United States, yet nervous about the adaptation process? Don’t worry! The International Hall Hosts living in your residence hall will help you adapt to both American life and college life at Truman State University.

International Hall Hosts are students who live in the dorms and act as an invaluable resource to incoming and current international students. Hall Hosts are chiefly responsible for helping the international students get acclimated to their new surroundings in the United States.

Learn more about this wonderful aid for Truman International Students through interviews with Hall Host Coordinator Kristin Kimrey, Hall Host Christina Milne, and a current international student. 
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International Student Profile

Iliyana Kuneva is a junior Accounting major from Bulgaria. Let’s hear what she says about Truman!

What attracted you to Truman State University? The great value it offers — a quality education at an affordable price!

What is your favorite thing about Kirksville? It is small, which helps you adapt to American culture more quickly.

How does Truman support international students? Professors are very understanding. They will answer any questions you have. Also, American students are respectful of other cultures and of course, the wonderful ISAO staff helps students with any issues!

How is Truman preparing you for the future? I have the opportunity to interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds and acquire knowledge in various areas, not only in my major. Also, extracurricular activities provide me with real world experience.
Interview with Kristin, Hall Host Coordinator:

**Q:** What are the general tasks of Hall Hosts?  

**A:** Hall Hosts are friends as well as peer mentors to international students. They are an important part of international student orientation, which takes place before the semester starts. They give social security instructions to international students in the first few weeks. As the semester goes on, they help international students merge into life at Truman by maintaining constant communication, answering any questions that come up, having meals with them, and hosting social events. They also direct students in the proper way academically.

**Q:** How are the International Hall Hosts selected? What requirements do they need to meet? What qualities do they need to possess?  

**A:** We select International Hall Hosts through applications and short interviews. The generic qualifications we look for include good class standing, living on campus, and ability to provide transportation to students. Other important criteria include an outgoing and friendly personality, an excitement for meeting new people, and an interest in learning about other cultures.

**Q:** How do Hall Hosts differ from the student advisors on each wing of the residence halls?  

**A:** Hall Hosts are completely focused on international students. They are able to understand the needs and challenges international students face. They are the first people the international students meet when they arrive at Truman, thus allowing for a connection to be made between the student and his or her Hall Host.

Interview with Christina, a current Hall Host:

**Q:** How would you describe the relationship between you and the international students in your hall? Has the relationship changed since they have become more adapted to life here?  

**A:** The relationship is mainly one of friends; however, sometimes it also feels parental. I ask questions about their life and academics and offer advice. Once they begin to adapt to Truman, there is certainly a change. Although I see some of my students less often, we are still good friends. I see this as a positive sign that they are successfully adapting to life here.

**Q:** Have you encountered any difficulties understanding or communicating with your international students? If so, how did you overcome it?  

**A:** I have never really encountered any difficulties. I was aware of many of the situations I might face before I became a Hall Host, so it generally went smoothly. Even if a misunderstanding occurs, I try to communicate with my students slowly and repeatedly so that we can understand each other. Throughout the process, I have become more accepting and appreciative to other cultures.

Interview with a current international student:

**Q:** How would you describe the relationship between you and your Hall Host?  

**A:** We are close friends and she takes care of me a lot. I even call her “mom.”

**Q:** How does your Hall Host make a difference to your life here?  

**A:** She often encourages me and helps with both my life and my academics. With her support, I have become more adapted to life here at Truman. I also feel my cultural identity is especially respected when talking to her.

“I arrived in Kirksville tired, afraid and almost in tears. But when the shuttle pulled up in front of Ryle Hall, I saw the Hall Hosts waving and smiling. They hugged me hello and helped with my luggage. I knew from then on that everything was going to be alright.”

— A former international student

ISAO is now officially on Facebook!

Come chat with us during the following hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 8:00am-10:00am central time.