Hosting Short-Term International Students

Are There Long-Term Benefits?

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Abstract
The importance of study abroad as a key factor in affecting international understanding has been supported since the early 1930’s (Meras, 1932). In recent years, there has been an increase in the amount of students choosing to study abroad; as research has shown that these programs are recognized as the most powerful tool available to teach students how to live interdependently in our global society (Kauffmann, Martin, & Weaver, 1992). There have been many studies conducted on why students study abroad, what they gain from that experience, and if the benefits are long or short-term. Many students who study abroad chose to live with a host family while participating in the study abroad program. While extensive research has been done from the study abroad student perspective, not many researchers have examined what benefits, if any, the families that host students during their study abroad experiences attain. This study examined the study abroad experience from the perspective of the host family. Specifically, the researcher surveyed families from Zeeland, Michigan in 2017 that hosted students from Spain for a short-term study abroad program during the summer(s) of 2012 and/or 2013. The researcher wanted to know what long-term benefits, if any, do families acquire from hosting short-term international students. The researcher determined that most families did consider hosting the students from Spain to be a positive experience and reported academic benefits, including increased desire and ability to speak Spanish, increased knowledge of global cultures, a better understanding of how the U.S. is perceived by those from other cultures, a greater acceptance of cultural differences, and a greater level of comfort when interacting with people from other cultures.
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Without a doubt, secondary and post-secondary students have become increasingly interested in foreign study. They realize that we live in a global society and that experience gained through studying abroad is unmatched in helping students develop intercultural understanding (Mapp, 2012). Study abroad is not something that should be viewed as a luxury, rather it is a necessity if we as a society want a generation of leaders and innovators who can be successful in an ever more globalized world (Steves, 2012).

Kinginger (2009) found that studying abroad provided opportunities for students to gain self-confidence, build self-esteem, broaden language skills and develop intercultural understanding. Hill (2006) defined intercultural understanding as a combination of knowledge about other cultures at a cognitive level, combined with a set of attitudes at the affective level. Knowledge includes understanding about one’s own culture as well as other cultures, and the similarities and differences between them. Additional research showed that students who studied abroad had higher grade point averages, graduated more quickly, and were more attractive to potential employers than those who did not (CIEE, 2015). While there are numerous options for study abroad, research has proven that short term experiences, those lasting less than eight weeks, are currently the most common types of international study programs for US undergraduate students (Donnelly-Smith, 2009). Many of the study abroad organizations encourage or require students to live with host families during their stay. There has been extensive
research done on how students benefit by studying abroad. Benefits include: improved foreign language skills (Freedman, 2010; Parsons, 2010), decreased xenophobia (Parsons, 2010), deeper understanding of oneself (Freedman, 2010; Gill, 2010; Malone 2008), greater international knowledge (Freedman, 2010, Parsons, 2010), changing opinions about the home and host countries (Parsons, 2010; Slimbach, 2005), in-depth exposure to other countries (Freedman, 2010, Slimbach, 2005), and intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006, 2009). Thus, it stands to reason that these benefits may also extend to the host families of these international students. However, little has been done to determine the benefits U.S. host families experience when hosting international students. Due to this gap in available literature, this study seeks to answer the following question, “What benefits, if any, do U.S. families report experiencing as a result of hosting a short-term international student four to five years after hosting?”.

Problem

There has been extensive research conducted on the benefits of studying abroad from the perspective of the study abroad participants. Short-term study abroad experiences are becoming increasingly popular. Research has found that most American college students who study abroad are spending two months or less in their host countries (Cheng, 2013; Dwyer, 2004; Martinsen, 2011; Ziamandanis, 2013). Much research has also been conducted regarding the advantages and disadvantages of living with a host family while studying abroad. In fact, the Second Language Acquisition community has long held the homestay environment as the indispensible ingredient of language study abroad (Rivers 1998). If the homestay environment is viewed as a necessary component
of a study abroad experience, it stands to reason that families who offer to host international students would need to know what kind of benefits, if any are derived by hosting these students. Unfortunately, most of the research conducted about the study abroad experience has been done from the perspective of the students rather than the host families. The little research that has been done to determine benefits that host families experience has been done primarily with international families who have hosted students from North America.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is intended to address the gap in literature associated with experiences and potential benefits U.S. host families experience as a result of hosting short-term international students, including further development of intercultural understanding. Specifically, the researcher aims to work with U.S. families who participated in a short-term hosting experience in which they hosted one secondary student from Spain during the summer. This experience was facilitated through a summer study abroad program coordinated by the researcher, in conjunction with an American-based non-profit study abroad organization. Although the literature related to this study specified that one of the reasons families hosted international students was to earn additional income, none of the families that participated in this particular hosting experience received any monetary compensation. The hosting experiences lasted anywhere from 17-35 days, depending on the host family’s availability and schedule, with the 35 day time period being the most common. These hosting experiences took place during June and July of 2012 and/or 2013. The majority of potential participating
U.S. families participated for one summer only, although there were a few families who participated during both summer experiences. Through the use of an online survey, which included close and open ended questions, the researcher sought to ascertain the benefits these U.S. families experienced as a result of hosting a short-term international student due to their participation in a summer study abroad program.

Justification of the Study

This study will help further inform U.S. families what benefits, if any, they may experience as a result of hosting short-term international students. Depending on this study’s findings, this knowledge may also be used to inform individuals, schools, and other institutions (e.g., churches, community organizations) regarding potential benefits of hosting short-term international study abroad students.

Research Question

The research question for this study is, “What long-term benefits, if any, do U.S. families report experiencing as a result of hosting a short-term international student?”
Definition of Terms:

This study references several important terms, which include . . .

**Host:**

Constitutive Definition: According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, “host” means “One that receives or entertains guests socially, commercially, or officially.”

Operational definition: For the purpose of this study, “host” will refer to an environment in which a student from another country lives with a local family.

**Host family:**

Constitutive Definition: “Host family” is defined as a family consisting of at least one parent and one child under the age of 18 that invites a person from a foreign country to live with them for a specified period of time. Each family differs in size, age, dwelling and personality. The family could consist of a widow or widower, single parent or a two-parent family with children. The host family provides lodging, meals, and structure for the student in their home or apartment and may receive monetary compensation.

Operational definition: In this study, “host family” will refer to a two-parent family with children (at the time of hosting) who did not receive monetary compensation for participating in the short-term hosting experience.
Intercultural understanding:
Constitutive Definition: Hill (2006) defines intercultural understanding as a combination of knowledge about other cultures at a cognitive level, combined with a set of attitudes at the affective level. Knowledge includes understanding about one’s own culture as well as other cultures, and the similarities and differences between them.
Operational definition: For this study, the same definition will be used.

Short-term:
Constitutive Definition: According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, “short-term” is defined as lasting for, relating to, or involving a short period of time. “Study Abroad” is an academic experience where students “physically leave [their home countries] to engage in college study, cultural interaction, and more in the host country. It may include foreign language study, residing with a foreign host family, internships, and service” (McKeown, 2009, p. 12).
Operational definition: In this study, “short-term study abroad” will refer to a period of study and cultural interaction lasting between 17-35 days in duration, while residing with a host family in or near Zeeland, Michigan.
Chapter 2 - Background and Review of Literature

Background

Literature has emphasized the importance of study abroad. As explained by Leon Panetta (Panetta, 1991), there has been no other time in history in which events in one country or on one continent have had a greater pervasive and lasting impact on the rest of the world. Lewin (2009) found that the necessity for more students to study abroad is now part of academic mission statements, business policies, and even federal legislation. Davies & Pike (2009) and Schattle (2009) stated that educating pupils to become global citizens is one of the primary reasons used to justify the importance of international education and study abroad. Study abroad, defined as an academic experience where students physically leave their home countries to engage in college study, cultural interaction, and more, in a host country (McKeown, 2009, p. 12), has often been seen as the best way for language learners to immerse themselves into the target culture and language. Living with a host family while participating in a study abroad program has been seen as the ideal context to promote language gains due to the opportunities of comprehensible input the experience provided (Di Silvio, F., Donovan, A., & Malone, M. E., 2014).

Discussion

While the importance of study abroad and the benefits derived by participating in such programs seem undeniable, the vast majority of the research that has been conducted regarding study abroad has been from the student perspective. Documentation from the
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The perspective of the host families has been limited, at best (Clark, 2015). Most of the studies investigating the benefits families have experienced as a result of hosting have examined the financial gains (Clark, 2015) and increased intercultural understanding (Salisbury, 2016).

**Why Families Host International Students**

In investigating why families committed to hosting students, Di Silvio, Donovan and Malone (2014) surveyed 87 families, all outside the U.S., who hosted U.S. students for one semester. The researchers analyzed participants’ pre- and post-hosting experiences, as reported through two separate survey responses. The reasons the families gave for wanting to host a student included: the desire to spend time with a young person from another culture, interacting with someone who speaks a different language, and the desire to help a student learn the language of the target culture. In another study, Stephenson (1999) surveyed and interviewed 56 Chilean host families of U.S. students and found that the most frequent reason they gave for being host families was a desire to foster a cultural exchange between them and their American students. The second most common reason given was to facilitate social exchange, such as companionship. Goldoni (2013) discovered that a host mother from Spain who had hosted numerous American undergraduates, stated that she treated the students she had hosted as her own children, a finding that was validated when the family of one of her American students offered to purchase the host mother’s plane ticket to the US in order to show their appreciation for the way the host mother welcomed their daughter into her home. Schmidt-Rinehart and Knight (1999) interviewed host families and found that younger families often had different reasons for hosting than did older families or those without children at home.
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They found that younger families often hosted so that their children gained firsthand exposure to another culture and to another language.

While there are many reasons families decide to host, the benefit noted by 24 of 30 host mothers Sara Clark interviewed in Costa Rica, was that hosting provided them with additional income (Clark, 2015). Salisbury (2016) in her interview with a host family from Ireland, who had hosted students from Japan, Italy, Germany and Russia, also noted a financial benefit to families, but more important than extra income were the language benefits, intercultural friendships and communication, and acquisition of skills from other countries that her family experienced as a result of hosting international students.

Stephenson (1999), in his study of Chilean host families, discovered that the hosting experience gave the families a greater appreciation and understanding of their own Chilean culture, as well as American culture.

Disadvantages of Hosting International Students

Hosting international students however, does not come without difficulties. In her study, Clark (2015) discovered that host mothers described problematic students as being messy, spoiled, reserved and not wanting to engage with the hosts. Every mother also related stories of some of their students causing problems by consuming too much alcohol (Clark, 2015). It seemed that, in order for students and families to have the best possible experience during study abroad, programs needed to provide participants (both students and families) accurate pre-departure information. Researchers who studied Japanese high school students studying in Canada asserted that the students reported having a negative homestay experience due in part to receiving insufficient information prior to the start of their program (Crealock, Derwing, & Gibson, 1999). Bodycott (2015),
in his analysis of three narrative-based case studies focused on Hong Kong born university students studying English in Canada, also discovered that from the student’s perspective, there was a lack of pre-program preparation as well, which led to difficulties while studying abroad.

**Facilitating a Successful Short-Term International Experience**

There are important components to facilitating a successful short-term international experience. For example, Riegelhaupt and Carrasco (2000), in interviewing U.S. teachers who participated in a five week study abroad in Guanajuato, Mexico, found out that host families, in particular, needed to be made aware of sociocultural and linguistic differences prior to the study abroad experience. For example, many host families were offended by some of the participating teachers’ uses of the Spanish language. Based on this finding, these researchers suggested facilitating additional meetings with the families prior to the arrival of participants. Another component to facilitating a successful short-term international experience is providing opportunities for host families and their international guests to engage in tasks aimed at increasing intercultural knowledge. To illustrate, Knight and Schmidt-Rinehart (2010) studied the effects of task-based learning to enhance student/family interaction during study abroad experiences in Cuernavaca/ Guadalajara, Mexico and Segovia/ Seville, Spain. Their research showed that U.S. students who were required to complete conversational and project-based tasks with their Mexican or Spanish host families, although time consuming to complete and document, showed a greater understanding of their host family, including their language, culture, and practices. As a result of these task-based learning opportunities, both students and their host families learned more about one
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another and had opportunities to make connections with one another, which resulted in increased comfort levels and understanding between host families and their international guests.

Given the benefits international students experience as a result of living with a host family, it stands to reason that host families may also benefit from this experience.
Chapter 3- Procedures

Description of the Research Design

Due to the nature of the information the researcher hoped to collect, the researcher chose to gather the data through an online survey (see Appendix A) given to U.S. families in or near Zeeland, Michigan who hosted short-term international secondary students from Spain during the summer of 2012 and/or 2013. The researcher hypothesized that participating U.S. families would identify and report experiencing one or more benefits as a result of their hosting experience. It was also hypothesized that these benefits would connect to aspects of intercultural understanding; that the families would report that they learned more about their own and/or other cultures as a result of the hosting experience.

The majority of potential participating U.S. families participated for one summer only, although there were a few families who participated during both summer experiences. Merriam Webster defines “survey” as an activity in which many people are asked a question or a series of questions in order to gather information about what most people do or think about something, or an act of studying something in order to make a judgment about it. The survey in this study contained close and open-ended questions relating to the academic benefits, cultural development and inspiration the families reported, or did not report experiencing as a result of hosting a secondary student from Spain during the summer of 2012 and/or 2013 through a program facilitated by the researcher.
Description of the Sample

The participants in this research were families in or near Zeeland, Michigan who participated in a 5-week hosting program, hosting a high school student from Spain during the summer of 2012 and/or 2013. Surveys were sent to approximately 21 families. Anyone age 18 or over in the families who participated in hosting a student during the summer of 2012 and/or 2013 was invited to participate in the study.

Information was collected through the use of an online survey e mailed to participants (see Appendix A). Wright (2005) validated the use of the Internet for conducting survey research, stating that as the popularity of the Internet increased, thousands of groups and organizations were using the Internet to conduct research with their clients. He went on to state that online surveys provided researchers greater access to unique populations, saved researchers time with data collecting, and were more cost effective than paper questionnaires.

Description of the Instruments Used

The data was collected through an online survey using Google Forms (Appendix A). Prior to the survey being sent out, an email was sent to all potential participants explaining the project and inviting them to participate in the survey (Appendix B). The survey included 13 close-ended questions that were based on academic benefits, intercultural understanding, and inspiration gained by hosting a student from Spain in Zeeland, Michigan for 3-5 weeks during the summers of 2012 and/or 2013. Respondents had 5 choices for their answers. Four of the questions were followed by open-ended
questions, if the person that answered the survey responded affirmatively to the question. There was also a space provided at the end of the survey to provide further comments.

Following the email inviting the families to participate, a second email was sent to the families, again inviting them to participate. This email included online consent and assurance that all participants were 18 years of age or older.

Explanations of the Specific Procedures Followed

Representatives (18 years or older) from each U.S. family who hosted a secondary student from Spain during the summer of 2012 and/or 2103 through a program facilitated by the researcher, were invited to complete an online survey, reflecting upon how the hosting experience(s) may or may not have affected their families’ academic benefits, intercultural understanding, and inspiration gained by hosting a student from Spain in Zeeland, Michigan for 3-5 weeks during the summers of 2012 and/or 2013. Data collection began in May 2017 after IRB approval was granted. Prior to sending the survey link via email to all families who participated in the program, the researcher sent a short email (Appendix B) to all host families, outlining the project and inviting them to consider participating. Because the families hosted students through a program facilitated by the researcher, the researcher had the e-mail addresses of the families on file. A week after sending out the initial email, the researcher sent out a second email, again inviting host families to participate in this study. Included in this invitation email were a consent form and a link to the online survey (Appendix C). After two weeks, the researcher followed up via email with all participants, reminding them of the opportunity to take part in this research study; included in this email was a link to the online survey
(Appendix D). The online survey was closed one month after potential participants had access to the survey weblink. All surveys were anonymous and no names of participating families or students were published.

Discussion of Internal Validity

According to Tuckman and Harper (2012), “Internal validity affects observers’ certainty that the research results can be accepted, based on the design of the study, (p.6).” Families reported on their own experiences of hosting a Spanish student during the summer(s) of 2012 and/or 2013. Because they reported on events in the past, it is possible that their personal situations have changed over time, which may have influenced study results, however, the benefits they reported would still be viewed as benefits or not benefits. The results answer the research question.

Discussion of External Validity

“A study has external validity if the results obtained would apply in the real world to other similar programs and approaches”, (Tuckman & Harper, 2012). Because this was a qualitative study, the results were not intended to be generalizable. The sample size was limited to only those families who hosted students through one specific study abroad organization in one US community. All of the students came from Spain. Further research could be done on a larger scale in another study.

However, the results of this study would be of interest to families considering hosting international students in the future and educational and other institutions investigating the benefits of partnering with international schools to establish an
exchange program. The researcher will make an important contribution to the field of study abroad research and this information may also be used by the researcher to inform future coordination of said program(s).
Chapter 4- Results, Analysis, Data

The researcher wondered if families experienced any long-term benefits from hosting an international student in one’s home for a short-term stay, and if so, what benefits the families would report. The researcher sent electronic surveys out to 21 families living in or near Zeeland, Michigan who hosted a secondary student from Spain during the summer of 2012 and/or 2013 through a program facilitated by the researcher. Anyone 18 years of age or above was invited to respond to the survey. A total of 18 people responded to the survey. The responses were gathered 4 and/or 5 years after the families hosted the students.

The results of the survey indicated that families did attain long-term benefits from hosting an international student for a short-term. Some of the benefits the families attributed from hosting included academic gains, such as an interest in learning a foreign language, and an improvement in their ability to speak Spanish, and an increased knowledge of world geography. All families experienced a greater understanding of world cultures and how the U.S. is perceived by people from other cultures. They also noted that hosting made them more accepting of cultural differences and increased their comfort level when interacting with people from other cultures.
SURVEY RESULTS

Which of the following can you or someone in your family attribute to having hosted a short-term international student?

1) Interest in Learning a Foreign Language

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2) Ability to speak a foreign language

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3) Increased knowledge of world geography

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4) Increased knowledge of global cultures

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5) Interest in global events

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6) Increased understanding of how U.S. culture is perceived by others outside of the U.S.

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7) Increased acceptance of cultural differences

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8) Increased diversity in friends from other cultures

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9) Greater level of comfort when interacting with people from other cultures

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The results of the survey indicated that families did attain long-term benefits from hosting an international student for a short-term. Some of the benefits the families attributed from hosting included academic gains, such as an interest in learning a foreign language and an improvement in their ability to speak Spanish and an increased
knowledge of world geography. All those who responded strongly agreed or agreed that by hosting, their knowledge of other cultures increased and 15 of the 18 respondents reported that hosting made them more interested in global events. Seventeen of the 18 noted a greater level of acceptance of cultural differences after hosting. The results of the researcher’s data also demonstrated a positive correlation between hosting an international student for a short-term and an increased level of comfort when interacting with people from other cultures, a greater acceptance of cultural differences and an increased diversity in friendships. These benefits were noted 4 to 5 years after hosting the international student. In retrospect, the researcher should have included questions about what facilitated a positive hosting experience (i.e., having children or teenagers in the household, having activities planned for the international students by a study-abroad coordinator).
Chapter 5- Discussions and Conclusion

It was apparent that families derived long-term benefits from hosting a short-term international student. Five of the 18 respondents stated that they themselves traveled internationally as a direct result of hosting a student from Spain, and one of the respondents stated that they would be traveling to Spain this summer as a result of this hosting experience. Half of the families still maintain contact through social media with the student they hosted. When asked to reflect on the hosting experience 4-5 years afterwards, those who answered the survey said things such as, “My love for Spanish was ignited by hosting students from Spain during the summers of 2012 and 2013.” and, “Having hosted an exchange student not only increased our understanding of another culture, but, more importantly, it created a friendship for our family with someone from another country.” Should another researcher want to follow-up on this study, a similar survey could be given to U.S. families who hosted short-term international students with a different facilitator in another area of the United States.

This researcher’s hypotheses were confirmed. She saw that, while opening up one’s home to a student from another country may seem daunting to some families, the benefits they experience as a result of doing so are significant, important and long lasting. Friendships that crossed cultural and geographical boundaries were formed and those bonds remain long after the student has returned to his or her home country. The writer plans on facilitating a short-term international hosting program again next summer and looks forward to sharing the findings of this study with prospective host families. She also anticipates presenting this information to study abroad companies and organizations that focus on short-term home stays for international students. In doing so,
the researcher anticipates that U.S. families will offer to host an international student more readily. They will know that they will likely experience benefits from hosting that will be significant and have a lasting impact on their family. Now, more than ever, it seems our world needs a greater appreciation and understanding of cross-cultural similarities and differences, and anything that can be done to promote that is critical.
References


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Appendices
Appendix A
Google Survey about short-term hosting

Short-Term Hosting Survey
Which of the following can you or someone in your family attribute to having hosted a short-term international student from Spain?

**Interest in learning a foreign language**
- [ ] Strongly Agree
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly disagree
- [ ] Not Applicable

**Ability to speak a foreign language**
- [ ] Strongly Agree
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly Disagree
- [ ] Not applicable

**Increased knowledge of world geography**
- [ ] Strongly Agree
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly Disagree
- [ ] Not applicable

**Increased knowledge of global cultures**
- [ ] Strongly Agree
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly Disagree
- [ ] Not Applicable

**Interest in global events**
- [ ] Strongly Agree
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly Disagree
- [ ] Not Applicable
Increased understanding of how U.S. culture is perceived by others outside of the U.S.
- [ ] Strongly Agree
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly Disagree
- [ ] Not Applicable

Increased acceptance of cultural differences
- [ ] Strongly Agree
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly Disagree
- [ ] Not Applicable

Increased diversity in friends from other cultures
- [ ] Strongly Agree
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly Disagree
- [ ] Not applicable

Greater level of comfort when interacting with people from other cultures
- [ ] Strongly Agree
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly disagree
- [ ] Not applicable

Do you or does anyone in your family maintain a relationship with the student(s) your family hosted?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If you answered yes to the above question, please explain how the relationship is maintained.
Have you or has someone in your family traveled internationally as a result of having hosted a student from Spain?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If you answered yes to the above question, please explain how often and to where people have traveled. Also explain how was this a result of having hosted a student from Spain.

Since hosting, have you or has anyone in your family participated in a study abroad program?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If you answered yes to the above question, in what country or countries did the study abroad program(s) occur?

Was the decision to study abroad made as a result of having hosted a student from Spain?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Additional comments: Please use the space below to explain any other ways in which you or your family benefitted or continues to benefit by having hosted a student from Spain.
Appendix B

E mail explaining project and inviting participants to participate in survey

Hello,

I am writing to you to invite you to participate in a brief survey I will be sending out soon. I am currently working on my Master’s Thesis at Aquinas College and am investigating the long-term benefits to U.S. families of hosting short-term international students. Your responses to this survey will help U.S. families understand the hosting experience better, e.g., whether there are benefits, or not after hosting short-term international students. Depending on this study’s findings, this knowledge may also be used to inform U.S. individuals, schools, and other institutions (e.g., churches, community organizations) regarding what families say about hosting short-term international study abroad students. This information may also be used by the researcher to inform future coordination of said program(s).

The survey will only take about 15 minutes to complete. The questions may be answered by anyone in your family 18 years or older who participated in hosting a student from Spain during the summer of 2012 and/or 2013.

You will receive another e-mail in a week with more information, including a consent form for participation and a link to the survey.

Thank you for your help.

Becky Purnell
Appendix C

Email inviting families to participate and electronic consent

Rebecca Purnell
Aquinas College
616-632-2434
rlp002@aquinas.edu

Hosting Short-Term International Students: Are There Long-Term Benefits?

Online Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a research survey about hosting short-term international students. Your participation will require approximately 15 minutes and is completed online. This study will help further inform U.S. families what benefits, if any, they may experience as a result of hosting short-term international students in the future. Depending on this study’s findings, this knowledge may also be used to inform U.S. individuals, schools, and other institutions (e.g., churches, community organizations) regarding potential long-term benefits of hosting short-term international study abroad students in the future. This information may also be used by the researcher to inform future coordination of said program(s).

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this survey. There will be no penalty if you decide not to participate. If you choose to be in the study you can withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the researcher, the hosting organization, or anyone at Aquinas College. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential, and digital data will be stored in secure computer files. Any report of this research that is made available to the public will not include your name or any other individual information by which you could be identified. Only the researcher and faculty research advisor will have access to the data. All digital data collected will be erased within a year after the study is completed. If you have questions or want a copy or summary of this study’s results, you can contact the researcher at the email address or phone number above, or Dr. Carol Winkle, faculty research advisor, at (616) 632-2434 or winkcar@aquinas.edu. If you have any questions about whether you have been treated in an illegal or unethical way, contact the Aquinas Institutional Research Board at winkcar@aquinas.edu or (616) 632-2434. Please feel free to print a signed copy of this consent page to keep for your records.

___________________________________
Name (Print)

Clicking the “Next” (Consent) button below indicates that you are 18 years of age or older, and indicates your consent to participate in this survey.
Appendix D

Follow-up email

Dear Host Families,

You may have already received an email inviting you to participate in this survey about hosting international students. If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept my thanks and delete this e-mail, as no further involvement is required. If you have not completed the questionnaire please take the time to consider helping out with this important research.