Inviting Families to visit the U.S.

Family members who are not the children or spouse of the F-1 student or J-1 exchange visitor must apply for a B-1/B-2 visitor visa to gain entry into the U.S. Family members from certain countries may be eligible to travel to the U.S. to visit for stays of up to 90 days without obtaining a B-1/B-2 visa through the U.S. Department of State Visa Waiver Program.

We recommend that you send:
• An invitation letter from you, indicating the specific reason for the visit.
• The letter should include information about the purpose of travel and planned itinerary or schedule.

For inviting family to graduation
ISS will gladly issue graduation invitation letters for graduating students’ family members. Two (2) original signed letters with a Registrar seal per guest will be provided. You will need to provide ISS with the full name(s) and relationship(s) to you of any family member(s) you wish to invite. ISS letters must be picked up in person in SU #324.

Graduating students should also write an invitation letter. In addition to the reason for the visit and information about the purpose of travel and planned itinerary or schedule, students might also want to submit:
• Proof that your application for graduation has been approved by the Registrar
• Printout of your Southeastern transcript
• Copy of page 1 of your I-20
• Copy of your passport (biographical info, document expiration date and visa)
• Copy of your I-94
What your family will need from you to apply for a B1/B2 visa:
- Dates of the visit
- Reason for the visit (your graduation)
- U.S. address where they will be staying

Documents your family (each member) will need to Apply for a B-1/B-2 Visa:
- Valid passport
- Photographs
- Visa application fee
- Visa application forms

*They should also check the consulate’s website for specific instructions as requirements may vary by country:  www.usembassy.gov

Reducing the chance for denial
The most common reason that tourist visas are denied is because the applicant is believed to have “immigrant intent”. Applicants must show that they do not wish to remain in the United States. Otherwise, the consular officer will deny the visa. Applicants can attempt to prove that they do not have “immigrant intent” by producing documents showing:
- They have a job to return to in their home country
- They own property in their home country
- An itinerary for their visit to the United States
- They have the funds to finance the trip
- Any other documentation showing they have a reason to return to their home country

For more Information
For more information about B-1/B-2 visa denials, refer to the U.S. Department of State Visitor Visas.

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