



**WELCOMING and CONNECTING International Students
with FRIENDS in the Greater Atlanta Area**

2019 - 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



Dear Friends of AMIS,

The 2019-2020 academic year has been one to remember. We heard from international students, “more events please,” and so we climbed Kennesaw Mountain, went to an Atlanta Hawks game, held more potluck dinners, and more — all with positive responses! Over the year, we grew in the number of students and volunteers who got involved with AMIS, particularly through the Amigo Friendship Program, and had new universities join or reestablish partnerships with us.

I’ve enjoyed being in my 3rd year with AMIS because it has allowed me to experience the fruit of relationships developed over time—with international educators, volunteers, board members and students. It has also been rewarding to see the results of updating our communications – our website, logo, and messaging have all played a part in welcoming many new friends to AMIS.

As I write this, we are several months into the COVID-19 pandemic. Like everyone else, we canceled our April events and went online to connect with students and each other. The coronavirus has changed the way we now interact with others, but AMIS’s purpose to welcome and connect international students and scholars with local American friends will not change.

Regardless of the challenges going on in our world, AMIS remains steadfast in our mission to promote global understanding through friendship and hospitality with international students and scholars in the greater Atlanta area. We believe that as the world experiences a global pandemic and “physical distancing,” it is and will be more important than ever to reach out across our differences and make international student friends through AMIS.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Irene Wong
Executive Director



2019-2020 Highlights

AMIS's 42nd Annual Welcome Concert and Reception

Was held on September 21 at Spelman College and featured the Morehouse College Glee Club. It was attended by 300 international students and volunteers.

Amigo Friendship Partners Program

Connected 125 international students with 61 local American friends/families.

Thanksgiving Program

Enabled 95 international students to celebrate the holiday with 26 local families.

Atlanta Christmas International House

Hosted 15 international students in 13 local homes for the 10 days of the program (December 18-28, 2019).

AMIS Events:

- Tour of MLK Center
- Kennesaw Mountain Hike and Picnic
- 3 International Potluck Dinners in local homes
- Delta Flight Museum
- Christmas International House Dinner at St. James United Methodist Church
- Atlanta Hawks Game
- AMIS Day 2020 at North Avenue Presbyterian Church (February 9)

During COVID-19

We distributed 20 jigsaw puzzles to students and started weekly Zoom "AMIS Talks" to offer opportunities to connect.

AMIS Students

In the 2019-2020 academic year, AMIS served over **400** international students and scholars who were involved in AMIS programs and events. Of these;

- **125** students were enrolled in AMIS's Amigo Friendship Partners program
- **95** students participated in our Thanksgiving Program
- **57** experienced National Christmas International House (15 of these were hosted by us in Atlanta)
- **125** additional students attended 1 or more AMIS events including the Welcome Reception, Hikes, Potluck Dinners, AMIS Day, etc.



AMIS Students by School

In 2019-2020, students participating in AMIS programs and events came from:*

- Georgia Tech (35%)
- Georgia State University (24%)
- Emory University (15%)
- Beulah Heights University (5%)
- Kennesaw State University (4%)
- Columbia Theological Seminary (3%)
- Georgia Southwestern State U (3%)
- Oglethorpe University (2%)
- Spelman College
- Agnes Scott College
- GSU-Perimeter
- Morehouse College
- Clayton College
- Gwinnett College
- UGA-Tifton

*These figures include students who participated in one or more AMIS events or programs including the Welcome Reception, Amigo program, Thanksgiving, and Christmas International House.

AMIS Students by Country

In 2019-2020, students participating in AMIS programs and events came from 50 different countries:*

- China (26%)
 - India (13%)
 - South Korea (7.5%)
 - France (6%)
 - Nigeria (4%)
 - Pakistan (4%)
 - Viet Nam (4%)
 - DR Congo (2.5%)
 - Brazil (2%)
 - Germany (2%)
 - Taiwan (2%)
 - Bahamas (2%)
 - Saudi Arabia (2%)
 - Colombia (1.5%)
 - Ghana (1.5%)
 - Iran (1.5%)
 - Kenya (1%)
 - Spain (1%)
- Countries with less than 1%:**
- Bangladesh,
 - Botswana,
 - Bulgaria, Chile,
 - Denmark,
 - Dominican Republic,
 - Ecuador,
 - Egypt, Ethiopia,
 - Hong Kong, Italy,
 - Jamaica, Japan,
 - Kazakhstan,
 - Liberia, Malawi,
 - Malaysia, Mexico,
 - Mongolia,
 - Morocco,
 - Netherlands,
 - Russia, Rwanda,
 - Seychelles,
 - Singapore,
 - Switzerland,
 - Thailand, Togo,
 - Turkey, Zimbabwe

AMIS Volunteers

In 2019-2020, **220** volunteers participated in AMIS programs and events. Of these:

- **61** individuals/families served as Amigo friends (of these **46%** were new volunteers)
- **26** individuals/families were Thanksgiving hosts
- **13** individuals/families hosted during Christmas International House
- **15** served as Board members
- **110** additional volunteers participated in 1 or more AMIS events

From an AMIS Student:

AMIS gave me a “home away from home” experience, through their dedication, time, and warm embrace which meant a lot to me.... AMIS was able to create memorable experiences for us through several events in the course of the academic year, helping us have fun outside our busy academic schedule and having people we can call family, despite being a first timer in the country. I appreciate and thank [the] AMIS leadership team for the care and support... Y’all were awesome! I will recommend [the] Amigo Friendship Program to every new student.

— Oladotun, Columbia Theological Seminary M.Div. student from Nigeria



From an AMIS Volunteer:



AMIS will always be a part of my life. It has allowed me to be connected with young people when I am so far away from my immediate family and grandchildren. These friends have kept me young in spirit.

— Doris Hoenig

I want to take this chance to say thank you for all the work you’ve done for us. AMIS has been a very warm source of my life living abroad, and has really helped me adjust to my life here. I also made some good friends because of AMIS events, which is awesome. So, THANK YOU!

—Grace, Georgia Tech master’s student from Taiwan



Our Mission:

AMIS promotes global understanding through friendship and hospitality with international students and scholars in the greater Atlanta area.

“My Amigo and I get along like two peas in a pod...a perfect match!”

— Neevra Walker, volunteer



CHRISTMAS INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

A Holiday of International Friendship

In 2019, 57 international students and scholars attended six National Christmas International House programs around the US from December 18 to December 28 or January 2, depending on the program. In Atlanta, we shortened our program duration to 10 days, which worked well for the students and host families. This year, thanks to two generous donors, we were able to offer scholarships to students who needed them. We are grateful to all the program directors, hosts, and volunteers who continue to join us in this important ministry of hospitality around Christmas.



"This is an incredible experience that allows for a beautiful exchange of cultures" — CIH Student



"I 120% recommend CIH to people!"

"... what I got was beyond expectations. I am very grateful for this experience."

Students in

CIH Programs:

Atlanta, GA - 15
Lithia, FL- 13
Kansas City- 12
St. Augustine, FL- 8
Orange Park, FL- 5
Ephrata, PA - 4
Total CIH Students: 57



CIH by Country

China- 22
Japan- 19
Hong Kong- 2
India- 2
Korea- 2
Vietnam- 2
Botswana, Brazil,
Colombia,
Denmark, Nepal,
Pakistan,
Singapore – 1 each

CIH by School

New York Univ- 7	University of Michigan-3
Kansas State Univ- 6	Georgia Southwestern
Coe College- 6	State University- 2
Georgia Tech- 5	Georgia State Univ- 2
Southeast Missouri State	Hollins University- 2
University- 4	Macalester College- 2
Emory- 3	

Carleton College, Columbia Theological Seminary,
Cotter College, Florida State Univ, Purdue, Rochester
Institute of Technology, Rose-Hulman, University of New
Mexico, University of Oregon – 1 each

"I was able to learn the warm heart of people and feel the family bond through staying with an American host family. "

"My host family was so hospitable."

"This program means everything to me, especially being part of an American family."



AMIS has been such a joy for our entire family. Spending time with our Amigo, international potluck dinners, and being at AMIS Day are all times we cherish. I am so happy to know we will raise our new baby with FRIENDS from all over the globe!"

—Jen Washburn, Volunteer



I have loved volunteering with AMIS and having my life enriched by so many wonderful international friendships.

—Kelly Britt, volunteer



"I love the opportunity to use my gifts of hospitality and welcoming while making new friends and learning new cultures." — Amy Speas, volunteer



AMIS Board of Directors

CLASS OF 2020

Heidy Brusitus, Atlanta Kiwanis Club
Doris Hoenig, Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church
Nikki Régis, Ebenezer Baptist Church
George Tan, Georgia Tech Ph.D international student

CLASS OF 2021

Paul Brown, First Presbyterian Church
John Hibbard, Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church
Andra Martin, Ebenezer Baptist Church
Robert Taylor IV, Northside Kiwanis Club
Karen Turney, Covenant Presbyterian Church
Belinda Wedgwood, St. Martin in the Fields Episcopal Church

CLASS OF 2022

Mitch Costley, North Avenue Presbyterian Church
Philip Gold, Marietta Golden K Kiwanis Club
Patricia Hibbard, Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church
Kirk Keene, Galleria/Northwest Kiwanis Club
Emily Texter, Oglethorpe Presbyterian Church

2019-2020 OFFICERS

President: Kirk Keene
Vice President: Philip Gold
Treasurer: Robert Taylor, IV
Secretary: Patricia Hibbard

AMIS STAFF

Executive Director: Rev. Irene Wong
Program Administrator: Susan Rembert
Executive Director Emeritus: Rev. Dr. Fahed Abu-Akel

AMIS COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Admin: John Hibbard
Programs: Emily Texter and Karen Turney
Volunteers: Mitch Costley
Welcome Reception: Kirk Keene
NCIH Advisory: John Hibbard



“Thank you for what you do for international students. You are making my experience in Atlanta unforgettable.”

— Rashed, Georgia State University master’s student from Saudi Arabia

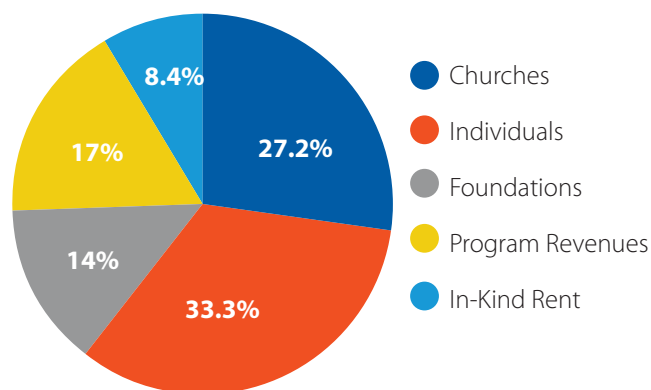
2019 Condensed Financials (January 1, 2019-December 31, 2019)

2019 Revenues

Churches:	\$38,788	27.2%
Individuals:	\$47,374	33.3%
Foundations:	\$20,000	14%
Program Revenues:	\$24,202	17%
In-Kind Rent	\$12,000	8.4%

Total Revenues: \$142,364

2019 REVENUES

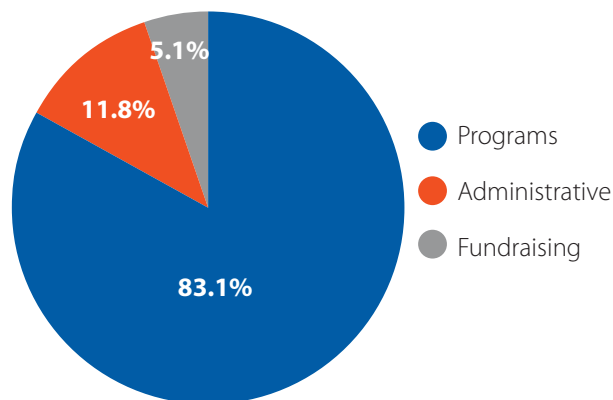


2019 Expenses:

Programs:		83.1%
Welcome Reception	\$25,467	
Amigo	\$50,346	
CIH	\$39,448	
Administrative:	\$16,315	11.8%
Fundraising:	\$ 7,040	5.1%

Total Expenses: \$138,516

2019 EXPENSES



Assets

Cash and Equivalents	\$43,975
Investments	\$34,415
Endowment Fund	\$111,587
Other Assets	\$1,324

Total Assets \$191,304

Liabilities

Total Fund Balances \$2,175

We are thankful that in 2019 our revenues exceeded our expenses due to a staff vacancy for the first few months of the year while we searched for a new program administrator. Our 2020 budget has increased by an additional \$20,000 to include a full year of program expenses. We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused economic challenges for many in our community. We are grateful to our faithful donors who partner with AMIS each year to make a difference in the lives of hundreds of international students.

If you are able, please consider making a financial gift to sustain AMIS in 2020.

Donate online at: www.amis-inc.org/donate.

Thank you for your partnership with AMIS!



International Friendship and Hospitality during COVID

In the midst of many uncertainties, we know that AMIS's purpose of **welcoming** and **connecting** international students with **friends** in Atlanta will not change. Many international students remained in Atlanta when COVID closed down our institutions. It is anticipated that the enrollment of new international students will go down this fall, but we WILL have international students in Atlanta who are living apart from family and far from home, who will need AMIS's programs.

AMIS remains steadfast in our mission to promote global understanding through friendship and hospitality with international students in our area. The best way to get involved is to make sure you are getting our email newsletters. Email us at office@amis-inc.org to be added to the list. You can also go to our website at www.amis-inc.org for our latest announcements.

This summer, we will be connecting international students and American volunteers for 2-4-week **Virtual Groups through Zoom** over common topics, as we explore new and creative ways to maintain our critical mission throughout this season.

Thanks to many who contributed during our #GivingTuesdayNow campaign! We are pleased to announce that we raised enough money to create **new AMIS videos** which we will use to welcome new international students to Atlanta in place of in-person orientation events at the start of the fall semester.

Beginning in August, we will offer our **Amigo Friendship Partners program** but encourage virtual conversations or in-person meetings following CDC and GA Dept. of Health guidelines. Volunteers are invited to sign up through our website at www.amis-inc.org/Amigovolunteer.

By September, we hope to know whether our **Thanksgiving** and **Christmas International House** programs can take place with some adjustments. Please keep in touch with us.

Thank you for your partnership in offering friendship and hospitality with international students during a global pandemic.

*Walk together, Talk together,
All you nations of the world,
Only then shall we have peace.*
— AMIS motto

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Like our Facebook pages:
AMIS. INC and
ChristmasInternationalHouse



Instagram: AMIS_INC