

# Conversation Partner Ministry

## Friendship House MSU

Friendship House MSU was founded in 1992 to help Michigan State's growing number of international students and scholars navigate language and life in the United States.



## ‘They will know we are Christians by our Love’

“Love one another. As I have loved you....” For almost 30 years, Friendship House MSU's guiding principle has been this directive to us from Jesus from the Gospel of John.

In my brief tenure as Executive Director, I have witnessed this love for others through our students (of stated faith or not), board, teachers, staff, and conversation partners.

And why are Conversation Partners so critical to our ministry? Many from our international community are not confident or comfortable speaking in front of others in a classroom setting. Many have something to share or a need to be addressed, but yet sit quiet.

Here is some feedback from an international student after just one meeting with her English-speaking partner, “We had our first meeting yesterday, and it was amazing. She was very kind and patient with me, and she spoke to me slowly so that I could understand so that I can talk more in class.”

Please prayerfully consider using your time and gifts to be one of conversation partners to be a part of our mission to love others — as Jesus loves us!

Dan

Friendship House MSU Executive Director

## How we serve



**Bible Studies:** We have numerous teachers well-equipped to share God's message, while assisting our international community in their English proficiency.

**English as Second Language (ESL):** We offer classes in a variety of different formats, from current events to preparation for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

**Conversation Partners/Small Groups:** We connect English speakers with our international members for more personal conversations to assist with English and navigating life here in the U.S. — and beyond.

**Sewing and Cooking Classes:** We also offer recreational classes to build community across cultural lines.

**Social Events:** Often hosted by member churches or connected with local sites (e.g., Potter Park Zoo), the Friendship House MSU's calendar is often full of events that bring internationals and U.S. residents together.

**Virtual Global Connections:** We learned during the pandemic that internationals, from here and around the world, both alumni and new students, are making use of our virtual classes and social gathering. We will continue being virtual to support our global community.



# How to Become a Conversation Partner

## What is a Conversation Partnership?

In addition to the typical schedule of group classes we offer each week at Friendship House MSU (e.g., English as a second language (ESL), Bible classes, etc.), we offer opportunities for students to meet one-on-one each week with American English speakers for individualized help. (Both teachers of scheduled classes and conversation partners are volunteers.)

## How often do students and partners meet?

Typically, students and partners meet once a week for about 60 - 90 minutes, the same time length as our formal classes.

## Where do students and partners meet?

We ask partners to start out meeting their students at Friendship House MSU (929 Sever Drive, East Lansing, Mich., 48823, on the west edge of the MSU campus). It is a safe and comfortable environment for the students. Once a rapport and mutual trust have been established, often the meetings shift to a coffeehouse, or over lunch, or at the American partner's home or church. For safety's sake, we ask the partners and students to let us know where and when they are meeting.

## What do you need to know to be a conversation partner?

You already know it: English. You also need to have the motivation to want to help someone from another country who can feel homesick, isolated, and culturally shocked.

## What is it that International students are looking for?

No matter what is discussed whether English is approached from a formal or informal teaching style, the Internationals are looking for friendship.

✉ [friendshiphousemsu@gmail.com](mailto:friendshiphousemsu@gmail.com)

☎ Phone: +1(517) 657 -7778

📘 Facebook : FriendshipHouseMSU

📷 Instagram: friendshiphousemsu

