

HOST Matters



Welcoming International Students

Issue No 37 Autumn 2019

One good turn deserves another...



Sometimes the activities our hosts offer their guests are *just perfect!* Chevening Scholar Brian Otieno from Kenya, studying at Cardiff University was a guest of Swindon hosts Christine and Gervin Senior. On realising Brian's subject was International Journalism, Christine arranged for him to enjoy a tour their local community radio station.

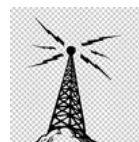
Better still a broadcasting opportunity was offered and Chris reports...

"The visit culminated with a recorded interview in which Shirley asked me about HOST and why I had got involved. She then went on to speak to Brian who responded very eloquently about his hopes for his future in making a difference in Kenya. Brian worked at a radio station in Kenya before coming to the UK to study and he was very impressed with the ethos of Swindon 105.5 with its policy of encouraging people of all abilities from the community to take an active part in the running of the station."

Thank-you Chris and Brian for this excellent awareness raising.

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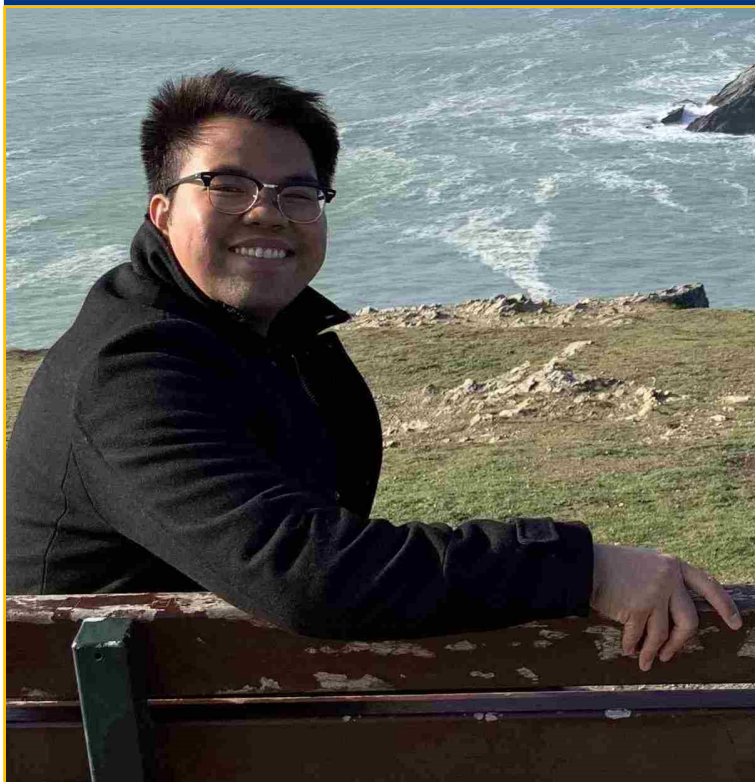


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The difference a HOST visit can make...



Seigfred Prado, a student from the Philippines studying at Imperial College London is certainly looking very happy and relaxed on his HOST Visit to Cornwall. His hosts, John and Carolyn Robinson clearly gave him a good time but unknowingly did so *very much* more than they had supposed.

When Seigfred wrote his feedback, his story moved us greatly. Happily he was fine we share it with you and pass along the gratitude he wants us all to feel.

Seigfred told us that around the time of his HOST visit he had been going through a very difficult time in his life, feeling stressed and missing family and friends back home.

It can only be imagined how very difficult it must be to cope with loneliness *and* a busy study schedule when you are a great distance from home and those in whom you would normally confide and receive support.

For Seigfred his HOST visit resulted in him feeling like “one of the family”. He enjoyed delicious home-cooked meals, was shown a beautiful rural landscape, and had conversations through which there was a much-valued sharing of stories and experiences. Seigfred wrote with warm appreciation of how impactful and restorative his visit had been.

“I realised that UK is such a lovely country and I can always feel at home here because of the lovely people like John and Carolyn. They both proved to me that UK can be a home to anyone. They really made a huge impact to my life. I am a lot more motivated and driven to continue reaching my dreams. I will forever be grateful to the both of them.”

Such accounts remind us all of the importance of HOST. Not only can we enjoy intercultural exchange with such interesting young people and cultivating valuable friendships but often we are able to offer the warmth and support that dispels loneliness and makes a lasting difference.

We very much welcome hearing accounts such as Seigfred's. It is a cause for celebration when friendships result from that initial HOST visit and blossom into something extra meaningful. Not only is it heart-warming to share such stories with *all* our volunteers but these accounts also support the fundraising bids we write. It helps potential funders to understand our mission and success. If you have a story to share please write to marketing@hostuk.org. **Thank-you**

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Christmas is coming...



Here we are once again approaching our most popular time of year when international students seek to learn what all the excitement is about and crave to be a part of our festivities. It is always sad to think that their alternative may be a lonely hall of residence far from home. We very much hope there will be many of you able to offer hospitality at this time of year, do please let your Regional Organiser know if you can, as it will make their work so much easier.

Just a reminder that the festive dates include those either side of Christmas i.e. the weekends of December 20th-22nd, December 27th-29th and December 31st to January 2nd.

Plenty of festive activities are going on at these times such as Christmas markets, pantomimes, carol services and concerts, adding to the festive buzz in towns and villages, with houses and trees being decorated and festive foods prepared.

For those of you better placed to offer day visits, please consider this option.

Each year we receive more applications than we are able to find invitations for and it is very disappointing to turn these eager young people away. Being able to arrange the visits requested is also vital for our income and ensures the future of HOST. So if you are able to open your doors this year we thank you and we trust that your hospitality gives as much pleasure to you as it will invariably give to your guest.

Helping HOST whilst Christmas shopping



With less than seventy shopping days before Christmas here's a couple of ways in which your shopping can support HOST. Every little helps so please consider these ways in which our funding can be added to.

When planning your online shopping please go to **easyfundraising** select HOST as your favoured charity then shop as normal. Retailers will then make a small donation to say "thank you". There are even 3,751 retailers to choose from ! Over £28 million has already been raised for UK charities! It would be great to have a share of this.



Thank-you.

If you shop on AmazonSmile, we could receive 0.5% of the net purchase price of your Amazon online shop at ***no*** extra cost to you.

Nominating HOST UK as your chosen charity will be very much appreciated.

Sign up for AmazonSmile today.



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Please put us in touch...

It may be that you heard about HOST through your Parish Magazine and church communities are an invaluable source of recruitment. Each year we write to those parishes for which we have a contact email. If our message has not appeared in *your* Parish News and you are able to put us in touch with your magazine editor, that would greatly help us in the future. Just a reminder that to comply with GDPR regulations, this should *not* be a personal email address.



The heart of HOST is its volunteers, without whom there would be no organisation. The testimonies on this page remind us of why we do what we do and the difference it makes.

Along with our volunteer hosts, our volunteer Regional Organisers are key to the running of HOST. We have a number of areas currently vacant and being managed by the office, which is not ideal. If you have an interest in such a role or know of anyone who would find the position fulfilling please do get in touch. A thorough induction would be given along with on-going support and with it would come the reward of knowing that you would contribute to so much happiness.

Brave Beza!

Three cheers for Beza Taye, a final year student at the University of Nottingham. She is making a generous offer to raise funds for HOST by Skydiving! She says...

"I want to live in a world where there is tolerance, where we are open to ideas and better understand each other's culture and traditions. I believe HOST UK is helping to make this happen and I would welcome your support to see it flourish. So, I'm doing something scary and daring, hoping you will give generously. Thank-you."



You can donate directly to her fundraising page
<https://www.justgiving.com/Beza-Taye>

A chorus of appreciation ...

"Thanks HOST UK for this great program, I truly believe such visits make a great difference in people's lives."
Ilhame from Morocco studying at London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

*"I have had the best weekend of my life so far, really enjoyed every single moment of my visit
HOST has been very helpful and doing an amazing work for international students."*
Assam from Pakistan studying at University of Westminster

"It was an opening to a new window for me. I have a very international community in London and UK flatmates and friends, but I was missing the experience of a family."
Deni from Albania studying at School of Oriental & African Studies

"It truly is an incredibly rewarding experience, this made feel at home as if I were with my relatives, hence now I have new friends whom I consider family as well"
Abel from Dominican Republic Studying at University of London

Finished reading?



...why not pass your HOST Matters on to a friend by way of telling them who we are and what you do....it could lead to your first recruit!

Turn Recycling into Recruitment!!!