



General Information

Faces & Our Cultures is a 7.5 week cultural exchange program from Guatemala, C.A. Our program offers an enriching experience through the exchange of cultures within an educational environment.

Faces & Our Cultures provides participants with tools to grow as individuals; it also facilitates the human and cultural development of young people between the ages of 10 and 17 by preparing them to be Cultural Ambassadors from our country. These students go through a careful selection process based on specific criteria and requirements to ensure their success.

The program's commitment is to provide an enriching experience for all parties: the host country, the host school, the host family and the participants themselves. The FACES Program currently works with 85 schools in the United States: specifically in the states of Virginia, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Maryland, Delaware, Arkansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Iowa, Ohio, Kentucky, Colorado, Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois.

Objectives of the Program

- To provide a growing and enriching cultural experience for both cultures within an educational environment, promoting global community understanding.
- An environment in which to practice a second language with native speakers from both cultures.
- To promote friendship between cultures.

Dates of 2019 Program

Starts: Sunday, October 20th

Ends: Sunday, December 15th

Profile of Cultural Ambassadors

- Boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 17.
- Who attend bilingual or trilingual schools in Guatemala (Spanish – English – German or French).
- Who speak, read, and write in English; some more proficiently than others.
- Who are academically strong students.
- Who value this opportunity and are willing to learn and share their country's culture.
- Who have grown up in an environment of values and discipline.
- Who have completed an emotional profile evaluation, which determines if the applicant has the necessary skills to participate in the program.

Our Cultural Ambassadors will participate in the host schools as regular students, but their grades will not be transferred to their local schools since they are on vacation from their local schools, and the main objective of the program is primarily cultural.

Program's General Procedure

- Guatemalan children apply to participate in the program.
- The children go through a selection process and are admitted once they fill the program's requirements and undergo a psychological evaluation.
- Each school in the United States invites the number of Cultural Ambassadors that they would like to host for 7.5 weeks.
- A school representative (Principal, Admissions Director, Multicultural Affairs Director, Foreign Language Director, Spanish teacher, etc.) functions as a liaison with one of our program coordinators.



Costs and Expenses

Parents in Guatemala cover the cost of their child's program. The host school establishes a fee that will cover expenses such as lunches, copies, field trips, etc. The corresponding FACES Coordinator will bring such payment to the school upon the arrival of the Cultural Ambassadors, or the payment can be sent beforehand by mail if required by the school. Children stay with volunteer families from the hosting school.

Medical Insurance

Our Cultural Ambassadors travel to the United States with a worldwide medical insurance card that will cover any medical treatment: BUPA International (www.bupa.com).

Coordinators Support

Program Coordinators will be available and will provide support to the school, host families, and Cultural Ambassadors throughout the entire duration of the program. For this purpose, they will maintain close contact with all parties.

Faces & Our Cultures Coordinators escort the Ambassadors to the United States and stay in the area for approximately two weeks to help with the transition process or any other aspect that the school, host families, or children might need. Coordinators return to the United States in December to escort the participants back to Guatemala.

Cross Cultural Enrichment

Our Ambassadors prepare and participate in five projects to share with their host school's educational community:

- **PPT about Guatemala:** This presentation will include information about the history, demography, geography, education, and cultural aspects of the Hispanic culture, as well as information regarding what means to be a teenager in Guatemala (school, friends, extracurricular activities, family, etc).
- **Video Documentary:** The Multicultural Affairs Office of our country prepares this material for the FACES Program. It provides a beautiful showcase of Guatemala with its varied environments and ecosystems.
- **Guatemalan Dish:** The students will be ready to prepare and share a typical Guatemalan dish with their host family, Spanish class classmates, or at a school festival/cultural activity.
- **Spanish Class:** Our children are willing to cooperate actively with the host school's Spanish department to provide support and enrichment at the elementary, middle school, or high school levels. They can help by reading books, practicing conversation, and helping students in the language learning program.
- **Photo Mural:** A series of Guatemalan landmarks to illustrate the different FACES of our country.

The Guatemalan students will be happy to present these projects on the date/schedule and to the group determined by the host school.

What to Expect from Cultural Ambassadors

Cultural Ambassadors from the Faces & Our Cultures Program are expected to be role models, to always be on their best behavior, to be examples of good manners, and to demonstrate positive attitudes.

At home:

- They will be on their best behavior and have good manners.
- They will adapt to all the activities, rules, and schedules of their host family.
- They will participate in all the household chores in which the host family children participate.

At school:

- They will attend school and participate like regular students.
- They must do homework and participate in all school activities, rallies, retreats, exams, quizzes; etc.
- They must follow the school dress code or wear its uniform.



Host General Guide

This document contains important information regarding Cultural Ambassadors for the host schools and host families.

Participant Profile

Our Cultural Ambassadors have a strong desire to participate in the program and recognize the experience as an opportunity for their personal and academic growth. They are selected from among a group of applicants.

Each child is required to provide us with recommendation letters from their school principal, school counselor, and English teacher. These letters provide us with a perspective of their academic performance and general behavior. They also require a medical certification and legal authorization to participate in the program.

School

Children attend a U.S. school as visitors and Cultural Ambassadors; they do not earn school credits. During their visit, they are expected to turn in homework, take exams and quizzes, and participate in all school activities along with the rest of the student body. Participants must follow the uniform/dress code as determined by the school.

The grades they receive in the United States during their program will not earn them academic credits at their Guatemalan school. The host school's liaison will complete a document that provides general information about the participant's performance at school: overall attitude, sense of responsibility, and presentation of the cultural project to the school.

Household Responsibilities

The Cultural Ambassadors will participate in all host family activities. They will keep their belongings in order, and, if they have their own room, they will be expected to keep it clean. They will also participate in the household chores.

Communication

The Cultural Ambassadors are allowed to receive weekly phone, Skype, or Facetime calls from their parents. Each child should ask the host family regarding the best time to receive phone calls. They are **not** to use the host family phone line to make international calls once a week. Participants are not allowed to bring cell phones or any device that will allow an Internet connection unless the school requires them to do so.

Permissions and Rules

The Cultural Ambassadors travel to the United States with the understanding that they will abide by all laws, rules, and regulations of the host home, school, and state. No misconduct will be allowed or tolerated at any time. Children understand that only the host family may grant permission for extracurricular activities and will determine curfew hours.

Restricted Activities

The Cultural Ambassadors are expected and encouraged to participate in school and family activities. However, they are not allowed, under any circumstances, to engage in activities that could endanger their life or anyone else's, such as hunting or shooting weapons of any kind or driving a motor vehicle.

Cultural Ambassadors may ride to and from school with a host brother or sister, student, or friend that has a valid driver's license and that the host school and host family trusts, but they may **not** operate any motor vehicle themselves.



Dating

For high school Ambassadors, dating while in the United States is prohibited by the **Faces & Our Cultures Program** as it could distract them from achieving the main goal of the program.

Meals

Food is very similar in Guatemala and the United States. Children will adapt to meals and schedules both at home and at school. The only basic difference is that dinner in Guatemala usually takes place between 7:45 – 8:30 pm, so they may ask for a snack before bedtime; however, they must adjust to your meal schedules. The lunch program at school will be covered by the program.

Money

Ambassadors prepare themselves throughout the year for this cultural experience. This preparation includes saving money to be able to enjoy their stay in the United States and have some pocket money to spend.

Shopping

Children always have expectations regarding shopping in the United States, particularly girls. There are many things in the United States that are either not available in Guatemala, or may be less expensive in the States. Program coordinators emphasize that shopping is not the purpose of this exchange program. Shopping excursions will be at the discretion of the host families.

Insurance

Every participant brings full international medical and travel insurance. Cultural Ambassadors will bring their insurance ID cards. Host families will receive this same information via email on a form that includes all pertinent contact information.

Logistics and Support

Children arrive in the United States with the group and leave with the entire group. They are not allowed to stay longer under any circumstances.

During the first week, as participants are adjusting to their surroundings, **Faces & Our Cultures Program** coordinators will stay in the area and visit schools and participants to help them have a smooth transition process. We will support Cultural Ambassadors, schools, and host families in any way necessary during the duration of the program.

Preparation Course

Students are required to participate in various workshops during the year, prior to leaving Guatemala, to prepare them to be successful Cultural Ambassadors in the United States.

Thank you so much for participating in this cultural exchange experience, and please feel free to contact us at anytime.

Spring & Summer Program

We offer an optional spring and summer program at a private school in Guatemala. Participants will live with a host family and take part in social, educational, and sports activities. The length of the program is up to the school, student, and parents. For more information, U.S. families can contact their school's liaison. Each FACES coordinator will create a personalized program according to the school's timetable and preferred schedule.



Program Support

Children all over the world, regardless of their cultural background, need guidance, support, and rules.

We want to be of support in EVERY way we can for the host families, hosting brothers and sisters, host schools, and the cultural ambassadors during the cultural exchange program and during the transition process so that this experience will be memorable and enriching for everyone involved.

If an issue arises because of cultural differences or for any other reason, we would appreciate your letting us know as soon as possible. Based on the experience gathered from previous years, we have learned that most issues, if not all, can be resolved if acknowledged and reported as soon as any discomfort is felt or perceived. Please be assured that the FACES staff members are always available.

Do not hesitate to contact us via email, phone, or Skype/Facetime if any of the following situations should arise or if you simply believe you need our support services:

- The child is homesick or is not communicating.
- The child is not obeying rules at school or at home.
- Any situation that makes you or your family feel uncomfortable.

As Coordinators, we ask that you contact us with any question or issue that might arise.

Sandy Cardona

Coordinator for: Virginia, Tennessee,
North Carolina, & Arkansas

E-Mail: sandy.cardona@facesandcultures.com

GUA Phone: (502) 5632-1896

USA Phone: (615) 300-3062 while in the US

Gaby Padilla

Coordinator for: Michigan, Indiana,
Illinois, Ohio & Colorado

E-Mail: gaby.padilla@facesandcultures.com

GUA Phone: (502) 3004-9910

USA Phone: (615) 756-8562 while in the US

Torene Genovese

Coordinator for: Delaware, Iowa,
Maryland, Minnesota & Missouri

E-Mail: torene.genovese@facesandcultures.com

GUA Phone: (502) 5902 0587 while in Guatemala

USA Phone: (516) 476-6835 while in the US

Claudia Caballeros

Coordinator for:
Kentucky

E-Mail: claudia.caballeros@facesandcultures.com

GUA Phone: (502) 5204-2505 while in Guatemala

USA Phone: (502) 5511-2576 while in the US

Ana Lucía Cáceres

Counselor
Support Coordinator

E-Mail: lu.caceres@facesandcultures.com

GUA Phone: (502) 5907-5322 while in Guatemala

USA Phone: (615) 756-9251 while in the US

Carola Madrid

Admissions
Support Coordinator

E-Mail: carola.madrid@facesandcultures.com

GUA Phone: (502) 5318-4292

USA Phone: (615) 419-2746 while in the US

Please CC Sandy Cardona in all emails.



Expectations from Students

The cultural ambassadors from the **Faces & Our Cultures Program** are expected to be role models, well-behaved, well-mannered, and examples of a good attitude.

AT HOME:

- They will be on their best behavior and always practice good manners.
- They will adapt to all the activities, rules, and schedules.
- They will attend and be respectful of any religious activity.
- They will participate in all house chores in which the host family children participate.

AT SCHOOL:

- They will come to school and participate like full-time students.
- They must do homework and participate in all school activities, rallies, retreats, exams, quizzes; etc.
- They must follow the school's dress code or uniform; they will wear clothes that closely resemble the school uniform if the school has a uniform.
- They will present four Cultural Projects to the educational community on the date/event as determined by school authorities.

WITH THE COMMUNITY AND FRIENDS:

- They will participate in social activities as long the host parents allow them to attend.
- They will follow curfews, rules, and schedules.
- High school children are not allowed to go on dates.

RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES:

- Students are not allowed to drive.
- Students are not allowed to drink or smoke.
- Students are not allowed to hunt or handle any kind of weapon.
- Students are not allowed to bring smart phones to the Cultural Exchange Program.

***** Students can only use electronics in common areas at home. They may NOT bring the devices to their bedrooms. *****



Medical Insurance

Faces & Our Cultures Program provides medical insurance to all its Cultural Ambassadors for the duration of the program – BUPA International (www.global.ihl.com).

POLICY NAME: **Faces & Our Cultures**

POLICY NUMBER: **9726874-2090**

BILLING ADDRESS: **2ª Calle 23-80, Zona 15, Vista Hermosa II • Edificio Avante, Oficina 1301, 13 Nivel
Guatemala City, Guatemala 01015**

PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS

When the child needs to see a doctor, specialist, or its treated for an ambulatory procedure or consultation at any clinic or emergency room, and/or needs medication, BUPA International will reimburse the family in Guatemala when he/she presents all his/her claim forms or prescriptions and invoices. **Each Cultural Ambassador is aware that he/she will need cover all the costs related to consultations, exams, and/or medication and treatment.** It's important to have the following information handy at the time of any medical visit:

- BUPA ID card or BUPA Policy Number.
- Area code and telephone number to be reached.

EMERGENCY INSTRUCTIONS

All the students are completely covered when admitted or taken to a hospital. In case of an emergency, each child or a host parent must have the following information handy:

- BUPA ID card or BUPA Policy Number.
- Area code and telephone number where responsible adult can be reached.

In Case of an Emergency:

- Take the child to the hospital nearest you or the one you know and trust the most.
- When admitted, call BUPA International: **+011 +45 7023 2460 or +011 +45 7023 2461 (Denmark Provider - Emergency Numbers)** **OR Email: emergency@ihl.com** (This is a 24/7 service, a representative will email back to you immediately, and if you include a phone number, they will call you as well.)
 - The information to provide includes: policy number, policy name (Faces & Our Cultures), the child's full name and date of birth, and the cause of the emergency.
- A BUPA representative will enter all the patient's information into the hospital system, Name and Policy ID.
- A BUPA representative will make all the payment arrangements directly with the hospital.
- In case the hospital registration papers require a billing address, make sure to give the information the Cultural Ambassador has on the BUPA ID card. This is a Guatemalan address.
 - IF the hospital only requires a U.S. address, provide your home address and please make sure to send us a scanned image of any notifications that may come to your house so we can take care of them.

PRIVATE PRACTICE CONSULTATION OR MEDICATION

You can take our Cultural Ambassador to your pediatrician, specialist, family doctor, and/or clinic nearest you.

When leaving the doctor's office it's important that:

- Physicians complete the Medical Claim Form **or**
- Physician's prescription details the diagnosis, tests required or performed, and medications recommended.
 - A doctor's prescription note is valid as the claim form if it contains the diagnosis, prescription medication, and any other medical tests that need to be done.

In case a visit to a specialist or further testing is recommended by the doctor or clinic visited:



- Call BUPA International: +011 +45 +7020 7048 or +011 +45 7023 2461 (Denmark Provider – Emergency Numbers)
OR Email: emergency@ihi.com (This is a 24/7 service, a representative will email back to you immediately and if you include a phone number, they will call you as well)
 - The information to provide includes: policy number, policy name (Faces & Our Cultures), the child's full name and date of birth, and reason for the consultation and/or medical test(s).
- A BUPA representative will enter all of the patient's information into the hospital system, Name and Policy ID.
- Request a special authorization to visit a medical specialist.
- Have on hand the completed Medical Claim Form or order provided by the primary doctor.
- When approved, a BUPA representative will note the visit and enter into the system the information necessary for the reimbursement process.
- You are free to take the child to the closest clinic or physician who will provide the consult and/or perform the tests.

REIMBURSEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

The parents in Guatemala will submit all the information necessary to the insurance company. In order for the process to move smoothly, we ask that host parents make sure that the following documents are scanned and via email to the FACES coordinators and parents in Guatemala:

- Medical Claim Form **or** Doctor's order.
 - Detailing the consultation, medication, and further testing.
- Invoices for the consultation, medication, and all tests.
 - We ask for the printed invoices from the consultation, those are the only approved reimbursement documents.

IMPORTANT

As soon as any situation arises, please send an email to the Area Coordinator and General Coordinator to let them know about the situation. Please copy them as well in the mail sent to the parents in Guatemala with the scanned documents and invoices.

We ask that you include our BUPA representative in Guatemala, César Sanchez (cesar.tanchez@infodeseguros.com) in any email or communications sent to the emergency center at BUPA International (emergency@ihi.com) in order to help expedite the process and help in any way possible. The information this email should include is: **Policy Number, Full Name of the child, Date of Birth, and Cause of Emergency/Additional Consultation/Further Testing.**

Parents, Coordinators, and BUPA International Representatives will begin the reimbursement process; however, the hard copies of these documents must be kept in case the BUPA office in Guatemala requests them upon the student's return. Parents in Guatemala are aware of how the insurance reimbursement policy works and know that if necessary, they will have to make a deposit to their child's debit card to cover these expenses.

The people that need to be notified when an emergency, medical visit, or medicine purchase happens are the Area Coordinator and Sandy Cardona (sandy.cardona@facesandcultures.com), General Coordinator.

✚ Sandy Cardona	Coordinator for VA/TN/AR	Mail: sandy.cardona@facesandcultures.com
✚ Gaby Padilla	Coordinator for MI/IN/IL/OH/CO	Mail: gaby.padilla@facesandcultures.com
✚ Torene Genovese	Coordinator for DE/IA/MD/MO/MN	Mail: torene.genovese@facesandcultures.com
✚ Claudia Caballeros	Coordinator for KY	Mail: claudia.caballeros@facesandcultures.com
✚ Carola Madrid	Director of Admissions	Mail: carola.madrid@facesandcultures.com
✚ Coralía Monterroso	Development and Logistics	Mail: coralia.monterroso@facesandcultures.com

Each Area Coordinator will follow up with the process and must be copied in all emails to assure the right information is transmitted to BUPA International. **Sandy Cardona, General Coordinator, must also be included.**



Communication

We encourage communication between Guatemalan and U.S. families: at least a month **before** the program starts, **during**, and **after** the program.

Prior to the Student's Arrival

Cultural Ambassadors and their families are looking forward to beginning communication with and getting to know their host family before coming to the United States. As part of our policy, we give the green light to begin communication between families by mid-September, after we have met with all the host families.

Tips and steps to begin communicating:

- Download the WhatsApp App (free international messaging) from the Play Store for Android phones and App Store for iPhone: www.whatsapp.com
- Expect an introduction email from your student and his/her family a day or two after the green light is given.
- Send out a small introduction email on the weekend of **September 15th**. It's **VERY IMPORTANT** that you reach out to all the email addresses written in the student's profile.

We believe that sharing pictures and having skype conversations are good ways to open communication channels between both families. **We encourage Skype or Facetime from the beginning and at least once a week prior to their arrival.**

It's important that host families share with the student and his/her family:

- Special occasions that they will be sharing (church events, trips, family gatherings, Thanksgiving plans, etc.).
- Information that you consider important for the student to know before he/she arrives.
- House rules and chores in which the child will participate.

During the Students' Program (October 16th – December 9th)

- Students are not allowed to bring cell phones or computers.
 - We find electronics to be a distraction and barrier for children to connect with a new culture.
- Cultural Ambassadors may receive telephone calls from their parents once a week, on a day and time that is convenient for the host family.
 - Please let your student know which day of the week would be best to receive the call from his/her parents and at what time, preferably before the child arrives.
- Children are **not allowed to call Guatemala**.
 - Unless it is a collect call and you authorize it because of the high cost it would mean for you.
- They are allowed to communicate via **email** with their family on a **daily** basis, as long as it is o.k. with the family.
 - The program recommends each child be allowed no more than 40 minutes on the computer each day, unless it's for required school work, just enough time to check emails, or reply to their parents.

After the Program Ends

We encourage both families to continue to bond and share after the Cultural Exchange Program ends. **Faces & Our Cultures** will help families in any way possible to plan a trip to visit Guatemala.

Local Cellphones

We understand that host families would want to reach their student ambassador during their program. **Faces & Our Cultures** allows the use of local cellphones (no smart phones), so the students can be reached by their host parents and U.S. friends. Students can purchase a local cellphone and prepaid cards for their device if it's agreed between parents in Guatemala and host families during their communication before the program starts.



They can only use this phone to reach people in the U.S. Parents in Guatemala have to reach their child at the home number and through the family's computer for their weekly conversation.

AUTHORIZED LOCAL CELLPHONES (SIMILAR)



AT&T AUTHORIZED PLANS (SIMILAR)

\$30 Monthly	Unlimited Talk and Text Data: Smartphone customers can use Wi-Fi, where available, for Data Usage, or purchase a data package. Pay-per-use data is available for basic/messaging phones only. More info
\$2 /Day Only on days used	Unlimited Talk and Text Daily fee charged only on days used. Data is automatically enabled at a pay-per-use rate of 1¢ per 5KB. 100MB/\$1 Day Data Pass package available. More info
10¢ /Minute	10¢ per minute Talk. 20¢ per message Text. Data is automatically enabled at a pay-per-use rate of 1¢ per 5KB. More info



Going Back

It has been a frequent request from Cultural Ambassadors, parents in Guatemala, host brothers and sisters, host families, and host schools that the students from Guatemala extend their visit with them. This request gives us joy and certainty that our program fulfills one of its main objectives, which is to create bonds and develop relationships that will, hopefully, last a lifetime.

However, as an organization and due to our responsibility and commitment to every party involved, families in Guatemala and the United States and host schools, this is not allowed for any of our participants. Every Cultural Ambassador goes to the United States with the group and its specific Program Coordinator and must return the same way (with the group and its assigned Coordinator).

TRIP BACK

We ask that all Cultural Ambassadors and their host families be at the airport three (3) hours before the departure time on the day of the trip back to Guatemala. We ask that the schedules are followed so that the entire group can proceed to the assigned gate together.

One of the Faces Coordinators will meet each group at the airport and help them at the airline counter. She will indicate the steps to be followed throughout the day.

Guidelines for traveling:

- Pick up the passport from the school representative the Thursday before departure.
 - Passports are kept at school in a locked place; they can only be retrieved if the host family travels out of state but must be returned to the school representative upon returning.
- Each piece of luggage must be carefully packed and weighed the day before departure. **We would appreciate it if host parents can help their student with the packing process.**
 - Each piece of checked luggage can weigh a maximum of 50 lbs. Overweight is charged at about \$75 per suitcase.

LUGGAGE

Participants are allowed to bring two checked suitcases, but will have to pay a fee on one of them. They can also bring one carry-on and their backpack at no extra cost on either flight.

- INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT (Washington, DC to Guatemala City)
 - 1st checked bag – No Charge
 - 2nd checked bag \$40

Parents in Guatemala will be instructed about this situation, and they have the responsibility to provide their son/daughter with enough money to cover these expenses.