



Friendship
with
International
Students

International Student Guide

Door County Wisconsin



2022

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WELCOME TO DOOR COUNTY!

We welcome you to the United States, to the state of Wisconsin, and especially to Door County. We are excited and happy to have you here. We hope and pray that your experience here will be beneficial and educational, and that it will create lifetime memories for you. We look forward to the cross-cultural exchanges that will enrich your lives as well as ours.

BRIDGES is a non-profit organization, supported by local Christian churches that sponsor BRIDGES, some businesses and a few other people. It has no connection with any government agency, and we receive no funding from the government. All our workers volunteer their time to reach out in friendship to our student visitors.

This is the 26th year that BRIDGES has assisted the many international students who come to work in Door County in the summertime. We want to be your friends and to be available to help you. Over 4400 young people from 72 countries have participated in this program! Many lasting friendships have developed. Some of these young people have become permanent residents of America as a result of their experiences in Door County.

This booklet has been written to explain what BRIDGES may do for you, and also what it cannot do. It will present in detail what we have planned for the 2022 season. All BRIDGES-sponsored events are provided to you free of charge, and free transportation to the events is available upon request.

This summer we have planned five social activities with a meal. The American Connection program of BRIDGES is the focus of our efforts - a way for you to be connected to an American family or friend that has volunteered to be like your American family and grandparents as explained in this booklet. Through the American Connection, your assigned family or friend may be able to help you with shopping, touring Door County's many interesting and beautiful places, banking, Social Security issues, and some may even invite you to share their family experiences.

We hope this booklet will be helpful to you, and will enable you to enjoy your time here in Door County!

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AMERICAN CONNECTION



The American Connection is a program of BRIDGES that allows you to have an American family or individual as friends. The most rich and meaningful cultural experiences that you can have while in Door County are with the people that live here. Friendships are made that often last a lifetime. Many students connect with American families/friends!

Let us connect you with a family or a person who can be your special friend while you are away from home. You will not live with the family, but you may be invited to enjoy meals and special family times with them, and be taken shopping or to interesting places around Door County. Summer times are busy for both the students and the American families, so your experience with your friendship family depends on how much time your work schedule and your family's schedule allows.

It is important to sign up as soon as possible: do so online at dcbridges.org. You can also sign up using the computer at BRIDGES events. If you have any questions, contact:

Vivian Nienow 920-421-2683 vivnienow@yahoo.com

BRIDGES ONLINE REGISTRATION

You may register as a student and apply for an American Connection using the form on the website at dcbridges.org/registration.

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BANKING AND FINANCE

Nicolet National Bank offers a free debit Master Card with a bank account for use by international students in Door County. Students are able to deposit their paychecks, withdraw cash, and use the debit card for local or online purchases.

Your visa and your DS-2019 form must be presented at the bank to open an account, and they will want to make a copy of them. The maximum you may hold in the account is \$5,000.

The card can withdraw up to \$500 per day from ATMs (Automatic Teller Machines) in the U.S. and in major cities in most other countries. There is a \$2.50 fee per withdrawal from ATMs that are not located at a Nicolet Bank branch.

During or at the end of the summer, money can be sent from your account to a bank in your country by a wire transfer for a fee of \$45.00. Or take your debit card home and withdraw funds at a limit of \$200.00 per day from an ATM machine in major cities in your country.

Nicolet Bank has ATMs and offices in Sister Bay, Egg Harbor, and two in Sturgeon Bay. All ATMs are available 24 hours; offices are closed on Saturday afternoons and Sunday. The Egg Harbor and both Sturgeon Bay ATMs also accept deposits.

See www.nicoletbank.com/branch-atm-locations

Unlimited funds can be sent by a Money Gram which can be purchased at the Service Counter in Walmart in Sturgeon Bay using cash or a debit card. A photo ID is required. Money can also be sent via Western Union online by debit card.

VERY IMPORTANT:

If you wish to cash your checks, be sure to do so in Door County, as banks in other cities usually will not cash a check from a bank unknown to them. This should be done well before the day that you leave for the airport!

If you wish to maintain a debit card account after you leave Door County, your employer may be willing to deposit your final check in your account for you.

Close your bank account **after** you cash your final check, or if you have a debit card, after withdrawing all funds upon your return to your country.

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CHURCHES

America was founded on Christian principles by immigrants from Europe who wanted to establish a country with religious and political freedom. Many immigrants from all over the world came to America for this reason. As a result, much of our culture has historically reflected Christianity, although that is less so now.

Fourteen churches support BRIDGES because we believe that we have a Christian opportunity and duty to reach out and provide friendship and help to young people from other countries who visit our area. BRIDGES programs are organized and led by a team of volunteers from local churches. In addition there are more than 100 other church volunteers that help make the programs run smoothly.

For a list of churches including links to their respective web pages see the BRIDGES website at dcbridges.org/about-us.

The people in these churches meet for one or more regular "worship services" each week, usually Sunday mornings, for about an hour sometime between 8 a.m. and 12 noon. While all churches are different, services usually include music, singing, announcements, prayers, and a lecture called a sermon. The service is conducted by the church leader called a pastor or priest. He or she will present the sermon based on the Bible, our Holy Book.

You are invited to share in this experience. You are very welcome regardless of your religious beliefs. There is no cost to attend a church service, and as our guests you are not expected to give any money. Churches are supported financially by their members.

BRIDGES would like to provide you with a bilingual Bible in English and your language for your use at no charge. These are available at BRIDGES social events.

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EMAIL & MESSAGING

As you get to know Americans, it is likely that you will be sending email and messaging them occasionally, especially to your American Connection family or friend when making arrangements to meet. It is very helpful for you to identify yourself using your American name *in the subject line* of your email. Most Americans cannot read a foreign language, will not recognize who the email is from, and do not want to open mail from unknown sources. You might say, "Hello from (your American name)" in the subject line.

Americans ordinarily put their name at the end of the emails which they send. It would be helpful if you did this too.

We are familiar with Facebook Messenger and texting to our phone numbers. Some are familiar with WhatsApp & Tik-Tok. Please share your contact information with your family as soon as possible.

ENGLISH CONVERSATION

This is one of the "extra" benefits of the American Connection program. With your American family, you can practice English vocabulary in listening and speaking, and in expressing ideas in English. Conversation topics will include ordinary life and job situations. In addition, common idioms in our language and work experiences of international students will be discussed. Additionally, English Conversation classes may be offered on Thursday evenings at First Baptist Church.

FACEBOOK

In the Facebook search box, enter "Door County Bridges" and you will find the page where event reminders and lots of other information is posted. After each event, pictures of the event are posted in the *Albums* section of the *Photos* tab. Pictures of previous events are also archived in the *Albums* section. Feel free to copy the pictures and share them with your friends and family. Please "Like" us on Facebook!

HAIR CUTS

Hair cuts for men or women are available at a barber shop, hair salon or beauty shop. Search for Beauty Salons Door County on the Internet. It is common practice to "tip" the person that trims or styles your hair.

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ETIQUETTE for SOCIAL SITUATIONS

Here are a few helpful tips:

- It is very important to be on time.
- In a group it is not acceptable to be talking while a speaker is giving a presentation.
- If you have an invitation for a meal, do not bring extra friends without first checking with your host or hostess.
- Being in the presence of an American gives you an opportunity to practice your English. We encourage you to do so, and not to speak excessively to your friends in your native language. It is considered rude to speak a foreign language in the presence of people who don't understand it.

HOUSING

You may have a contract or a rental lease on your apartment or dormitory to pay a certain rent. In most cases, you are obligated to keep that contract. If you wish to move elsewhere, you must get prior permission from your landlord and notify your sponsor.

BRIDGES does not get involved in providing housing or in housing issues. Any disputes between you and your roommates or landlord have to be worked out yourself or with your employer. If you believe you are paying more rent than you agreed to, or have other issues with your housing, contact the sponsor which brought you to the U.S. If there is a moral or safety issue, we will try to help you.

IGIG

IGIG stands for International Group Investigating God. BRIDGES has adopted that name for a series of informal evenings with international students who wish to further discuss spiritual things that we may have talked about in other contexts over the summer. IGIG meetings for 2022 are planned for Thursday evenings.

This is an opportunity for exploration of the Christian faith as compared to that of other religions of the world. It is conducted in an open discussion format in which students can ask questions that may be concerning them about faith, God, and the world. Bibles in the students' native language are offered to all international students in dual language format at no charge. The Bible is used as the basis for discussion of life experiences and how they relate to God.

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LIBRARIES AND INTERNET ACCESS

Door County has public library facilities in Baileys Harbor, Egg Harbor, Ephraim, Fish Creek, Sister Bay and Sturgeon Bay. Every library is stocked with books, magazines, and videos. You can visit them and read there, or get a library card to borrow books for four weeks at a time at no charge. DVDs are available for a shorter loan period. These materials must be returned by the specified date.

All of the facilities are free. Each library has different days and hours when they are open, which are posted at their entrances and at doorcountylibrary.org. Free Wi-Fi is available at all of these locations and in many restaurants and motels.

RESTAURANTS

In restaurants where you sit down and are served food, customers normally tip the waitress or waiter 15-20% of the total according to the quality of service given. The tip is added to the bill when you pay.

GROCERY SHOPPING

Smaller grocery stores are located in Ellison Bay, Fish Creek, and Jacksonport.

Supermarkets north of Sturgeon Bay:
Main Street Market, Egg Harbor; Piggly Wiggly, Sister Bay

Supermarkets in Sturgeon Bay:
Pick 'n Save, Walmart, and Marketplace Foods (formerly Econo Foods)

Many orchards offer fresh fruit and vegetables in season, as well as bakery items. A variety of Deli and Bakery stores offer sandwiches, soups, and pastries.
Walmart, Target, and gas stations carry some packaged food.

Farmer's markets offer produce and other food items directly to the consumer, but operate seasonally. See doorcounty.com/experience/farmers-markets

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SHOPPING (Continued)

Department Stores:

Department stores sell almost everything, including clothing, electronics, jewelry, sporting items, household goods, and hardware.

Walmart and *Target* in Sturgeon Bay are large department stores.

Hardware stores that sell a wide variety of hardware and household items:

Ace Hardware in Sister Bay and Sturgeon Bay

Nelson Shopping Center in Fish Creek

Harbor Hardware in Egg Harbor

Dollar Tree in Sturgeon Bay sells many things at low prices.

Resale Shops:

Bargains Unlimited in Sister Bay, and the *Thrift Store* at *Feed & Clothe My People* and *Green Door Thrift* in Sturgeon Bay have a wide selection of used clothing and household items at very reasonable prices.

There are many stores in Sturgeon Bay and throughout Northern Door which offer clothing, gifts, other specialty items, and nearly anything you might wish to buy.

Green Bay has large shopping malls with many stores, as well as stores selling electronics. Green Bay is about 75 miles (125 kilometers) from Sister Bay, and it can take 1.5 to 2 hours to drive there.

The ticket price shown on items in stores does not include tax, which is added at the cash register. Sales tax in Wisconsin is 5.5%; it is higher in Chicago or New York. It is not customary to "bargain" in an attempt to lower the price.

"Shop Lifting", i.e. attempting to walk out of a store with merchandise you have not paid for, is against the law. Many stores will call the police and attempt to have you arrested if you are caught doing this – just don't.

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MEDICAL AND PHARMACY

Medical services are very expensive in America. If you have come through a sponsor agency, you most likely have an insurance plan which will cover *some of the costs*. You may have to pay for medical services, and get reimbursed for the bill from your insurance. You can ask for help from your American Connection family in processing the necessary insurance papers. You will need your insurance certificate with your I.D. number which can be obtained from the website of your sponsor agency.

Medical Facilities are available should you become ill:

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Aurora Nor-Door Clinic | Sister Bay | 902.854.2347 |
| North Shore Medical Clinic | Fish Creek | 920.868.3511 |
| Door County Medical Center | Sturgeon Bay | 920.743.5566 |

Coventry Care is *for people with no health insurance*:

Sister Bay 10547 Koessl Lane [just south of the Piggly Wiggly]

Open Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9:30 – 11am

[facebook.com/coventrycare](https://www.facebook.com/coventrycare)

Nurse Direct is a *free medical information service*.

You can call them to get answers to medical questions and ask about symptoms.

Telephone 1-877-746-0003 or 1-800-522-8919, toll free.

Pharmacies in Sturgeon Bay:

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Bay Hometown Pharmacy | 920.746.4110 |
| CVS Pharmacy | 920.743.6089 |
| Walmart Pharmacy | 920.746.0412 |
| Walgreens Pharmacy | 920.746.5245 |

Pharmacy in Sister Bay, just north of the Piggly Wiggly:

Hometown Pharmacy 920.633.4060

A pharmacist is usually at the pharmacy and will be happy to advise you or to assist you with any medicine you might need. Certain medications require a doctor's prescription before the pharmacist can provide them to you.

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PARKS, BEACHES AND PICNIC FACILITIES

Door County has some of the most beautiful scenic places in the state of Wisconsin, so there are many public parks that you might like to visit. These facilities are the property of either the state of Wisconsin, Door County, or several of our villages. It doesn't cost anything to walk or ride a bicycle in the State Parks, but a car will need a permit which is available at the entrances for \$10/day or \$28/year.

Peninsula State Park is the most popular State Park in Wisconsin. It offers a great number of facilities, including beaches, picnic areas, hiking and bicycle trails, camp grounds, lighthouse museum, amphitheater, boat launches, a golf course and driving range. Nicolet Beach within the park is the most popular beach in Door County. It offers watercraft rentals and a small store with food.

Whitefish Dunes State Park has a long sandy beach and hiking trails, and Newport State Park has another great beach and wilderness hiking.

Just next to and north of Whitefish Dunes is Cave Point County Park. It is a beautiful place, with cliffs on the edge of the water, hiking trails and picnic facilities. Access is free.

Also, each village has its own beach for you to enjoy free of charge.

Please respect the following:

- Alcoholic beverages are not allowed in public places.
- Garbage should be placed in trash containers.
- It is against the law to pick any flowers in these parks.



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SOCIAL EVENTS

Social activity events are provided by BRIDGES for international students. A free meal is served and there is a short inspirational talk.

Activities may include volleyball, basketball, a cruise around the islands, riding Segways, soccer, baseball, kayaking and more. For a complete list of events with pictures see dcbridges.org/events.

These evenings not only provide fun, but also an opportunity to meet other international students working in the area as well as the Americans who sponsor BRIDGES.

There is no charge for these events, and free transportation is available by calling Judith on the transportation phone at 920.421.4980 before 2pm the day of the event. WhatsApp and text messages are also accepted.



SOCIAL SECURITY CARD

In the United States, you cannot legally work for anyone without a Social Security number. Your employer must have this number for government wage and tax reporting purposes.

There may be an opportunity for you to sign up for your Social Security number locally. Your employer will know when this will be possible.

You will need to specify a local street address to which your Social Security card can be mailed. Ask your employer for the correct address to use.

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If you have begun the application process, or already have a Social Security number, this is great. If you have not received your SS card within a reasonable period of time, discuss this situation with your employer first. If you need further help, talk with your sponsor, your American Connection family or someone from BRIDGES. We will try to help you.

Your employer will not be able to issue your paycheck until your Social Security card is received. If you need to contact Social Security, call 1-800-772-1213 or visit the local office at 1561 Dousman Street in Green Bay (it is located on the southeast corner of Dousman and Military Streets). Bring your passport, J-1 visa, and DS-2019 form.

You are required to fill out a tax form at the end of your employment. Most of the taxes you paid will be refunded if you file the tax form. If you do not fill out a tax form, you may be denied entry to the U.S. if you try to come to work again, or maybe even if you come as a tourist. Ask your employer about this. Instructions are at www.irs.gov.

STUDYING IN THE UNITED STATES

If you are interested in becoming a student at a U.S. college or university, the process of applying for admission and obtaining a visa is not simple. A good place to start your investigation is with the International Programs Office at Northeastern Wisconsin Technical College in Green Bay (NWTC-GB).

NWTC is a public college, offering over 200 two-year programs in subjects as widely diverse as Hospitality Management and Horticulture. For information on application for admission and courses offered, go to nwtc.edu. Or you can contact Kari Olsen at Kari.Olsen@NWTC.EDU, who is an advisor for international students.

The University of Wisconsin in Green Bay has a four-year program offering over 45 undergraduate bachelor degrees, and graduate programs in subjects such as business, engineering, human biology, computer science, and more. Scholarships are available, and transfer credit is awarded to students who have already begun college or university studies elsewhere. Opportunities are also available to participate in athletics, theatre, and music. For more information, please visit uwgb.edu, or email oie@uwgb.edu or call 1-920-465-2190.

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TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

If you bring a smartphone with you from your home country, you will probably not be able to use it as a telephone in Door County. You will be able to access the internet and send text messages with your phone using Wi-Fi services provided in most local motels, restaurants, and businesses. While some smartphones can be adapted to operate on American mobile networks, many cannot. You will probably need to purchase a new phone in order to do so. In either case you will need to purchase a voice service package for use while you are in the U.S.

Cellcom at 2350 Maple Drive in Sister Bay is one representative for cellular phones and service, and you can purchase several types of phones and basic service there. They also have a store in Sturgeon Bay, as do other carriers like *T-Mobile*, and *UScellular*. The carriers offer regular and prepaid plans, and will program the phone and set up the service for you.

Smartphones are available, and can also be purchased with specific minutes packages, at stores like Walmart or Target. It can be difficult to set up the service and program the phones, so ask the store if they will do that for you.

To call internationally from your smartphone you generally dial 011 plus the country code before the number. Many students use WhatsApp, Messenger, or Skype to make free phone calls using Wi-Fi. This is a great way to communicate or text your family, American Connection Friend family, friends, or employer.

Most of the phone calls you might want to make can be made by using the phone numbers as listed in this booklet. All calls in Door County must use the 920 area code. If using a land line, calls outside of Door County usually require a "1" before the area code.

For help with emergencies call 911. The dispatcher will need to know where you are located.

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TRANSPORTATION TO BRIDGES EVENTS

Free rides are available to any BRIDGES social event, English Conversation Group, IGIG meeting and the sports activities prior to English. You must phone **920.421.4980 by 2:00 p.m.** the day of the event. *We cannot guarantee a ride if you call later than 2:00 p.m. to arrange a ride.* Please tell how many people need a ride at your location, and give **specific details** where they should pick you up. Otherwise, the driver may not find you. It is good to be outside your door and watching for a car. If you are not there at the appointed time you may miss your ride. Because of the many calls received, **it is best that only one person calls from each location** stating the number of students needing a ride.

BRIDGES drivers will usually have a green sign in the front car window identifying them. They do not provide rides for activities other than BRIDGES events or to any other place. American Connection friends/families *may* be able to provide rides for shopping trips or to the Social Security Office in Green Bay.

HOW TO GET AROUND DOOR COUNTY

Transportation can be difficult for summer workers in Door County. There are no buses or trains, and there is very limited taxi or Uber service.

Here are some public transportation services in northern Door County:

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Door County Cab | 920.818.1124 |
| Door County Courier | 920.559.0339 |
| Door 2 Door Shared Rides | 1.888.337.9485 |

Reservations are generally required. Some services are Door County only.

In Sister Bay there is a free seasonal shuttle bus that make a loop around the Sister Bay area. For a description and map see the [Pulse article](#).

Transportation to and from the airport or the bus station is the responsibility of your employer. Using a public service such as the above to get to the airport can cost more than \$100, so be sure to call ahead to get a cost estimate.

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WORKING CONDITIONS

Occasionally a person will have a problem at work, either with their employer, other workers, work conditions, number of hours, or other things.

The sponsor agency that you came with should have informed you in detail what your job would include and what it would not include. Contact them if you have a problem. You are obligated to your employer to perform your job to the best of your ability.

If there is a safety or moral issue in your work situation, BRIDGES may be able to help you.

Before you begin working at a second job you must have the approval of the sponsor which arranged for your primary job. This is a government requirement, and you can be sent home if you do not handle this correctly!

ETC.

- Americans are usually friendly, and often seem to be in a hurry.
- Americans usually call people by their first names and usually shake hands when greeting each other (both men and women).
- Drinking or purchasing alcohol is illegal in Wisconsin for anyone under age 21.

Enjoy your summer in Door County!

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