



Door County
BRIDGES

Friendship with International Students

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT GUIDE

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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 so happy you are here. It is our hope and prayer that your experience here will be beneficial and educational and will result in lifelong friendships and memories. We look forward to the many cross-cultural exchanges that will enrich your lives as well as ours.

Door County **BRIDGES** is a Christian non-profit organization that provides friendship, assistance, group social events, and helpful services to the international students who come to work in Door County each summer. We are not connected to any government agency, and we receive no funding from the government.

BRIDGES is organized and led by a team of dedicated volunteers from a number of local churches who volunteer their time to reach out in friendship to our student visitors. Since our inception in 1997, we have served over 5,000 international students from over 70 countries.

This Student Guide is designed to assist you during your time here in Door County and explain what our organization has to offer. All of our large group Events include a meal and are free of charge, with transportation available upon request. The American Connection program offered by **BRIDGES** is likely one of the most fulfilling and memorable experiences we offer — a way for you to be connected to an American family; more details are explained in this booklet. In addition, throughout the summer, there may be other opportunities to connect, such as Game Nights and English Conversation, which will be posted on our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages.

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

AMERICAN CONNECTION



Some of the most rich and meaningful experiences you can have while in Door County are with the people who live here. American Connection allows you to have an American family as friends. You will not live with them, but your assigned family may help you with shopping, touring Door

County's many interesting and beautiful places, practicing English, banking, Social Security issues, and some may even invite you to share their family experiences. Summer is a busy time 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 allow. These friendships that are made will often last a lifetime.



Let us connect you with a family or a person who can be your special friend while you are away from home. It is important to sign up as soon as possible at <https://dcbridges.org/american-connection/>. You can also sign up using the computer at BRIDGES events.

If you have any questions, contact:
Debby Heidler 630-917-2548

dsheidler@comcast.net

BANKING AND FINANCE

You are free to choose any bank that is convenient but Nicolet Bank offers Travel Cards for J-1 Students as a safer way to deposit and use your money. Your Travel Card will have an account number and a routing number, which may be used to deposit or withdraw your money. Students are able to deposit their paychecks, withdraw cash, transfer to their home account, and use the debit card for local or online purchases.

Nicolet Bank has ATMs and offices in Washington Island, Sister Bay, Egg Harbor, and two in Sturgeon Bay. All ATMs are available 24 hours; offices are closed on Saturday afternoons and Sunday.

Unlimited funds can be sent via MoneyGram, 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 NOT be done on 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 into 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.

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.

BRIDGES programs are organized and led by a team of volunteers from several different local churches whose desire is to show God's love to our community. For a list of sponsoring churches,

including links to their respective web pages, see the **BRIDGES** website at <https://dcbridges.org/about-door-county-bridges/>.

The people in these churches meet for one or more regular "worship services" each week, usually on 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.

EMAIL & MESSAGING

As you get to know Americans, it is likely that you will be sending emails 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 that 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 and Instagram. Please share your contact information and your preferred way of communicating with your American Connection family as soon as possible.

ENGLISH CONVERSATION

Short Film Conversations is an opportunity to improve your English using short films to discuss life topics. It is an opportunity to meet other students in a smaller setting. Check the [Events](#) page on our website for meeting places and times.

English conversation is an "extra" benefit of the American Connection program. With your American family, you can practice English, your vocabulary, and pronunciation through listening, speaking, and expressing ideas in English. Feel free to let them know if you have a desire for them to help in this area.

SOCIAL MEDIA



FACEBOOK

Search "**Door County BRIDGES**" to find the page where event reminders and lots of other information are posted. Pictures from the events are posted here for you to look at and send on to family and friends. Please "Like" us on Facebook!



INSTAGRAM

Event reminders, photos, and updates can be found here as well. Follow us on Instagram **@DoorCountyBridges**.

HAIR CUTS

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

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.

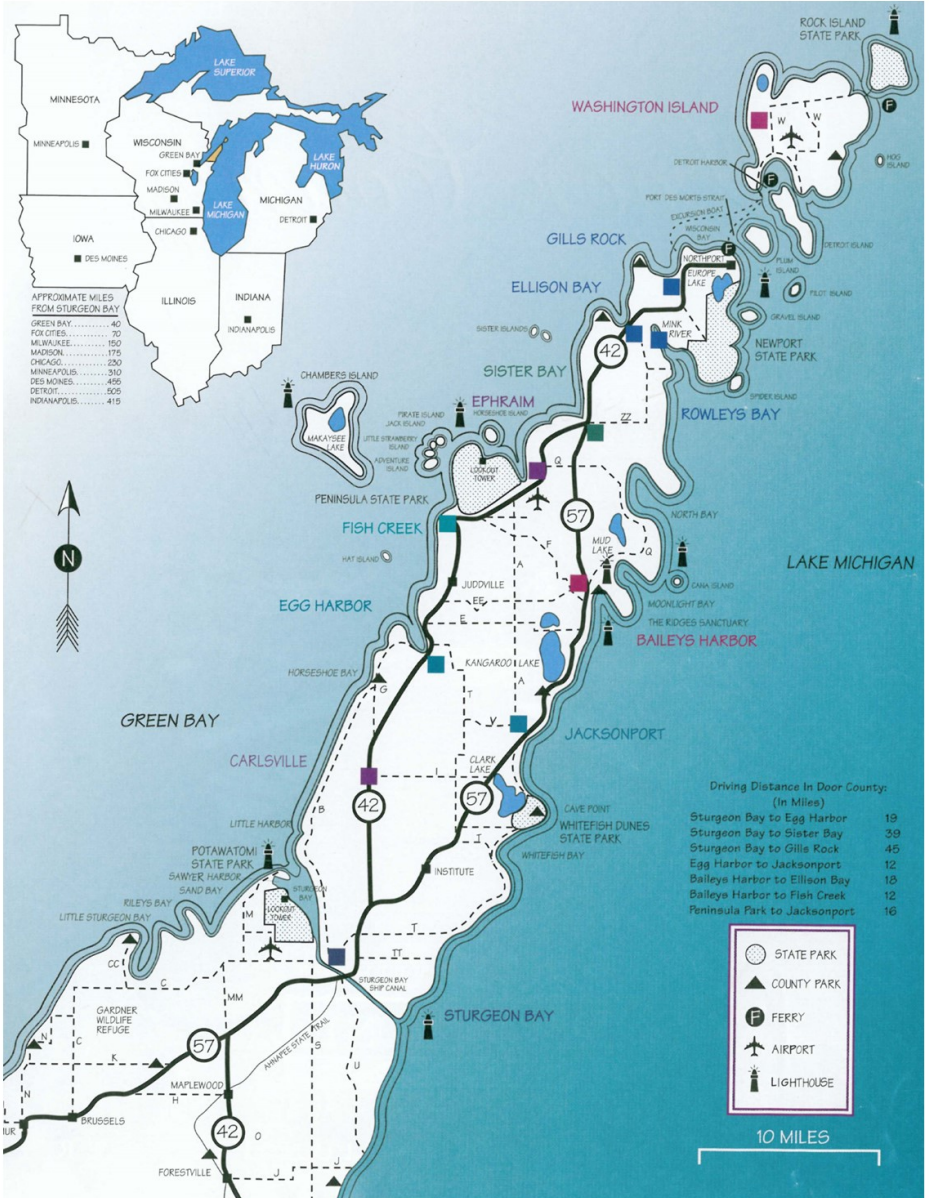
Door County **BRIDGES** does not get involved in providing housing or in housing issues. Any disputes between you and your roommates or landlord have to be worked out yourself or with your employer. If you believe you are paying more rent than you agreed to, or have other issues with your housing, contact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

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 <https://www.doorcountylibrary.org/>. Free Wi-Fi is available at all of these locations and in many restaurants and motels.

MAP OF DOOR COUNTY



MEDICAL, DENTAL AND PHARMACY

For help with emergencies—accidents, medical or physical, call 911.

Medical Facilities are available should you become ill:

[Door County Medical Center](#) (Urgent Care) Sturgeon Bay
(920) 743-5566

[Door County Medical Center](#) (non-Urgent) Sister Bay
(920)-868-3511

** (Please note the Sister Bay location is NOT an Urgent Care. You will need to call to make an appointment or walk in. They are open M-F 7:00-4:30)

Prevea Care (Nurse Direct)

24-hour free medical information service. You can call them to get answers to medical questions and ask about symptoms.
Telephone 1-877-746-0003

Pharmacy

[Bay Hometown Pharmacy](#) Sturgeon Bay (920) 746-4110

[CVS Pharmacy](#) Sturgeon Bay (920) 746-6089

[Walmart Pharmacy](#) Sturgeon Bay (920) 746-0412

[Walgreens Pharmacy](#) Sturgeon Bay (920) 746-5245

[Hometown Pharmacy](#) Sister Bay (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.

Medical and dental services are very expensive in America.

If you have come through a sponsor agency, you have an insurance plan that 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.

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, campgrounds, lighthouse museum, amphitheater, boat launches, a golf course, and driving range. Nicolet Beach 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, and **Newport State Park** has another great beach and wilderness hiking.

Just next to 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 note:

- 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.

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. Note: It is common for many restaurants to provide free refills on plain coffee, iced tea, lemonade, or soda. Just ask the server if they provide this.

SHOPPING

Food Stores

Smaller grocery stores are located in Ellison Bay, Fish Creek, and Jacksonport and at many larger gas stations.

Supermarkets north of Sturgeon Bay: [Main Street Market](#), Egg Harbor; [Piggly Wiggly](#), Sister Bay

Supermarkets in Sturgeon Bay: [Pick 'n Save](#), [Walmart](#), and [Tadych's MarketPlace 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. Farmers' markets offer produce and other food items directly to the consumer, but operate seasonally. See doorcounty.com/experience/farmers-markets

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

Hardware stores 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

Discount Stores

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](#) and [Sunshine ReSale](#) in Sturgeon Bay have a wide selection of used clothing and household items at very reasonable prices.

Other Stores

Many stores in Sturgeon Bay and throughout Northern Door 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.

Helpful Tips:

- 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.
- "Shoplifting", 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.
- Some students purchase items they cannot find online through [Amazon.com](#) or other shopping apps. Be careful, though, it adds up quickly!
- You can also order items ahead of time for pickup at [Walmart](#). This is helpful if you are asking someone else to pick up items when they are in Sturgeon Bay.

SOCIAL EVENTS for BRIDGES

Large Group Events:

- The schedule and location of these events are listed at <https://dcbridges.org/bridges-events/> or on our [Facebook](#) page.

Throughout the summer, **BRIDGES** hosts large group activities for international students. Each event includes a meal, a short inspirational talk, and fun sports or activities. 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 Large Events and free transportation is available. Reference page 19 for transportation information.

If you live in Sturgeon Bay, click the [Sturgeon Bay Bridges](#) for your Events.

Small Group Events:

- **Game Night**
Each summer, students are invited to a Game and Sports night at the First Baptist Church in Sister Bay
- **Short Film Conversations**
This is an opportunity to get together with Americans and other students to discuss topics of life and faith using Short Films. We will meet the first Sunday evening of each month at a designated time and location. If you are interested in participating, contact Mary Nowachek at anowachek@yahoo.com or +1-320-290-5126.

There is no charge for Small Events and free transportation is available. Call 920-421-4982 before 2pm the day of the event.

TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

For help with emergencies—accidents, medical or physical, call 911.

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

If you have difficulty calling someone in Door County, try using 1-920 before the number.

Cellcom, US Cellular, Target, and Walmart sell Smartphones if you are in need of purchasing one. Some students purchase them online. You can get a prepaid package with a fixed number of minutes (which can be renewed) or a monthly minutes and fee plan. They will program the phone and set up the service for you, and can answer questions and provide assistance.



TRANSPORTATION TO BRIDGES EVENTS

Free rides are available to any **BRIDGES** social event, English Conversation Group, and Game Nights. Please read the information below carefully for transportation to both LARGE group and SMALL group events.

Large Group Events:

Fill out the form on our website to request a ride **by 2:00 p.m. the day before the event.**

<https://dcbridges.org/transportation/>

BUS STOPS: Students need to check the event website to know the proposed bus stop time for each scheduled location stop. Bus is scheduled to remain at each scheduled stop 5-7 minutes.

Small Group Events: (Game Night or Short Film Conversation) phone **920-421-4982 by 2:00 p.m. the day of the event.**

We cannot guarantee a ride if you request a ride 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 requests received, **it is best that only one person request a ride from each location** and state the number of students needing a ride.

TRANSPORTATION AROUND DOOR COUNTY (non- Bridges related)

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. Sister Bay has a free shuttle: <https://sisterbay.com/getting-around/>.

Check with your employer to see if they have any bicycles to loan. When riding a bicycle, PLEASE wear reflective or light/bright clothing to be seen! Use lights and a helmet if possible.

Here are some public transportation services in Northern Door County:

Door County Cab 1-920-818-1124

Door County Courier 1-920-559-0339

Door 2 Door Shared Rides 1-888-337-9485

Reservations required Travel within Door County only.

Transportation to and from the airport or the bus station is the responsibility of your employer.

TRAVEL HOME

Many students find it very expensive to find transportation back to Green Bay or Chicago at the end of their time in Door County. It's



always safer and cheaper to travel together. Instead of getting a ride to Green Bay, a bus to Milwaukee, and a train to Chicago, consider splitting the cost of an Uber or Van to your final destination. See if your employer will help you

arrange this. If you plan ahead, you can usually find a Transport Company that offers group rates.

Just like in most parts of the world, there are dangers to traveling. Be aware of your surroundings and plan to travel with a friend or two. If you have an American Connection friend, ask their advice.



Door County BRIDGES

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