

Inviting Guests to the United States

If you are interested in inviting your relatives and/or friends to visit you in the U.S. either during your academic program or for commencement, please read the following information.

In most cases, guests who you have invited to the U.S. to visit Colgate, sightsee, and/or attend your commencement ceremony will enter the U.S. in B-2 visitor status.

- If your guest is a citizen of a Visa Waiver Eligible Country (see <http://1.usa.gov/7mtlm3> for a complete list of countries), the following information, while still relevant, is not as necessary since they do not need to apply for a visitor visa at a U.S. Embassy; visitor status is given at the U.S. port of entry.
- If your guest is a citizen of a non-Visa Waiver Eligible Country, your guest will need to apply for a visitor visa at the nearest U. S. Embassy in their country of citizenship or legal residence.

While your guest must be able to **independently** meet the eligibility requirements for a visitor visa, it is helpful, though not required, for them to have documentation from you supporting their application.

To support your guest's application, it is strongly recommended that **you** write a letter of invitation for your guest in which indicates:

- The guest's relationship to you (example: mother; childhood friend; grandfather; etc.)
- The intended purpose of the trip (example: attend commencement ceremony; visit New York City and local attractions; etc.)
- Where the guest will stay (example: Colgate Inn; my residence hall; specific address; etc.)
- How the travel will be financed (example: guest will pay for their transportation and I will cover room and board; guest will cover all expenses related to their visit; etc.)
 - If you will be financially supporting your guest, it is important that you include financial documentation showing that you have sufficient funds to cover the expenses. Usually a recent bank statement or bank letter is sufficient.

In addition to your letter, you should also consider submitting the following:

- Copy of your most recent Colgate transcript
- Copy of your I-20 (Never give away your original I-20)
- Letter of invitation from OISS (see attached request form)

While it is always better to send original documents to your guests, it is not required so you may send a copy if necessary.

****Please note that OISS does not offer immigration advising or support for visitor visas.****

SAMPLE LETTER OF INVITATION

(Date)

United States (Consulate or Embassy)
(City), (Country)

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is (your name) and I am an F-1 student at Colgate University in Hamilton, NY, pursuing a Bachelor's degree in (major). A transcript and a copy of my I-20 are attached as proof of my enrollment.

I wish to invite the following individuals to my commencement ceremony to be held in Hamilton, NY:

- First Name LAST NAME (as in passport), Date of Birth, Relationship to you.
- First Name LAST NAME (as in passport), Date of Birth, Relationship to you.

Please assist them in receiving a tourist visa so that they may attend the ceremony as my guest.

My guests will stay at (residence, or other location) during the duration of their visit, and the costs of their visit will be covered by (financial information). Please see the attached financial documentation for more details.

Thank you for your time and favorable consideration of the attached visa application.

Sincerely,

Signature

Name

Address

Phone

Email

