



Person to Person
People to People



THE WHITE HOUSE, 12 July 1955 — Remarks by the President to a group of American Field Service students:

"It seems a bit of a fortunate coincidence that I should have an opportunity to see all of you just as I am about to depart for Geneva. . . .

"I hope that you have learned in your year here that this country does have certain basic principles—beliefs—that though not often expressed in the home and in the schools are nevertheless a very basic part of our existence. . . .

"It is possible that the kind of conventions that you people have been having among yourselves, with those you have visited, and that our young Americans are having in your countries, may be far more important in the long run than the kind to which I am going. . . .

"Good luck to each of you."

While the President was speaking to AFS students in Washington . . . more than 600 young Americans were being greeted in Europe



HOW WAS IT ARRANGED?

As you can see, the American Field Service "exchange program" is a going operation—both in the United States and abroad.

Each year, as many students as funds will allow are hand-picked from thousands of applicants. Foreign teen-agers are brought to the United States by the American Field Service and placed in homes all over the land. They attend high school side by side with our own children, become part of our

community, and for ten months live the typical American life.

During the summer, hundreds of our own teen-agers are sent abroad to their foster-families. This—the "over there" phase of the American Field Service International Scholarships—was undertaken at the invitation of the "returnees," the foreign students who have returned to their home countries after their year in the United States.



HELPING HANDS . . . EXCHANGING IDEAS

How does this program differ from most other exchange programs? First, these are high-school-age youngsters who actually become part of the families they visit. They are individually integrated into a new way of life with care, affection, and understanding. Second, they are at the most impressionable age, with no set opinions or ideas. They are the leading citizens of the future, but they are still young, still growing . . . and eager to learn. No politics, no propaganda can distort what they see. They are wide-eyed and wide open for the truth about people and nations.

And, third, when they go home they do not lose their link with this country. They bring American students to live in their homes, and they organize themselves into committees to keep alive their allegiance to their American experience and to keep faith with the ideals of the AFS program.



WHAT THEY LEARN IN THE CLASSROOM

To begin with, and to qualify for American Field Service scholarships, the student from abroad must be able to speak English. He must be of above average intelligence and of good character—friendly and adaptable.

In school in the United States he will take such subjects as American History, Government, Social Studies, and American Literature. He will be encouraged to participate in sports, and other extra-curricular activities—particularly the Student Council, which can give him an invaluable insight into the democratic way of life.



WHAT THEY LEARN IN THE HOME

The foster-homes, both in America and abroad, have been the chief reason for the success of the American Field Service program. The visiting youngster immediately becomes a member of the family. He quickly learns the customs of the family and the community . . . and grasps the culture of the land. A deep and abiding affection results . . . and the understanding that is so important between peoples and nations.

The American Field Service is dependent upon the community to find a family for the visiting student, but the final decision must be made by AFS, as it is entirely responsible for the welfare of the student—and his new home environment.



SO THIS IS AMERICA! SO THESE ARE AMERICANS!

The climax of the visit in America is a month-long bus trip across the land. In 1956, 653 youngsters made this trip, covering 35,000 miles with visits to 150 cities. At each stop they were greeted and entertained. Dances, parties, picnics . . . a teenager's field day. They shook hundreds of hands, formed thousands of good impressions. High point, of course, was a stay of a few days in the nation's capital.

One comment was: "People sure get funny ideas about America in Austria. I'll tell them when I get back how wrong they've been."

And these words from an American student after his return from Europe: "At first it was a little strange. But then we began to feel at home—and I could tell they really liked us. Not just the families we stayed with, but the people we met everywhere."

Everyone learns from first-hand experience—the students represent and explain their own countries to others while they learn of a different way of life, which they can later interpret to their countrymen at home. They are good-will ambassadors, every one.



LEARNING ALL THE TIME

The following is a digest of the *Reader's Digest* article by Quentin Reynolds on the American Field Service program, its title: "European Teen-Agers Take a Look at America":

"Xavier Tandeau de Marsac is a serious-eyed 17-year-old French boy who arrived a year ago to live with an American family and to finish his high school education at the Thatcher School in Ojai, Calif.

"'I had a lot of prejudices about the United States,' he says. 'In Paris we sometimes unconsciously accept Communist propaganda. For instance, when I came here I was positive that all Negroes were virtually slaves and that all workers were treated badly, paid poorly, and considered social outcasts.

"'So what happened? The Santa Barbara High School elected Glenn Young, a Negro boy, student president. I became friendly with him and told him I'd like to meet some working people. . . . I met his father and his friends, white and Negro. They worked

in factories and were liked and respected by their neighbors. Nearly all owned cars and television sets.' . . .

"Annette Boegelund, slim, blond, and 16, has plenty to tell her friends in her native Copenhagen. . . . 'In the movies, we see only the very rich, the very poor, and the gangsters. We never learn much about the average American.

"'I've learned that the greatest evil is ignorance. You get to know a people, and to your surprise you find girls of your own age are just about like you are. You learn that the snobbery of upper-class Europeans is unknown here. People here are sincere, and when someone says good-bye and adds, "God bless you," they really mean it.'

"These are thoughtful, questioning youngsters, and without exception they have fallen in love with this country of ours. . . . They see . . . the warmth, the generosity . . . and, above all, the strength and practicability of the democratic ideal. This is what they take back with them."



HOW MANY STUDENTS LIKE THESE WILL YOU SPONSOR?

HOW MUCH WILL YOU CONTRIBUTE TO UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PEOPLE?

YOU CAN:

- Interest your local high school—form a sponsoring committee—raise funds for your community participation—invite a teen-ager into your home for ten months . . .
- Promote the program in all the schools in your community—arrange hospitality for several teen-agers for their year—invite a bus-load of students to visit your community for a day or two at the end of their year. . .
- Contribute, or interest a corporation or organization in contributing, to the community participation or to general expansion funds.

All gifts are tax deductible.

	Students to America	Students to Europe
1947	50	
1948	83	
1949	76	
1950	219	9
1951	205	24
1952	235	107
1953	265	253
1954	445	367
1955	653	605
1956	768	696



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

In reply refer to
IES

February 8 1954

My dear Mr. Galatti:

I should like to take this occasion to confirm the Department's sincere appreciation, expressed at our recent meeting with you, for the contributions which the American Field Service has made to the exchange of persons program by participating actively in the high school student exchange program during the past several years.

Although the teen-ager program for the coming academic year has been reduced, as have been programs involving grantees in other categories, this reduction does not imply that the Department considers its value or effectiveness to have been lessened. On the contrary, the Department believes that this program continues to have great value in inducing private support from the public and increasing mutual understanding between the United States and Germany and Austria. Recent reports from Congressional committees concerned with the exchange of persons program likewise reflect the fact that all concerned are convinced that this endeavor is worthwhile.

The credit for the success of the exchange of persons program goes, of course, to such persons as yourself and such organizations as the American Field Service. I hope, therefore, that you will share the Department's satisfaction for the substantial accomplishments made by this program. Particularly impressive, I believe, is the fact that the high school student program demonstrates the practicality of this Government, on the one hand, and private citizens and organizations, on the other, working together to enhance respect abroad for the United States, its motives and aspirations, and to bring about in this country an increased understanding of those nations whose support is so necessary at this time.

Sincerely yours,

Francis J. Colligan
Deputy Director
International Educational Exchange Service

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WALK TOGETHER, TALK TOGETHER,
O YE PEOPLES OF THE EARTH;
THEN AND ONLY THEN, SHALL YE HAVE PEACE.

— SANSKRIT



The American Field Service was founded in 1915 as a volunteer ambulance service with the French Armies, later adding a "camion" service. In World War II, the AFS provided a volunteer ambulance service in the field and at the front with French, British, Indian, Polish, Italian, South African, and New Zealand troops. Daily person to person contacts between people of different nationalities promotes international understanding, respect, and affection, they found. And, in this spirit, the American Field Service in peacetime has sponsored international scholarships—the AFS Fellowships for French Universities from 1919 to 1950 and, since 1947, the rapidly growing teen-age programs.

For further information, please write to:

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