

Dear host family,

Hi, My name is Zachary Landers. I live with my two parents and younger brother in Austin, Texas. I am still in high school, but I will graduate in December 2019 (this has probably already happened by the time you read this). I'm 18 and will be 19 before I come to Russia. I like to spend my free time reading, playing video games, and hiking. I speak English, Finnish, and some Karelian and Latin. I have a great interest in languages, so an opportunity to help a family improve their English skills is very exciting for me as well as the opportunity to learn Russian.

I enjoy Russian music, literature, history, and food. In fact, I plan to study Russian when I go to college. My favorite Russian musician is Dmitri Shostakovich. My favorite Russian writer is Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. My favorite Russian food is pelmeni with horseradish. I am not a picky eater, so please do not worry about making American food to make me feel comfortable. In fact, I would prefer it if you continued to do all the things that you would normally do while I am there.

I was an exchange student in Finland for 11 months. During that time, I stayed with two host families. I stayed with one for ten months in a small town named Ojakkala. I stayed with the second host family for one month on an island called Laajasalo. I also went to a Finnish high school and took my lessons in Finnish. It was an absolutely amazing experience, and I would love to do it again. I learned how to live closely with individuals that I was not related to.

Most of all, I would love to be in a family where I can become a part of their daily lives, enjoying the family activities that they do and helping with the chores. I am excited about this opportunity and look forward to a rewarding time together.