

# ATAD Board - Minutes of Meeting

February 7 , 2023

FINAL

**Present:** Sharon Garofanello, Iva Doser, George Morgan, Suzanne Isgrigg, Peggy Lull, Deb Alwell, Jody Lehr Waite, MJ Stark, Les Knox, Barbara Pellicano, Marina Sweany, Randy Peacock, Alicia Ward.

**Call to order:** The meeting was called to order via Zoom at 7:02 pm by President Sharon Garofanello. The minutes from January 2023 meetings were approved.

## **Treasurer's report:**

There are no changes from last month as far as finances.

We are looking to register for the Webster Community Arts Day event on 4/15 from 10 am to 4 pm as soon as registration opens. Would love some volunteers even just for an hour to help that day.

## **Host Families: Sue Isgrigg**

We still only have one placement. Webster Schroeder High School has accepted Maria from Spain.

Here are the ways we have reached out to find more homes:

1. Twitter - thanks MJ
2. Email to former host families, current host families and our current International Students
3. Pittsford district email newsletter
4. Pittsford Girl Scout Facebook page
5. Nextdoor Neighbor - Pittsford/Fairport area
6. [ATAD.org](http://ATAD.org) lists the bios for six of the students
7. Sign on bulletin board at Pittsford Rec Center
8. Poster at Huntington Learning Center in Pittsford

How board can help:

1. Post on Nextdoor Neighbor in your area - Sue can give you a sample and a picture to use
2. Get an announcement in your church bulletin or other source - Example: Greg Lull sent a letter to the sport team families he works with
3. Reach out to foreign language teachers you know. - Sue has posters they could put up.

**Proposal:** We try offering our current students a monetary incentive to get us potential host families for next year. If they ask friends at school if they would host, ATAD could give them a "refund" of some of their fee for each family that ended up hosting. The International Student would give Sue the name, email, and phone of an adult to contact. If the family ended up hosting, we could "refund" some of the fee that the International Student paid ATAD. I suggest \$100 would be a great incentive. This needs board discussion and vote.

The Board approved the motion.

**CSET:**

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Paperwork was filed and fee paid in January. CSJET sent us a letter confirming our membership for the 2023-2024 school year.

## State Department:

On January 18, 2023 Sevis authorized an allotment for 4 additional forms for the academic year. The authorized allotment level for 2023/2024 academic year (7/1/2023 – 6/30/2024) is 12 forms. The Office of Designation has released 4 forms for the academic year based on the following information:

2023/2024 academic year authorized allotment level is 12. (12 allotment level – 8 forms remaining – 0 forms in active/initial/inactive status for AY 2023/2024 = 4 forms released).

On January 13, 2023 I contacted the State Department regarding the official stance on background checks required by our organization.

This is their response:

Reference: [22 CFR 62.25\(j\)\(7\)](#) Host family application and selection. Sponsors must adequately screen and select all potential host families and at a minimum must: “Verify that each member of the host family household 18 years of age and older, as well as any new adult member added to the household, or any member of the host family household who will turn eighteen years of age during the exchange student's stay in that household, has undergone a criminal background check (which must include a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry)”

I feel there are many companies that offer that service, including Intellicorp. I have done some research and First Advantage is utilized by many state organizations/ agencies for their background checks. I do not know their fees. I suggest that someone from ATAD that oversees that aspect of the organization should call and compare. Their website is [www.fadv.com](http://www.fadv.com)

What I like about Intellicorp is they have a high standard of archiving the reports in a secure location. First Advantage may offer that feature as well.

On January 5, 2023 the State Department was notified that ATAD, Program P-#-04526, did not have any spring placements to report for the academic year 2023.

## Activities: Randy Peacock

International Dinner will be Sunday February 26<sup>th</sup>.

## Americans Overseas: Peggy Lull

We received one AO application in January.

I have spoken to the applicant and am in the process of scheduling her AO interview.

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She is a 16-year-old Brighton HS junior, and her first choice is to apply for a summer in Iquitos, Peru. I explained that it is not currently an option due to the volatile political situation and the level 3 travel advisory by the US Department of State. She is excited about applying for her second choice of a summer in Majorca, Spain.

## **Website Update: George Morgan**

The bios of the new potential students are up on the website.

## **Sharon – Italy**

Alba is hoping to get to NYC before she leaves. Her host family will not take the trip. Things are going well with the host family and the school.

## **Marina – Spain**

Laura is doing well. She is going to be in the musical. She participates in all school events such as the Diversity club. This Saturday she went to the Winter Dance event and had a lot of fun. Laura is doing well in school; she is getting good grades in all subjects.

## **Alicia – Bamaco**

High school student from Mali is coming to US through the ALEX Program, a program of the State department, and needs a host family. The US state department is recruiting these students and screening them. They also issue them a visa. Alicia suggested contacting this program to introduce ATAD to the candidates that don't make it and acquire students for our program through that channel.

## **Barbara Pellicano - Spain**

Overall, Lara is doing well both at home and at school. She had positive experience on the volleyball ball team, and she currently is on the basketball team. She's very happy because they made it to sectionals.

Lara also had a successful 2nd quarter in school and continues to excel. She is a hard worker! The highlight of her NYC Christmas vacation was seeing the Empire State Building. She enjoys spending time with the family. Her favorite things to do are going for walks and watching movies together.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Iva Doser