

Comal Independent School District

NEWS RELEASE

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Hungarian exchange student seeks host family

For Daniel Bartal, being in America is an exciting adventure. He has everything he needs to enjoy it—except for a family to share the experience with.

Bartal is a foreign exchange student from Hungary enrolled in classes as a junior at Canyon High School, and he is seeking a family to host him while he is here throughout the school year.

“I just need a safe place where I can live during my stay,” he said.

Jennifer Deshotel and her two children in New Braunfels are Bartal’s welcome family, and they are trying to help him find a good host family that can help Bartal make the most of his American experience.

“Daniel is a great kid,” said Deshotel. “He is a wonderful person who is respectful, helpful, and an excellent student. I’m sure he will have a wonderful stay in the US, but we just need to find a permanent family for him.”

A host family would only need to provide Bartal with a separate bed and meals, as he has his own spending money for entertainment, clothes and other activities. Deshotel said the family can be a working family with or without children, singles, single parents or empty nesters.

“An ideal host family is a warm, welcoming and open-minded family that is eager to share the American culture and lifestyle with Daniel, and is interested in learning about other cultures as well,” Deshotel said.

Deshotel said she would encourage a family interested in hosting a foreign exchange student to accept Bartal into their home because it’s a great experience for both the host family and the exchange student.

“Hosting a foreign exchange student is a very enriching and rewarding experience as it contributes to a greater understanding of the world we live in,” she said. “We’ve had the opportunity to explore the differences in our cultures as well as discover similarities.



Being a welcome family has helped us to rediscover the simple things we take for granted. It's also important for Daniel because it will help him be a better global citizen, strengthen his English, and enable him to learn about our democracy and freedoms."

Although they are trying to help find a permanent home for Bartal, Deshotel said they would still enjoy spending time with him during his time in the United States.

"Daniel has been a joy to have in our home, and we will be happy to help the host family in any way we can," she said. "He makes friends easily and loves animals. We would welcome him to stay with us from time to time throughout the remaining school year, whether it is a night during the week or on the weekends. We are developing a lifelong friendship with Daniel and his family."

Bartal arrived in the US in mid-August and said he has enjoyed his time here so far.

"The Deshotels are really nice and helpful people," said Bartal. "They have helped me learn a lot about the American culture already. I also like being a student at Canyon High School. I'm having a good time. The teachers and students are interesting, nice and helpful."

Canyon High School US History teacher Kent Miller said Bartal is a great student.

"Daniel is attentive in class, and conscientious of his grades," he said. "He is polite and respectful, good humored, and a very good conversationalist. It is enlightening and fun to be able to glimpse the United States, and its history, through his eyes."

Miller said he thinks Bartal will fit right in with a host family since he is pleasant and easy-going.

"Daniel is very good at 'going with the flow,'" said Miller. "He has traveled extensively through Europe, and it is fascinating to view the United States from his point of view. The host family will learn as much from him as he does from his host family."

Learning about other cultures is what inspired the Hungarian exchange student to participate in the program.

"In my opinion, the best way to learn about other cultures in the world is to live in another country, see how people behave, talk to each other, think, live, what and how they learn in school, and how they accept someone from another country," said Bartal. "I wanted to learn American English, about American politics, government and history. I was also really interested to see how I can live so far from my family without their help."

Some of Bartal's favorite things to do in his spare time are biking, swimming on the school swim team, skiing, hiking, listening to music, watching movies and reading.

Bartal said he has already learned a great deal just in the six weeks he's been in the United States and he's looking forward to the rest of his stay.

"I have experienced that, although people live in a different culture here, they are just people as well," he said. "They can feel and they have the same problems. I hope that

I will have a very good time while I'm here, make some really great friends, learn English well and learn more about the American culture.”

Miller said it's imperative for Bartal to find a good host family in order for him to be successful and have a good experience in the United States.

“A good host family would allow Daniel to experience much of our nation's beauty and the warmth of the American people,” said Miller. “Daniel will take the knowledge he's gained, and the experiences he's had, back to Hungary when his time here is at an end. What could be a better way for an ordinary family to make such a positive impact on the world?”

For more information on how to become a host family for Bartal, please contact Deshotel at 210-232-3303.

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