



2022  
2023  
Annual Report





## FROM THE AMIS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

During the past fall semester, a Georgia State University student from Turkmenistan signed up for our Amigo Friendship program. When she first arrived in Atlanta, she had a hard time adjusting to the new and different culture of America. In the beginning, she was homesick, struggled to make new friends, and told her mother that she wanted to return home. Then, after attending our September Welcome Reception with her new Amigo family, she told them she was so excited about all the new friends that she made there, she felt she could now make it here in Atlanta. Since then, she has enjoyed outings and celebrated holidays with her Amigo family and recently successfully completed her first year of school.

Over the year, I've met many international students like this one who are grateful for AMIS because of the connections they have made through our events and Amigo program. I have enjoyed seeing friendships blossom after the event or initial introductions. We cannot underestimate the value of creating spaces where international students can be welcomed to Atlanta and make connections outside of campus.

Thank you for being a part of this wonderful organization. We are grateful for your contributions, big and small, in making the world a more peaceful, connected, and welcoming community not only for international students, but also for all of us.

Peace,

Rev. Irene Wong  
*Executive Director*

## FROM THE AMIS ACADEMIC ADVISORY BOARD CHAIR

While I've supported AMIS over the 20+ years I have been working in international education by encouraging students to participate, regularly attending the welcome event, promoting AMIS to colleagues and neighbors to volunteer, and even serving on the AMIS Advisory Board, it hasn't been until recently that I volunteered to be an Amigo myself. Being an Amigo has helped my children learn more deeply about parts of the world they haven't seen through a real-life person, unlike the reels they scroll through on a phone or tablet.



During the pandemic, AMIS swiftly transitioned to digital platforms, creating new programs and incorporating feedback from students and scholars to ensure valuable connections. Their diverse programs and delivery methods effectively reached students, filling gaps in campus activities and providing opportunities to connect with the local community.

I have known AMIS as a longstanding community partner to Atlanta area college and university educators, and now I have a more complete perspective on how their work impacts the people and families who volunteer with AMIS. International students and scholars who chose Atlanta as their new home receive a warm welcome from AMIS. All parties involved benefit from the opportunity to make new friends and have a window into the world at a time when greater understanding and curiosity about each other is increasingly important. I am proud to be a part of the AMIS community, knowing firsthand the mutual benefit the relationships and stories have for the students and the Atlantans who participate.

Dr. Marisa Atencio  
*Assistant Dean & Director of Global Education*  
*Oglethorpe University*

## 2022-2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In the 2022-2023 academic year, **AMIS served 520 international students overall.** Of these:

- **480** attended at least 1 AMIS event
- **190** participated in 2 or more ways with AMIS (Amigo program or event)
- **100** participated in 3 or more ways with AMIS
- **140** participated in the Amigo Friendship program

## OUR MISSION



*promotes cultural and global understanding through friendship and hospitality with international students and scholars in the greater Atlanta area.*



**AMIS's 44th AMIS Welcome Reception** was held on the afternoon of Saturday, September 24 at the Georgia Tech Coda Plaza. We welcomed **200** international students with **100** volunteers. We enjoyed live music, welcome speeches from **Atlanta City Councilmember Bryon D. Amos**, the Georgia Fulbright Association **President, Sandra Jeffrey**, salsa dancing, catered food, ice-breaker activities like a scavenger hunt, and a raffle drawing for new student gift baskets.

Over this academic year, AMIS held the following events:

### 15 SUMMER-FALL 2022 EVENTS

- 44th Welcome Reception
- Summer Barbecue
- High Museum of Art
- Ponce City Market & Beltline Walk
- Back to School Dinners
- Volunteer Meet & Greet
- New Student Pizza Dinners (2)
- Career Networking
- Movie Night hosted by Oglethorpe Presbyterian Church
- Trunk or Treat
- Thanksgiving Celebration
- Christmas Party hosted by Central Presbyterian Church
- Atlanta Symphony Orchestra at North Avenue Presbyterian Church
- End of Year Holiday Party

### 8 WINTER-SPRING 2023 EVENTS

- Firepit & S'mores
- Food Connects Us All
- MLK Park Visit
- Career Networking
- Graduation Party
- Atlanta Braves game
- Introduction to AMIS Volunteering (2)



**“Thank you so much for such overwhelming support by the AMIS team. You make Atlanta feel like home.”**

**- CHAITANYA, GEORGIA TECH STUDENT FROM INDIA**

## AMIS STUDENTS BY SCHOOL & COUNTRY



In 2022-2023, AMIS students came from **15** colleges/universities:

- Georgia Tech (230) **54%**
- Georgia State University (170) **33%**
- Emory University (40) **8%**
- Agnes Scott College (16) **3%**
- Oglethorpe University (9) **2%**
- Spelman (5)
- Others: Beulah Heights University, Kennesaw State University, SCAD, UGA, Georgia Southern, Georgia Southwestern State, University of North GA (3 or less)

(% out of 520)

In 2022-2023, AMIS students came from **90** different countries:

- India (180) **35%**
- Pakistan (28) **5%**
- China (20) **4%**
- Nigeria (8) **3%**
- South Korea (16) **3%**
- Taiwan (13)
- Brazil (9)
- France (9)
- Ghana (9)
- Germany (8)
- Saudi Arabia (8)
- Japan (8)
- Singapore (7)
- Vietnam (7)
- Columbia (5)
- Egypt (5)
- Malaysia (5)
- Spain (5)
- Bangladesh (4)
- Turkey (4)
- Iran (4)
- Kazakhstan (4)
- Kenya (4)
- Sri Lanka (4)

Others: Cameroon, Canada, Ecuador, Indonesia, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Turkey, Uruguay, Argentina, Austria, Bolivia, Cote D'Ivoire, Chile, Denmark, Georgia, Guinea, Ireland, Italy, Morocco, Palestine, South Africa, Thailand, Tanzania, Turkmenistan, Venezuela, Zambia (2-3 each) and more!

**“I am so grateful to have found the Amigo Program. It gave me the chance to make valuable contacts and helped me quickly settle into the new environment far away from my home country, family and friends. The people I met through the program became my new family in the US and made me feel at home.”**

**- SHERIF EL HARIRY,  
STUDENT INTERN FROM GERMANY**

## AMIS VOLUNTEERS

In 2022-2023, **190** volunteers were involved in AMIS programs and events. Of these:

- **150** came to at least one AMIS event
- **75** individuals/families served as Amigo Friendship volunteers
- Of these Amigo volunteers, **30**, or **40%** were NEW
- **60** participated in 2 or more ways (program and events) with AMIS.







*AMIS Board members top row: Rob Taylor, Brian Seungjae Yoo, John Hibbard, Amy Speas, Mitch Costley, Heidy Brusitus. Bottom row: Patricia Hibbard, Zebekiah Bortner, Karen Reynolds, Irene Wong*

## 2022-2023 AMIS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Class of 2023

**Heidy Brusitus**, Kiwanis Club of Atlanta  
**Wendy Kohn**, Realtor, Wyndt Realty  
**Nikki Régis**, Ebenezer Baptist Church  
**Amy Speas**, Senior Relationship Manager, Principal Financial Group

### Class of 2024

**Robert J. Taylor, IV**, Northside Kiwanis Club  
**Andra Martin**, Ebenezer Baptist Church  
**John Hibbard**, Mt. Vernon Presbyterian Church  
**Karen Reynolds**, North Avenue Presbyterian Church  
**Mesha Marie Ward**, CEO LeClass Events, LLC

### Class of 2025

**Zebekiah Bortner**, Senior Tax Manager, RFA Management  
**Mitch Costley**, North Avenue Presbyterian Church  
**Patricia Hibbard**, Mt. Vernon Presbyterian Church  
**Brian Seungjae Yoo**, Product Manager, Delta Airlines

### AMIS Officers

**President:** Amy Speas  
**Vice President:** Karen Reynolds  
**Treasurer:** Zebekiah Bortner  
**Secretary:** Patricia Hibbard

### AMIS Staff

**Executive Director:** Rev. Irene Wong  
**Amigo Director:** Jill Parker  
**Program Coordinator:** Petar Ivusic  
**Office Administrator:** Karen Dickey



**“I forged a friendship that I did not imagine.... It gave me strength to be able to be in a country where I had no friends. I was also able to overcome some taboos about American culture, and to feel more confident.”**

**-ALFREDO AMABLE, GEORGIA STATE MASTER'S STUDENT FROM PERU**



## ACADEMIC ADVISORY BOARD

**Marisa Atencio, Ed.D. (Chair)**  
 Assistant Dean and Director of Global Education  
 Oglethorpe University

**Veronique Barnes**  
 Associate Director, ISSS  
 Georgia State University

**Kathryn Gaylord-Miles**  
 Director, ISSS  
 Kennesaw State University

**Kathleen Kirk**  
 Assistant Director, ISSS  
 Georgia Tech

**Katia Kushano**  
 ESL Director  
 Beulah Heights University

**(vacant)**  
 Office of Student Affairs & Community Life  
 Columbia Theological Seminary

**Sandra McQueen**  
 Past-President  
 Georgia Fulbright Association

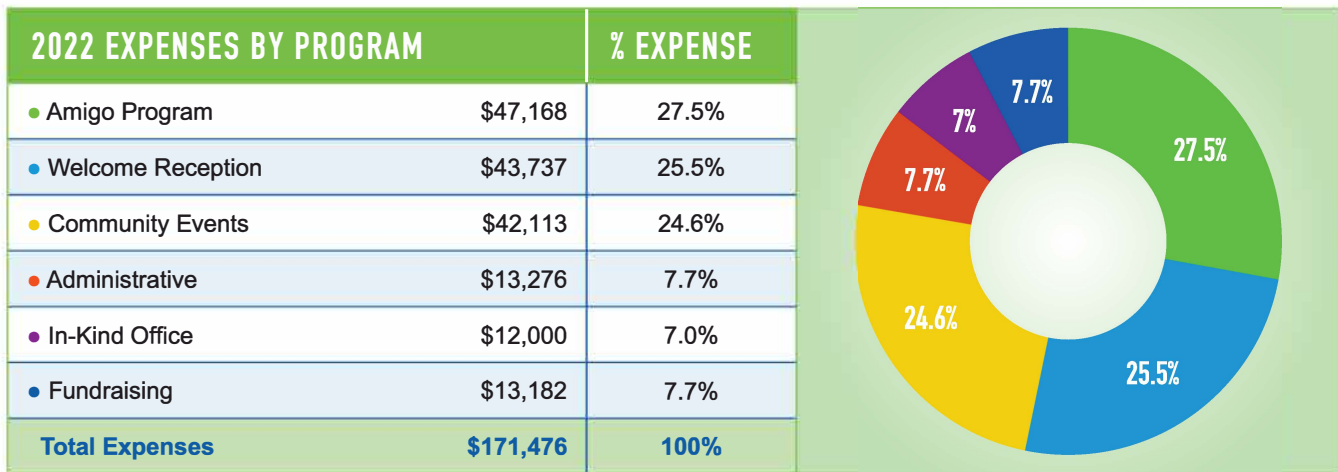
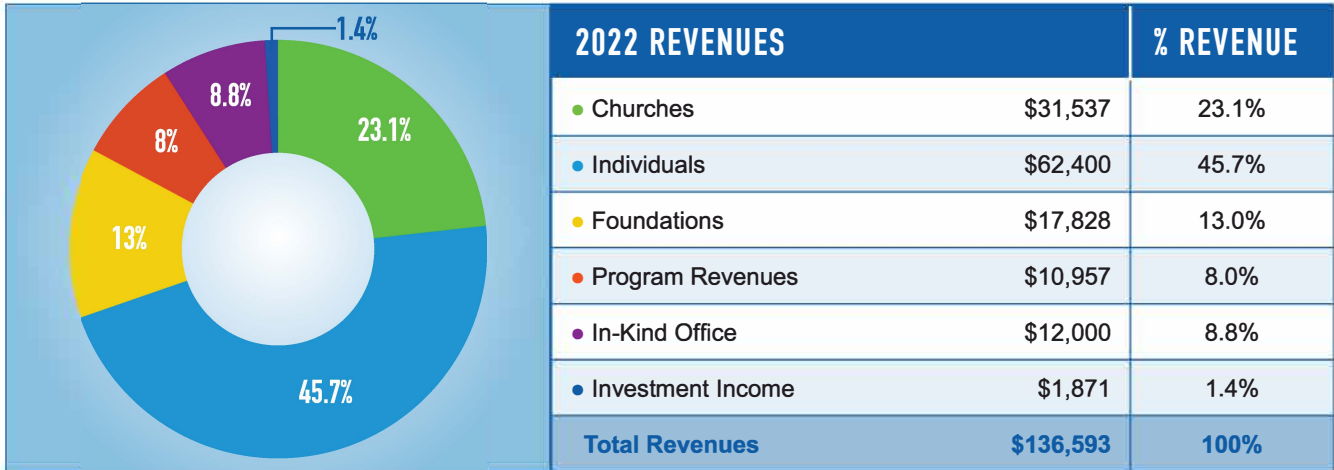
**Adria Motiwalla**  
 Student Support Coordinator  
 Georgia Tech Language Institute

**Sharon Santmyer**  
 Intensive English Program  
 Georgia State University

**Wafia Sayf**  
 International Student Advisor  
 Agnes Scott College

**Kirsten Schaezel, Ph.D.**  
 English Language Specialist  
 Emory University School of Law

## 2022 CONDENSED FINANCIALS (JANUARY 1, 2022-DECEMBER 31, 2022)



2022 ACTUAL EXPENSES	
Salaries & employee benefits	\$125,700
Contractors and professional fees	\$5,888
Printing, postage, email, website, etc.	\$6,756
Program & event expenses	\$13,181
Insurance, fees, miscellaneous	\$7,951
In-kind office	\$12,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$171,476</b>

NET ASSETS (ON DECEMBER 31, 2022)	
Cash and Equivalents	\$17,208
Investments	\$36,515
Endowment Fund	\$104,029
Other	\$4,919
Liabilities	(\$423)
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$162,248</b>

2022 was a challenging year for us financially. Rising costs and reduced giving resulted in a shortfall of revenues compared to expenses by the end of the year. We are responding by tightening our budget for 2023 and by seeking new sources of funding throughout the year.

We have introduced a NEW Monthly Giving Program called **AMIS Circle of Friends!** We invite you to join us as a monthly sustaining partner. Learn more at [www.amisatlanta.org/support](http://www.amisatlanta.org/support).

**Thank you for your partnership with AMIS!**



## A MILLION THANKS TO THE 2022-2023 AMIS VOLUNTEERS!

### AMIGO VOLUNTEERS

Fahed Abu-Akel  
 Caitlyn Alligood  
 Marisa Atencio  
 Samuel Bailey  
 Kendra Bethely  
 John Blankenhorn  
 Carol Brantley  
 Heidy Brusitus  
 John Callahan Jr  
 Amy Caloritis  
 Mary Crawford  
 Natalie Cruz  
 Susan Davidson  
 Lara De Lange  
 Carol Dew  
 Timothy Eastling  
 Jefferson Edge  
 Omar Elnahas  
 Oluwatola Femi-Olatunji  
 Andrea Gappell

Roseann Gapusan  
 Kaylin Garnett  
 Gabrielle Gonzalez  
 Andrew Griffin  
 Paola Guell  
 Kate Hansberry  
 Camille Harris  
 John Hibbard  
 Lyda Holness  
 Khimmie How  
 Jeffrey Hyde  
 Betsy Johnson  
 Nacir Jones  
 Kirk Keene  
 William Kenney  
 Camille Kesler  
 Sam Kim  
 Kathryn Kite  
 Shanta Knight  
 Wendy Kohn  
 Isabella Lacy

Ellen Lee  
 Lee Lo  
 Joan Lopez  
 Monica Mainwaring  
 Rena Marroquin  
 Sara Martin  
 Joe Moody  
 Laura Northrop  
 Lauren Olens  
 Jill Parker  
 Han Pham  
 Donna Poseidon  
 Darrell Preble  
 Susan Rembert  
 Talaia Respress  
 Shelby Rhee  
 Avni Sanghi  
 Brandon Selistyo  
 Stacy Shade  
 Kathryn Sheerin  
 Kelly Slater

David Small  
 Mary Smarr  
 Carolyn Southard  
 Anna Studdard  
 Robert J. Taylor, IV  
 Linny Tran  
 Hannah Ulrich  
 Oliver Wagner  
 Deidre Watson  
 Misty Whitlock  
 Irene Wong

### WELCOME RECEPTION TEAM

Ezekiel Adeniyi  
 Sam Bailey  
 Aravind Charles  
 Roy Conradi  
 Miguel Ashley Hernandez  
 Petar Ivusic  
 Kirk Keene

Shivam Kumar  
 Theresah Mensah  
 Sahil Shiraz  
 Peter Vu  
 Marie Ward  
 Brian Seungjae Yoo

### PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Ezekiel Adeniyi  
 Susie Davidson  
 Nadeen Green  
 Patricia Hibbard  
 Petar Ivusic  
 Wendy Kohn  
 Theresah Mensah

### CAREER NETWORKING TEAM

Zebekiah Bortner  
 Mitch Costley  
 Ashish Jain

## A MILLION THANKS TO THE 2022 AMIS DONORS!

(RECEIVED JANUARY 1, 2022 – DECEMBER 31, 2022)

### 10 CHURCHES

Alpharetta  
 Presbyterian  
 Covenant  
 Presbyterian  
 Ebenezer Baptist  
 First Presbyterian  
 Church of Atlanta  
 Mount Vernon  
 Presbyterian  
 North Avenue  
 Presbyterian  
 Oglethorpe  
 Presbyterian  
 Peachtree  
 Presbyterian  
 St. James United  
 Methodist  
 St. Martin in the  
 Fields Episcopal

### 6 FOUNDATIONS & GRANTS

Bright Wings  
 Foundation  
 Griffith Theological  
 Research  
 Foundation  
 John and  
 Mary Franklin  
 Foundation  
 Mount Vernon  
 Presbyterian  
 Foundation  
 Presbytery of  
 Greater Atlanta  
 Synod of South  
 Atlantic

### 4 KIWANIS CLUBS

Galleria NW  
 Atlanta Kiwanis  
 Club  
 Kiwanis  
 Foundation of  
 Atlanta, Inc.  
 Metro Atlanta  
 Kiwanis Club  
 Northside Kiwanis  
 Club Foundation

### 2 CORPORATE

Campus SIMS  
 Intact Insurance  
 Charitable Trust

### 4 COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

Beulah Heights  
 University  
 Georgia Institute of  
 Technology  
 Georgia State  
 University  
 Oglethorpe  
 University

### 6 WORLD PEACEMAKERS

\$2500-\$5500  
 Nadeen Green &  
 Ned Cone  
 Patricia & John  
 Hibbard  
 Doris Hoenig  
 Judy & Thomas  
 Jones

Kirk Keene  
 Robert Taylor IV

### 14 PRESIDENTS

\$1000-\$2499

Fahed Abu-Akel  
 Jody Andrade  
 Zebekiah Bortner  
 Heidy Brusitus  
 Betsy & Mitch  
 Costley  
 Rosa C. Howell  
 Sandra Jeffrey  
 Andra & Aubrey  
 Martin  
 Thomas McLeod  
 Karen Reynolds  
 Karen & John  
 Shen  
 Carolyn & Tim  
 Southard  
 Amy Speas  
 Irene & William  
 Wong

### 8 AMBASSADORS

\$500-\$999

Marjorie & Oliver  
 Anderson  
 Kristen Aycock  
 & Richard  
 Heimbarger  
 Lelia Crawford  
 Anne Haltiwanger  
 Camille & Paul  
 Kesler

Judith Miller  
 Adria & Shafi  
 Motiwalla  
 Martha Jane  
 Petersen

### 48 FRIENDS

\$100-\$499

Mary & Thomas  
 Amos  
 Marisa Atencio  
 Tony Ayoub  
 Carol Beckman  
 Susan Brister  
 Catherine Butler  
 Verônica Caitano  
 de Santana  
 Joyce & Tucker  
 Cox  
 Sussie Craig  
 Bettie Durrah  
 Ellen Eng  
 Rebecca & David  
 Evans  
 Anne & Leaf  
 Fayssoux  
 Gail & Marion  
 Glover Jr.  
 Martha & John  
 Head  
 Josephine Hill  
 Laveta Hilton  
 Jeffrey Hyde  
 Jonnie Johnston  
 Robert Jones

Karen & Michael  
 Kelly  
 Audrie Kelton  
 Wendy Kohn  
 Jihyun Koo  
 Sue Levine

Haiying Wang &  
 Zhongjie Li  
 Duncan McClusky  
 Belle Miller  
 McMaster  
 Jeanne & Ross  
 Mielke  
 Greg Moor

Laura & Bruce  
 Northrop  
 Dean Ota  
 Kathleen Parker  
 Donna Poseidon  
 Gretchen & Fred  
 Reese Jr.  
 Nikki Régis  
 Adele Shepherd  
 JoAnn & Marvin  
 Simmers  
 Martha Ann  
 Stegar

Lydia & Benny  
 Sumardi  
 Carolyn Talley  
 George Tan  
 Joan & David  
 Towles  
 Ruth Webb

Anne & Bryan  
 Wheeler  
 Elizabeth & Chris  
 Willett  
 Gretta Wray  
 Chris York

IN MEMORY OF LEN  
 PHILLIPS  
 Kirk Keene

IN HONOR OF REV. DR.  
 FAHED ABU-AKEL  
 Martha Ann  
 Stegar

AMIS CIRCLE OF  
 FRIENDS  
 Heidy Brusitus  
 John Bunting  
 Tucker Cox  
 Sam & Bithia Kim  
 Adria Motiwalla  
 Sue Levine  
 John & Karen  
 Shen  
 George Tan  
 Brian Seungjae  
 Yoo

## SUPPORT AMIS ATLANTA

### Join our Circle of Friends

Sign up for our monthly giving program to ensure that AMIS's mission of promoting cultural and global understanding through friendship and hospitality with international students and scholars continues.



AMIS Circle of Friends members understand the value and importance of supporting international students by donating monthly to support AMIS Atlanta. Any amount large or small will make a difference. Your gifts are tax-deductible. Does your employer match your donations? Let us know. Sign up at [www.amisatlanta.org/support](http://www.amisatlanta.org/support).

### Save the Date



September 16, 2023 at 2-5 pm

### 45th AMIS Welcome Reception for International Students

Georgia Tech-Coda Tech Square Plaza  
756 W. Peachtree Street NW, Atlanta, GA 30308

Go to [amisatlanta.org/welcome](http://amisatlanta.org/welcome) for more details. Please consider becoming a sponsor of our event! Various levels are available.



## BE AN AMIGO FRIEND

Sign up to be an Amigo Friend to a new international student arriving in August.

Registration is open for volunteers in our international friendship program. New students will be arriving in August and we are looking for volunteer Amigo friends to meet them for friendship and cultural exchange. We ask you to meet in-person and reach out to them quarterly. Your care will mean so much to them, and the student will enrich your understanding of the world.

Learn more at [www.amisatlanta.org/volunteer](http://www.amisatlanta.org/volunteer).



Walk  
together  
Talk  
together  
ALL YOU  
NATIONS OF  
THE WORLD  
Only then  
shall we  
have peace.  
[www.amisatlanta.org](http://www.amisatlanta.org)

### Contact Us

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470-851-1248

Mail: AMIS Atlanta  
607 Peachtree St. NE  
Atlanta, GA 30308



Like us on social:

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AMIS\_Atlanta  
#amisatlanta

AMIS Atlanta

Leave a 5 ★ review for us on Google and Facebook!

**“Join to make the world a smaller place, one international student at a time!”**

**- ANDREA GAPPELL, AMIGO VOLUNTEER**