amis

**WELCOMING and CONNECTING International Students with FRIENDS in the Greater Atlanta area**

# 2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT

## Dear AMIS Friends,

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021 presented many challenges and opportunities for AMIS as we carried out our mission of promoting global understanding through friendship and hospitality with international students. A theme for us was "Reimagining International Friendship" as we learned new ways to welcome and connect through virtual events and outdoor, socially distanced, masked events starting in the fall. These opportunities for students to interact with others on a personal level were deeply appreciated during a time when they had few other opportunities to socialize.

Although international student enrollment decreased over the year and most students attended classes remotely, we developed a core group of international students who now regularly engage with AMIS in multiple ways through our programs and events. These students, who remained in Atlanta during the pandemic, faithfully attend our events, text through our WhatsApp group, tell other students about AMIS, and give us input for our planning.

Some AMIS volunteers told us they would take a break from volunteering during the pandemic, which we supported. The good news is that we onboarded over 40 NEW, first-time Amigo Friendship partners through volunteer websites like Hands on Atlanta or a Google search. This record number of new volunteers is exciting and means we will be prepared to welcome new international students when they arrive this next academic year as we emerge from the pandemic.

I hope you have been well during this time, and I hope you enjoy this report on AMIS's developments over the past year. We could not have been as successful without a wonderful and dedicated team of Board and committee members, volunteers, and Susan Rembert, our Program Administrator, all of whom, we are fortunate to have in AMIS. I am confident that we will be a stronger organization because of the creativity and ingenuity we learned during this unprecedented season.

Peace to you,

Irene

Rev. Irene Wong
Executive Director

# 2020-2021 Highlights

**The Amigo Friendship Partners Program** connected **96** international students with **70** local American friends/families, including **40** first-time Amigo volunteers.

## 40 Virtual Events involving 100 students and 50 volunteers:

- **10** AMIS Talks (April/May)
- **9** Summer Topical Groups (Careers, Culture, Movies)
- **9** Fall Topical Groups (America 101, Careers, Culture, Election, TV)
- **3** "Kick-offs" for new students and volunteers
- **5** Christmas with AMIS Zooms
- **4** Spring Topical Groups (Culture and Careers)

## 11 Outdoor In-person Events enjoyed by 100 students and 60 volunteers (many attending multiple times between October and May):

- Piedmont Park and Villa International
- Thanksgiving with AMIS
- Christmas Lights Walk
- New Year's Firepit
- MLK Walk
- Valentine's/Lunar New Year
- GT Photo Scavenger Hunt
- Movie Night
- Easter with AMIS
- Spring Hike at Mason Mill Park
- Graduation Celebration

## AMIS Students

In the 2020-2021 academic year, AMIS served **300 international students** who were involved in AMIS programs and events. Of these;

- **96** students were matched with a friend through the Amigo Friendship program
- **100** students participated in one or more virtual event
- **100** students participated in at least one in-person event
- **130** students received welcome packets with reusable masks
- **34% (or 102)** of our students participated in one or more AMIS program or event

## AMIS Students by School

**These figures include students who participated in one or more AMIS events or programs (% out of 300):**

- Georgia State University (85) 28%
- Georgia Tech (61) 20%
- Emory University (40) 13%
- Au Pairs (20) 7%
- Beulah Heights University (7) 2%
- Kennesaw State University (5)
- Columbia Theological Seminary (5)
- Mercer (5)
- GSU-Perimeter (5)
- Oglethorpe University (4)
- UGA– Tifton (4)
- Agnes Scott College (3)
- Georgia Southwestern State Univ (2)
- Chattahoochee Tech (1)
- Morehouse College (1)
- Unknown or out of state (52)

## AMIS Students by Country

**In 2020-2021, students participating in AMIS programs and events came from 57 different countries (% out of 300):**

- India (42) 14%
- China (36) 11%
- Colombia (13) 4%
- Nigeria (13) 4%
- Pakistan (13) 4%
- South Korea (12) 4%
- Mexico (9) 3%
- Brazil (9) 3%
- Vietnam (7)
- Saudi Arabia (6)
- Turkey (5)
- Ghana (5)
- Ecuador (5)
- Italy (4)
- Bolivia (4)
- Bangladesh (4)

**Countries with 3 or less students:**
Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Bahamas, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Congo, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Iran, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Malawi, Malaysia, Moldova, Nepal, Netherlands, Panama, Poland, Puerto Rico, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Taiwan, Togo, Tunisia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Zimbabwe.

## AMIS Volunteers

In 2020-2021, **136 volunteers** participated in AMIS programs and events. Of these:

- **70** individuals/families served as Amigo friends (of these **57%** were new volunteers)
- **24** joined Thanksgiving with AMIS
- **15** volunteered with Christmas with AMIS
- **50** joined virtual events
- **60** participated with in-person events
- **14** served as Board members
- **41% (or 56)** volunteers served in more than one event/ program

## From an AMIS Student:

"I truly feel so lucky to be involved in the Amigo Friendship program where I enjoyed good times chatting and hanging out with my partner. What I gained from this has been far beyond my initial expectation..., because I not only got to know Atlanta better as an international student, but also made a sincere friend that I truly can share my thoughts in life. This irreplaceable experience is especially valuable to me in the middle of the pandemic."

— Lu, Georgia Tech undergrad from China

## From an AMIS Volunteer:

The Amigo program is a great opportunity for a volunteer to do some good in the community by welcoming international students who are looking for American connections, as well as an opportunity to broaden your own learning, fun, and enrichment. It is also energizing to be around young people who are eager to learn and have new experiences!

A highlight this year was hosting my Amigo with other international students for a Halloween gathering where they experienced the American tradition of making Jack-o-Lanterns from pumpkins and dressing up in costumes. Everyone loved this uniquely American activity and had fun designing and cutting the pumpkins!

— Susan Davidson, volunteer

### Our Mission:

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

**"The Amigo program has given me the opportunity to meet and interact with people physically even in this pandemic climate. We went out to The Battery Atlanta baseball stadium, met up with some other AMIS friends, and had a great time, eating, and sharing cultures."**

— Yamoah, Georgia State University Master's student from Ghana

# Holiday Happenings

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we canceled our usual Thanksgiving and Christmas International House programs. However, we discovered new ways to celebrate the holidays with international students!

For Thanksgiving, we offered two outdoor small group locations to enjoy a traditional Thanksgiving meal, which we had catered and delivered. One location was at Villa International near Emory and the other was in front of Westminster Christian Fellowship on the Georgia Tech campus. Thanks to many generous donors, an online fundraising campaign to raise money for the student meals was able to cover the costs.

For Christmas, we created a virtual series of events called Christmas with AMIS. Students were invited to spend an hour every afternoon during the week before Christmas via Zoom. In advance, we delivered Christmas boxes filled with supplies for crafts like ornament making and gingerbread house decorating, a small Christmas tree, a small filled stocking donated by the International Club at Alexander High School in Douglasville, GA, and several wrapped gifts. Thirty-two students signed up and fifteen volunteers participated over the five days. We had several international student families with children join us who enjoyed doing the activities at home.

Deepak (pictured top right), an Emory Ph.D. student from India who is in Atlanta with his wife and pre-school aged son said,

**"I felt like I really got to celebrate Christmas this year, thanks to AMIS."**

We discovered that holding outdoor holiday celebrations provides fun opportunities for cultural sharing and exchange, and international students enjoy celebrating other holidays like New Year's, Valentine's Day, and Easter with AMIS. Students have already requested that we do these events again next year!

"I soooo loved the Xmas with AMIS event last December! It made up for the COVID-ruined Christmas spirit for sure!"

— Student

"The Christmas events this year helped me pass this rough time. This is my second year in the US. Last year, Christmas break was horrible: no-one around, almost everything was closed, however this year, this gave me something to wait for everyday and be happy about it. Thanks! "

— Student

"I had a great time during Christmas. Playing games, listening to stories, making new friends, opening gifts from AMIS together, etc, are wonderful memories for me." — Vuong Do, from Vietnam

# Academic Advisory Board

In January 2021, we started a NEW Academic Advisory Board made up of representatives from twelve International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) offices and Language Programs at the higher education institutions we have been partnering with throughout metro Atlanta. The purposes of the Advisory Board are to give AMIS input for our programs and future planning, improve communication between our offices, provide an opportunity for networking, and strengthen our partnerships.

## Advisory Board Members:

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

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

**Jasmine L. Douglas**
Director of Admissions
Beulah Heights University

**Christian Gallie**
Intensive English Program,
Georgia State University

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

**Peter W.M. Karanja**
Vice President of Operations
Beulah Heights University

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

**Khalfani Lawson**
Office of Student Affairs & Community Life
Columbia Theological Seminary

**Sandra McQueen**
Past-President
GA Association of Fulbright Scholars

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

**Jody Pritt**
Director, ISSS
Georgia State University

**Wafia Sayf**
International Student and Study Aboard Advisor
Agnes Scott College

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

# AMIS Board of Directors

### CLASS OF 2021
Paul Brown, First Presbyterian Church
John Hibbard, Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church
Andra Martin, Ebenezer Baptist Church
Robert Taylor IV, Northside Kiwanis Club
Karen Turney, Covenant Presbyterian Church
Belinda Wedgwood, St. Martin in the Fields Episcopal Church

### CLASS OF 2022
Mitch Costley, North Avenue Presbyterian Church
Patricia Hibbard, Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church
Kirk Keene, Galleria/Northwest Kiwanis Club
Emily Texter, Oglethorpe Presbyterian Church

### CLASS OF 2023
Heidy Brusitus, Atlanta Kiwanis Club
Doug Elliott, unaffiliated
Nikki Régis, Ebenezer Baptist Church
Amy Speas, unaffiliated

### 2020-2021 OFFICERS
**President: Kirk Keene**
**Vice President: Doug Elliot**
**Treasurer: Robert Taylor, IV**
**Secretary: Patricia Hibbard**

### AMIS STAFF
**Executive Director: Rev. Irene Wong**
**Program Administrator: Susan Rembert**

### EMERITUS MEMBERS
**Executive Director Emeritus: Rev. Dr. Fahed Abu-Akel**
**Board Member Emeritus: Doris Hoenig**

> **It takes a village. This is why I've been a supporter of AMIS programs over the 20+ years I've worked in international education. AMIS has been an important longstanding community partner to Atlanta area college and university educators. 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 to the world.**

— Marisa Atencio, Ed.D., Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Global Education at Oglethorpe University

## 2020 Condensed Financials (January 1, 2020-December 31, 2020)

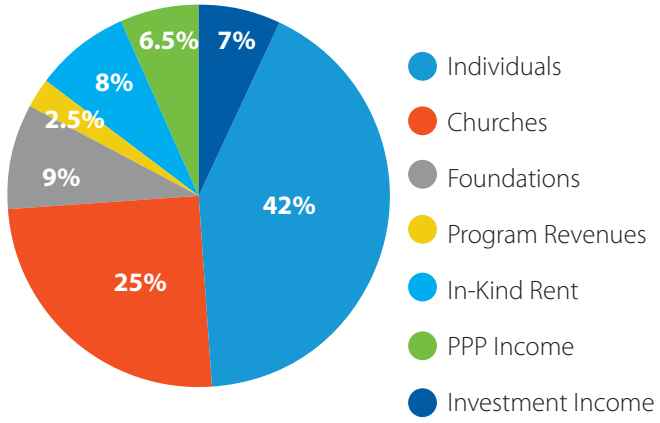
| **2020 Revenues** | | **% Revenue** |
|---|---|---|
| Individuals | $61,466 | 42% |
| Churches | $37,300 | 25% |
| Foundations | $13,400 | 9% |
| Program Revenues | $ 3,600 | 2.5% |
| In-Kind Rent | $12,000 | 8% |
| PPP Income | $ 9,547 | 6.5% |
| Investment Income | $10,178 | 7% |
| **Total Revenues:** | **$147,491** | **100%** |

| **2020 Expenses:** | | **% Expenses** |
|---|---|---|
| Programs: | | 83.8% |
| Amigo | $86,295 | |
| Welcome | $17,086 | |
| Christmas | $20,099 | |
| Administrative (includes in-kind rent) | $16,797 | 11.4% |
| Fundraising | $ 7,094 | 4.8% |
| **Total Expenses:** | **$147,371** | |

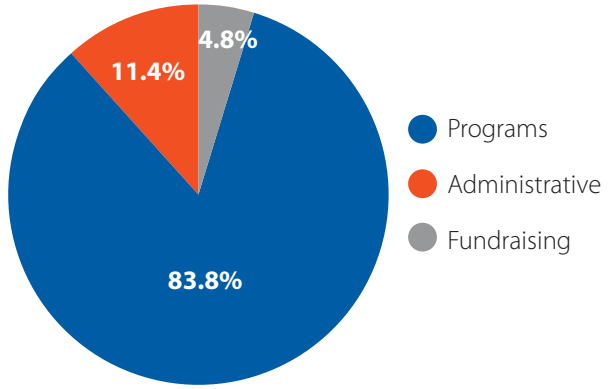
| | |
|---|---|
| **2020 Net Income** | **$120** |

| **Assets (on December 31, 2020)** | |
|---|---|
| Cash and Equivalents | $37,396 |
| Investments | $32,430 |
| Endowment Fund | $128,799 |
| Other Assets | $522 |
| **Total Assets** | **$199,147** |
| Liabilities | $834 |
| **Total Fund Balances** | **$198,313** |

**2020 REVENUES**




**2020 EXPENSES**




We are thankful for many generous donors who sustained us during a challenging year. Even though our program revenues were reduced due to canceling Christmas International House, the difference was made up by a forgiven PPP loan and our investment income. We are grateful for those who invested in AMIS years ago as those gifts continue to support us today.

**Please consider becoming a monthly or annual contributor to AMIS in 2021.**

**Donate online at: www.amis-inc.org/donate**

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

# A Million Thanks to the 2020-2021 AMIS Volunteers!

**AMIGO VOLUNTEERS**
Sundari Arunarasu
Samuel Bailey
Ashleigh Baker
Pam Barnett
Dan Boozer
Zebekiah Bortner
Edward Brinson
Catherine Butler
Cathy Carpenter
Jessica Craney
Susan Davidson
Renee & Felipe Dias
Abby Ferrin
Lauren Gimotty
Viviana Gonzalez
Nadeen Green & Ned Cone
Jadah & Davine Hawkins
Jennifer Hayden
Jasiel Hernandez Garcia & Jessie Trawick Garcia
Elizabeth Hiatt
John & Patricia Hibbard
Beverly Hill
Ashish Jain
Risha Johnson
Kirk & Peggy Keene
Isabella Lacy
Amanda Lang
Kasey & Chris Lieu
Andra Martin
Tom McLeod
Sandy McQueen
Cliff Mettier
Rachel Murray
Cristyn Narciso
Linh Nguyen
Bruce Northrop
Lauren Olens
Darryl Payne
Raquel Penalver Bartolome
Christina Porter
Donna Poseidon
Jonathan Quigg
Jonathan Rebby John
Nikki Régis
Betsy & Steve Rembert
Shelby & Kyungho Rhee
Kathleen Rouse
Daphne Saavedra
Avni Sanghi
Delight Satter
Tianna & Nathan Sims-Miller
Kelly Slater
Christine Solomon
Emily Spears
Kelly Tchemi
Emily & Carl Texter
Karen Turney
J Vaughn
Amy Vorhauer
Oliver Wagner
Marie Ward
Kent Watkins
Raquel & Adam Wilson
Sylvia Wilson
Carole Wooten
Sylvia Wrobel
Seung Jae Yoo
Hilarie Zombek

**PROGRAMS COMMITTEE**
Ezekiel Adeniyi (GSU Student)
Gissel Barbecho (GSU Student)
Susie Davidson
Nadeen Green
Patricia Hibbard
Doris Hoenig
Emily Texter (Co-Chair)
Karen Turney (Co-Chair)
Belinda Wedgwood

**VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE**
Mitch Costley (Chair)
Uzair Laeeq (KSU Student)
Linh Nguyen
Donna Poseidon
Tianna Sims-Miller
Emily Spears
Amy Speas
George Tan (GT student)
Amy Vorhauer

**ADDITIONAL VIRTUAL EVENT PANELISTS (besides Committee members)**
Christina Porter
Shiva Bahrami
Ashish Jain
Jasiel Hernandez Garcia
Shawn Sun

**Special thanks for sharing their outdoor space:**
Westminster Christian Fellowship (WCF at GT)
Villa International

# A Million Thanks to the 2020-2021 AMIS Donors!

(Received January 1, 2020 – December 30, 2020 and In Memorial and In Honor of gifts through April 30, 2021)

**SPONSORING CHURCHES**
Ebenezer Baptist
First Presbyterian of Atlanta
Mount Vernon Presbyterian
North Avenue Presbyterian
Oglethorpe Presbyterian
Peachtree Presbyterian
St. James United Methodist

**CONTRIBUTING CHURCHES**
Alpharetta Presbyterian
Central Presbyterian
Covenant Presbyterian
Northwest Presbyterian

**FOUNDATIONS AND GRANTS**
CLC Foundation
GracieCam Foundation
Griffith Theological Research Foundation.
John and Mary Franklin Foundation
Mount Vernon Presbyterian Foundation
Peacemaking Fund, Synod of South Atlantic
Presbyterian Women, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta

**KIWANIS CLUBS**
Galleria NW Atlanta Kiwanis
Kiwanis Foundation of Atlanta
Northside Kiwanis Club Foundation

**ATLANTA COLLEGES AND UNIVERISITIES**
Beulah Heights University
Chattahoochee Technical College
Georgia Institute of Technology
Oglethorpe University

**WORLD PEACEMAKERS: $2500-$6000**
Anonymous
Carol & Jim Dew
Nadeen Green & Ned Cone
John & Patricia Hibbard
Tom & Judy Jones
Kirk & Peggy Keene
Robert Taylor, IV

**PRESIDENTS: $1000-$2499**
Fahed Abu-Akel
Jody & Billy Andrade
Heidy Brusitus
Mitch & Betsy Costley
Rosa Howell
Andra & Aubrey Martin
Judith Miller
Donna Poseidon
Amy Speas
Irene & William Wong

**AMBASSADORS: $500-$999**
Marion & Gail Glover
Anne Haltwanger
Jonnie Johnston
Duncan McClusky
Martha Jane Petersen
Len Phillipps & Barbara Boardman
Karen Reynolds
Marvin & JoAnn Simmers
William & Carolyn Talley
Emily & Carl Texter
Ruth Webb

**FRIENDS: $100-$499**
Anonymous
Mary & Anthony Amos
Marjorie Anderson
Marisa Atencio
Kristen Aycock & Richard Heimburger
Tony Ayoub
Marcia Bansley
Carol Beckman
Dan Boozer
Owen Braun
Paul Brown
Wheeler & Anne Bryan
Gretta Wray Burns
S.N. Collins, Jr.
Jean & John Cox
Susan Craig
Lelia Crawford
Paul Dimmick
Dené Dixon
Tim Eastling
Doug Elliott
Ellen Eng
David & Rebecca Evans
Lynn Ezell
Anne Fayssoux
John & Camille Fenton
Leon & Janet Folsom
Marjorie Gardner
Jean Gettys
George & Sally Hauptfuhrer
Steve Hayden
John & Martha Head
Carol & Neale Hightower
Josephine Hill
Doris Hoenig
Sam Hong
Robert S. Jones
Karen & Michael Kelly
Audrie Kelton
Camille & Paul Kesler
Bret Kugelmass
Zhongjie Li & Haiying Wang
James Loth
Monica Mainwaring
Ann Carter & Allen McDonald
Belle Miller McMaster
Jeanne & Ross Mielke
Greg Moor
Adria & Shafi Motiwalla
Sandy & Jay O'Meara
Dean Ota
Kathleen Parker
Jim & Marcia Reese
Nikki Régis
Adele Shepherd
Hattie Shipp
Tianna & Nathan Sims-Miller
Martha Ann Stegar
Phoebe Stevenson
Genie Stringer
Patricia Sullivan
Benny & Lydia Sumardi
Paul & Margaret Tokunaga
Joshua Tolbert
David & Joan Towles
Belinda Wedgwood
Elizabeth & Chris Willett
Chris York

**IN MEMORY OF DR. MARY SHIBLI ZUMOT (1938-2021)**
Marilyn Humphreys & Frank Hughes
Mary Caroline Lindsay
Fred & Gretchen Reese
Marvin and JoAnn Simmers

**IN MEMORY OF GINGER DEWBERRY**
Dale Dewberry
Anonymous

**IN MEMORY OF REV. PETE PETERSEN**
Jean Gettys

**IN MEMORY OF JOE TAYLOR**
Marion and Gail Glover

**IN MEMORY OF MR. AND MRS. RICHARD WHITTIER**
John & Carol Hardenburg

**IN HONOR OF REV. DR. FAHED ABU-AKEL**
Marcia Bansley
Tim Eastling
Janet & Leon Folsom
Patricia Sullivan

**IN HONOR OF CIH**
Anonymous

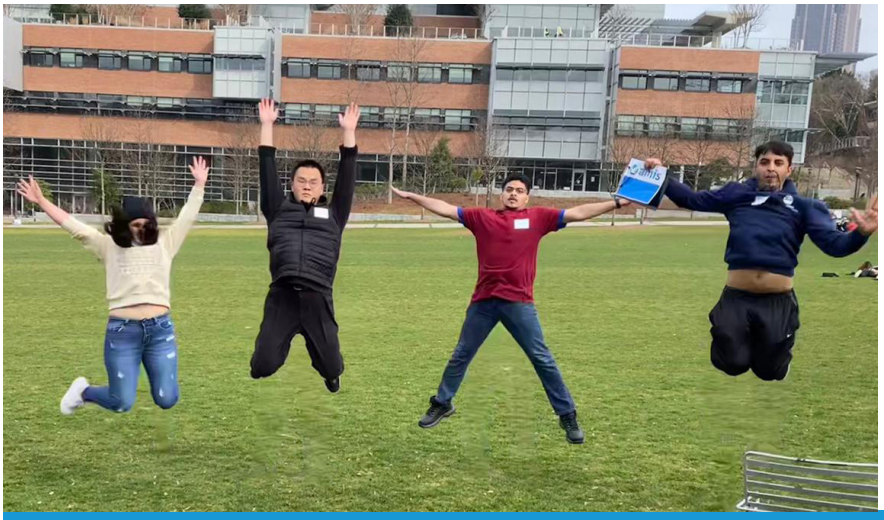
**IN HONOR OF DORIS HOENIG**
Doug Elliott
Irene & William Wong

**IN HONOR OF NADEEN GREEN AND NED CONE**
Dené Dixon

**IN HONOR OF NADEEN GREEN**
ThatKey.com

**IN HONOR OF KAREN TURNEY**
Presbyterian Women

**IN-KIND DONATIONS**
Robert Taylor, IV



## SAVE THE DATE

**Saturday, September 18, 2021 at 2-4 pm**

**43rd AMIS Welcome Reception for International Students and Scholars**

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

We are excited to bring back our annual Welcome Reception this fall to an outdoor venue on the Georgia Tech Midtown campus. Located between the GT Bookstore and the North Avenue MARTA, the new GT-CODA Tech Square Plaza is easily accessible with plenty of nearby public parking. Registration will open on our website in July.

**More info: www.amis-inc.org/welcome**

Sign up to be an Amigo Friendship Partner with an international student at:
**www.amis-inc.org/amigovolunteer**

## Contact us

**www.AMIS-INC.org**

**office@amis-inc.org**

**470-851-1248**

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

amis
ATLANTA MINISTRY WITH INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Like our Facebook pages:
**AMIS.INC**

Instagram:
**AMIS_INC #amisatl**

**Do you get our Email Volunteer Updates? Let us know at office@amis-inc.org if we can add you to our list.**