



Meet Salome from Georgia

What is your full name?

Salome Latsabidze

Where are you from?

Tbilisi, the capital of the Republic of Georgia.

What are the people like?

They are very hospitable, nice, and fun.

Is the weather different here?

We get less snow and it does not get as cold.

How did you get involved in the exchange program?

My English teacher told me about the program. It is called the Flex Future Leaders exchange program. There are three levels. If you reach the third level, the whole trip is free. There are about five thousand kids that tryout and only fifty get to come to the U.S. There is lots of psychological testing to see how independent we were and if we could adapt to US culture. There was a lot of other testing and essays we had to do.

How do you keep in touch with your family and

friends?

My parents call me all the time and I use email.

What kinds of things do you do with your friends back home?

Pretty much the same things that everyone here does. We go to the movies, we go shopping, and we have sleepovers, basically just like here.

Do you have your license?

No, I think the age is 18 though.

How does school here compare to there?

I like it better here. It is more pleasant and you have more choices and after school activities (no extracurricular at home). The school is a lot nicer and more organized. I like how school here actually impacts your life. In Georgia they do not care much about grades. Here you have to do good in school to be successful.

Who are you living with here?

I live with Maize Deane. She lives on Winter Street in Orange. I also live with Shreya Chandola. She is an exchange student from India.

Are you having problems adjusting to American food?

The food here is very good. I have had no problems adjusting.

How did your expectations of life in the US compare with what you've experienced so far?

Before we came we had an orientation and they told us that there are too many differences and that you cannot expect anything. I really tried not to have any expectations. I did have some expectations that I got from watching movies and MTV but they failed. They were completely wrong.

What are people from your country called, Georgians?

We are called the Sakartvelo.

Do you miss your friends and family?

Yes

Do you like it here?

I like it here better.

Is there anything else about Georgia that we should know?

It is separate from Russia and has completely different cultures. Georgia has very old history—over 3,000 years. The Georgian alphabet is one of only 14 in the world.

What is one major difference between living in Georgia and living here?



Salome Latsabidze, from the Republic of Georgia, is living with Maize Deane in Orange.

What are your hobbies or special talents?

In Georgia you don't need a car to get around because there is a lot to do but here you basically depend on someone having a car. There is also a lot more public transportation as well. I never have a problem getting where I want to go.

Do you have any hobbies or special talents?

I play the piano.



Staff and the flag of Georgia: Mike M, Scott W, Lindsay R, Chris G, Amy M, Amanda A, Ben B, Megan D and Tony F. Read Tony's interview with Salome above.