

Sister Cities Commission of the Village of Hoffman Estates 2015 Football Exchange with the Angoulême Marauders

From October 17, 2015 through October 25, 2015, the Sister Cities Commission of the Village of Hoffman Estates coordinated an exchange with a group of football players from the Angoulême Marauders. The team members of the Marauders are semi-pro professional football players that participate in a four team league in their region in France. There are over 200 American football teams in France.

The purpose of this exchange was to expose the football players to American football in a variety of different ways. In a partnership with Schaumburg High School, the players viewed their practice every day after school. As part of their tour of SHS during the week, the players met with coaches, the principal and the Athletic Director, to discuss their playbook and view game films. The week's observations and discussions culminated in attending the SHS vs. Fremd game at the end of the week.

In addition to their time at SHS, the following itinerary was organized and led by the Sister Cities Commission:

- Viewed the Chicago Bears vs. Detroit Lions at Jersey's Sports Bar and attended a pot luck dinner in the evening with Commission members and host families.
- Visited the Hoffman Estates Police and Fire Departments and toured the Hoffman Estates Village Hall and visited with Mayor McLeod.
- Toured Hoffman Estates High School.
- Toured the Chicago Cultural Center, Millennium Park (with a French speaking guide) and Willis Tower in Chicago, Illinois.
- Toured Eisenhower Junior High School including special education, dual language, Language Arts and S.T.E.M. classrooms. Players broadcast an interview in their production studio.
- Attended Bon Appétit, the Food and Tasting Festival of Hoffman Estates sponsored by the Hoffman Estates Chamber of Commerce.
- Toured DePaul University and conducted a radio interview on Radio DePaul sports channel.
- Attended a concert at the Sears Center.
- Tailgated and attended the Eastern Michigan vs. Northern Illinois University Homecoming football game in DeKalb, Illinois.
- Dined at Pinstripes and played bocce ball.

Our many thanks to the host families – Rios/Harding, Samson, Lamberti, Miller, and Mosier – for their kindness and hospitality in opening their homes and their hearts to our guests from Angoulême.

Many positive comments were made by the participants of the Angoulême Marauders about the football exchange such as, "This was a dream!" and "This was the best week of my life!" The Sister Cities Commission and the Marauders are already planning for the reciprocal exchange to take place in 2016.