

## Press Release

### **American Homestay Network® Opens in North Carolina to Connect Host Families with International Students**

*Industry best practices and standards will bring economic and cultural benefits to communities  
and families across the state*

**(November 20, 2013) CHARLOTTE, North Carolina** – The American Homestay Network® (AHN) ([www.homestaynetwork.com](http://www.homestaynetwork.com)), the first national-scale, standards-based homestay organization in America, today announced its latest Regional Agency with the opening of the American Homestay Network-North Carolina (AHN-NC). AHN-NC will connect international students with local host families from Charlotte to Raleigh to Wilmington, and everywhere in between, for unique cultural experiences and economic opportunities for families and communities. AHN-NC is currently recruiting host families and developing relationships with educational institutions across the state, including UNC-Charlotte where AHN is a designated primary provider of homestay accommodations for international students.

Different than most traditionally high school based exchange student programs, an AHN “Homestay” offers paid compensation to hosts that provide accommodations for visiting college students during an average stay of 8 to 10 weeks. Homestay is a cultural exchange between a local individual or family (called a “Homestay Host”) and a visiting International Student who comes to live as a guest in their home. The homestay experience supports the student's desire to improve his or her English-language skills, while learning about American culture and lifestyle.

AHN-NC will manage homestay programs across the state’s numerous universities, colleges and English Language Schools through office locations in Chapel Hill and Charlotte, providing on-site support for schools, students, and hosts. Regional Manager Michelle Korczynski, who brings 15 years of experience in international educational programming and student exchange programs, will lead AHN-NC.

“Working in international education for more than a decade allowed me to quickly recognize and be excited about the impact AHN’s professional, well-managed approach to homestay can make here in North Carolina,” said Michelle Korczynski, Regional Manager of AHN-NC. “With the number of universities across the state and the natural hospitality of Southern culture, we believe North Carolina has a huge homestay opportunity. We’re hitting the ground running to implement AHN’s top-notch procedures and systems, ensuring hosts and students have an amazing experience and begin building bridges that will last a lifetime.”

The economic impacts of international students go far beyond the deep cultural value and diversity they bring to a community. According to NAFSA, the leading industry association for international educators, in the 2012-2013 school year North Carolina hosted more than 15,000 international students; contributing \$385M to the state economy.

“North Carolina is known both for its superb higher education programs and for the warmth of its people, so it is an ideal region for us to expand our programs as we continue to raise the bar in homestay,” said Glenda Sinclair, President of the American Homestay Network. “Through our infrastructure, standards, and industry best practices, educational institutions and local communities can realize the economic benefits of hosting an increased number of students, while injecting a unique cultural experience into the community.”



AMERICAN HOMESTAY NETWORK

AHN-NC is part of the company's broader Regional Agency Program, which is designed to provide new or existing regional homestay organizations with the technology and administrative resources needed to develop and grow local programs. AHN's program allows regional agencies to focus on conducting host interviews and home visits, maintaining relationships with local institutions, responding to any onsite student or host needs while providing AHN Headquarters with local insights on marketing, vendors, and related industry organizations.

AHN's headquarter-based resources can substantially reduce a regional agency's overall workload as AHN HQ manages host and student applications, homestay matching, technology systems, a national background check process, a 24x7 call center, online payments, online student and host orientation training, advertising, public relations and other related administrative services.

AHN was launched in response to the growing demand by international students for homestay accommodations and to bring a new level of industry best practices in service offerings, operations, and technology. While as many as 20 percent of visiting students would prefer a homestay option during their studies in America there continues to be a significant shortage of qualified host families. Existing homestay organizations do not have the infrastructure needed to grow and meet this demand. More information on AHN's Regional Agency Program is available at [www.homestaynetwork.com](http://www.homestaynetwork.com), or by emailing [regionalagency@homestaynetwork.com](mailto:regionalagency@homestaynetwork.com).

#### **About The American Homestay Network**

The American Homestay Network (AHN) was created to bring a new level of best practices in service offerings, operations and technology to hosted homestay programs for visiting international students. AHN is committed to setting a new global standard for student homestay in America. Through its business relationships with the Australian Homestay Network, global insurers, banks and national emergency response partners, the company offers an unprecedented collection of comprehensive services. The company is a member of NAFSA: Association of International Educators and AWISA: Association of Washington International Student Affairs. For more information, visit [www.homestaynetwork.com](http://www.homestaynetwork.com).

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