



News Release

6 December 2021

Urgent Call for Volunteer Host Families to Welcome International Students During Winter Break

Pearson College UWC is urgently putting out the call for volunteers to host fully vaccinated students from around the world during their upcoming winter break from December 17 to January 8.

“We foresaw that the need for local and regional families to welcome students into their homes would be higher than usual this year,” says Host Family Volunteer Coordinator Dawn Boshcoff. “While we anticipated this, the added wild card of the Omicron variant is having a knock-on effect.”

Boshcoff said some students who were set to fly home are finding they cannot go because of updated travel restrictions aiming to stop the spread of the new COVID variant. Others are saying they cannot afford to go because of dramatic increases in airline fares – sometimes double last year at this time.

Close to 80 per cent of Pearson students who attend Canada’s only United World College do so on full or partial scholarships or financial assistance made available through the generosity of individual and institutional donors. Pearson is a non-profit, charitable-registered College that welcomes about 200 students every year from across Canada and up to 160 nations around the world.

Boshcoff added the work-from-home phenomenon means that fewer spare rooms are available for students as they have been converted to home offices and workspaces. Other long-time hosts, some who have welcomed students for more than three decades, have retired from hosting.

Boshcoff, a host mom for 15 years says it was a great experience for her family. “I’m still in touch with many of the students who have now gone on to really cool careers, and some are starting families. It’s been one of the most enriching experiences for me and my kids,” she said.

An ideal host family is anyone with extra space who likes teenagers, is welcoming and friendly, and doesn’t mind having a stranger join the family for a few weeks. The idea is to involve the student as though they are a member of the family, including meals, household chores, and family outings. Hosts could be retirees, young families or empty nesters who want to share their holiday traditions. We welcome host families who live in across southeastern B.C. including the CRD, Gulf Islands and Lower Mainland.

To apply to become a host family, please contact Boshcoff at dboshcoff@pearsoncollege.ca. A Criminal Record Check and home visit are required.

We are privileged to learn, work, and live on the traditional territory of the Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay) First Nation. [Pearson College UWC](#) was founded as Lester B. Pearson United World College (UWC) of the Pacific in 1974 as unique pre-university school. Up to 200 students from across Canada and around the world chosen based on their promise, potential and demonstrated commitment to actively engage in creating a better world. Students are from up to 160 countries worldwide.

Contact: Dawn Boshcoff | Host Family Volunteer Coordinator
dboshcoff@pearsoncollege.ca

Brian Geary | Nikola Mende
Pearson College UWC Communications
bgeary@pearsoncollege.ca | nmende@pearsoncollege.ca