Host Family Program

Carnegie Mellon University-Africa is proud to announce the launch of a **Host Family Program for International Students** in our Kigali Campus.

Host family is a vital part of a cultural exchange, immersing the international student(s) in a variety of activities throughout their stay in Rwanda. The volunteer host family will play a large role in offering the international student(s) a view of another country, culture and develop a lifelong connection with the student.

In addition to the traditional Host Family, we are also hoping to provide students with the opportunity to connect with a professional who has been successful in the industry and build a relationship with that person to serve as a resource in their career development.

The reward of hosting is immeasurable because the volunteer host family will be helping an international student(s) transition into a new culture and ease into the surroundings by giving the international student(s) the opportunity to explore Rwanda with their host families, engage in meaningful dialogue and generally enjoy a connection to Rwanda that they might not otherwise experience as international students studying at Carnegie Mellon University Africa.

The program works by matching CMU-Africa graduate international students with a family interested in serving as Kigali/Rwanda ambassadors. These students and families will build relationships that best fit their needs, agreeing to meet every month or so at mutually convenient times. For these activities, the host will provide transportation for the student(s) to and from campus. *(Please note that this is not a homestay program.)*

The program aims to help our international students engage more meaningfully with the Kigali community and Rwandan culture while also giving you a chance to deepen your connection to the University.

Host family comes in all shape and sizes whether you are single, married, retired or have a young family, we are excited to invite you to host.
How It Works

- Interested CMU-Africa students and CMU-Africa Host Families – drawn from alumni, faculty, staff and community members – submit their applications and sign the release forms and send it to Student Services Officer Gikundiro Olga Buki studentservices@Africa.cmu.edu
- Students will be matched with families who will provide informal social exchange opportunities and activities. These can include museum visits, shopping excursions, and dinners at home, family gatherings, birthdays and Easter/Christmas holidays throughout the academic year. You will also be supporting the student by sharing expertise, knowledge and wisdom from years of being in the industry
- Once notified of a match, volunteer host families will initiate contact with the international student(s), and arrange to meet every month at mutually convenient times. For these activities, the host will provide transportation for the student(s) to and from campus.
- The duration of the volunteer cycle is one academic year. The host and student(s) may choose to extend the relationship beyond that academic year (e.g., until the student graduates).
- The number of students to be matched depends on the number of families who volunteers.

Benefits

International students matched with a host family will be given the opportunity to:

- Enhance their sense of community at Carnegie Mellon University Africa
- Learn about local culture and traditions
- Build personal relationships with families in the community
- Foster a stronger connection with Rwanda by exploring the city/country beyond the campus
- Get career building advice, including ways to track industry trends, how to make a successful transition to the professional life and the importance of building a professional network

Host Families will be given the opportunity to:

- Expand their families by building lifelong friendship with the student
- Learn new cultures by introducing your family to a new language, new foods and music, and an entirely new culture
- Enhance personal connections within and beyond Carnegie Mellon University Africa
Gain a new perspective by seeing your world with fresh eyes as you share your experiences with and learn from someone from a different background

Make a difference by supporting diversity and cultural awareness throughout your community

Explore aspects of their own community in new ways

Be Rwanda’s ambassadors

Give back some of the support you have received throughout your career

Contribute to the future of the industry by assisting the next generation of leaders

**LINKS**

- Link for volunteer host family questionnaire
  [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1O6Nu3Fsx25mO3oApeS3rqDXXIqPzmat2GcfVpJxxyy1/edit](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1O6Nu3Fsx25mO3oApeS3rqDXXIqPzmat2GcfVpJxxyy1/edit)

- Link for International student questionnaire
  [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1CBvF16A007uSXafrT5HK0Z10BdYImgkSaDdHcYIwn_s/edit](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1CBvF16A007uSXafrT5HK0Z10BdYImgkSaDdHcYIwn_s/edit)