

General

Ask people

Let people know that you are looking for great families to host high school exchange students and that you thought of them because they're a great family ... Ask if they have ever considered hosting. They will either say yes, maybe, no not now or no never. People are gracious and consider it a compliment to be asked.

Regardless of their answer, ask them for other great families they know and share about the \$100 referral fee.

Keep track of who you talk with and if they said no not now, follow up the next semester.

Networking

Leveraging Your Personal Network

We can use the things we have in common with groups or individuals to help create host family leads.

Let's take a look at our own personal networks - ways that we are connected in our communities. We are members or participants in these groups, so we already have a point of commonality from the beginning. You have a better chance of being accepted and being given a voice than someone outside the group would have.

Take time to make two lists. First, list all your own established networks. Next, make a list of other possible places you could add to your network. You might Google civic organizations, community events (for sponsors, community service, etc. to get an idea of groups in your local area that have potential.

Here are some possible networks and opportunities that might be available in some common groups.

Networks

- Church or other place of worship
- Work related organizations
- Volunteer positions
- Civic organizations
- Support groups
- Local government or political groups

Resources

- Associations
- Newsletters
- Weekly bulletins
- Directory of members
- Websites
- Community events
- Conferences or meetings

Use these resources to create Host Family leads.

Associations:

Many churches/places of worship and other organizations are members of larger regional or national groups. As a member, ask your local church/place of worship or other local organization to submit a HF ad to the associational communication, electronic or print. If possible, ask to have it run for several months.

Community Events:

Many groups sponsor community events to raise awareness for certain issues and to raise funds. Often there are opportunities to be one of the sponsors of the event by paying a fee that results in your organization name being put on a t-shirt, sign, etc. check into the cost for participating as a sponsor.

Community Service Projects:

Participate in the service project. As a member and participant, ask if you can hand out flyers to other participants.

Directory of Members:

Send individual emails or letters to members introducing yourself as a fellow member and telling them about your work with Pan Atlantic. Include an attachment with a few generic profiles.

Meetings and Conferences:

If possible, ask to set up a small display table with flyers, etc. Make sure your contact information is included.

Newsletter:

As a member, ask to run a small HF ad in the print or electronic newsletter. If possible, ask to have it run on a continual basis or at least for several months.

Website:

Ask to have a link put on the website

Weekly Bulletins:

Most churches have weekly print bulletins that are given to attendees as they enter the building. Ask to have an announcement added to the bulletin where you attend.

Planning

Importance of Placement Planning

Evaluate your personal network options to create action steps as part of your placement plan. Plan one month at a time including at least 3 things you can do each week to generate leads. Taking 30 minutes to plan now will help you save time later and use the time you have to work on Pan Atlantic more efficiently and effectively.

Look at the following example of an area representative who has personal network connections in church, civic and work-related organizations.

Week 1 Action Steps

- Email generic profiles to church members with an introductory email. Include information about our referral program
- Ask to run a HF ad in the organization newsletter. Include information about our referral program
- Ask to make an announcement and put out flyers at the next club meeting. Include information about our referral program

Week 2 Action Steps

- Choose a student of like faith or from a country of interest to the church, and ask to put a blurb in the weekly bulletin for the next 3 weeks asking for a host for that particular student
- Email student profiles with a note of introduction to members of the group
- Ask to put a HF ad in the organization newsletter for the next 2 months
- Choose one new group to check out for possible networking opportunities

Week 3 Action Steps

- Google local newsletters for community calendars that list local events or service projects that you might be able to participate in and use for networking
- Make a list of any groups you belong to that have a website. Contact each and ask if they will post a small HF ad and the link to the Pan Atlantic website
- Look up local bookstores and libraries. Ask if you can leave postcards or flyers.

Week 4 Action Steps

- Choose 2 students and brainstorm and group or individual that has something in common with the students
- Work through your list and send the generic profile to every group or individual. Be sure to accompany with an email highlighting the point the student has in common and mention the referral program
- Ask your church or place of worship if you can set up a table in the lobby with brochures and other promotional items

Moving Forward

Don't lose momentum

Continue to draw from the resources available in your current personal network while adding in other opportunities to create your personal action steps. Consider greater involvement in your local community as a way to create a broader base for your networking.