



YANCEY COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Yancey County Economic Development Commission & Yancey Chamber of Commerce
Promote Airbnb’s “Experiences” Program in Yancey County**

In collaboration with the mobile-app based hospitality giant, Airbnb, the Yancey County Economic Development Commission and Yancey Chamber of Commerce are announcing an effort to sign up new Airbnb Experience hosts in Yancey County as part of the company’s drive to grow the Experiences program in western North Carolina.

“Over the past couple of years we have seen a huge surge in the growth of Airbnb properties in Yancey County. Many folks have seen the development of the accommodation rental service as an opportunity to be part-time entrepreneurs by letting rooms, houses and apartments to visitors and tourists coming to our beautiful community. Already local officials have seen the huge impact of the growth of this tech-driven industry in the growth of occupancy tax receipts over the past couple of years” said Yancey EDC Director Jamie McMahan.

“Though people everywhere are now pretty much aware they are able to book accommodations through Airbnb, they are less aware that with the new “Experiences” program through Airbnb, the company has provided an opportunity for travelers to book specific excursions and experiences in the places where they are vacationing; everything from art and cooking classes to guided hikes and walking tours” added McMahan. “Here in our community where we are blessed with so many artists, outdoor enthusiasts, and talented folks of every kind, what better place than here in Burnsville in Yancey County to get those folks signed up with Airbnb so they can share their unique talents and passions with visitors who are interested to learn from them and share the experience with them. The Experiences program allows visitors to our area to have an authentic travel experience on their vacation here and allows our folks to make money hosting those experiences.”

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So what is the Experiences program specifically? Experiences are excursions or other activities designed and led by local hosts. Hosts give guests unique access into places and communities in their community. Airbnb Experiences are activities designed and led by inspiring locals. They go beyond typical tours or classes by immersing guests in each host's unique world. It is an opportunity for anyone to share their hobbies, skills or expertise without needing an extra room. Making a craft, hiking, guided walking tours, or teaching a skill unique to our mountain heritage and region are all good examples of activities that fit well in the Airbnb Experiences program. Entrepreneurs who would like to teach fly tying, pottery, or yoga or who would like to guide hikes, rafting and tubing trips, or even gardening, preserving and canning will all find the Experiences platform an ideal way for them to connect with visitors who want to pay to experience those activities while on vacation. Airbnb is actively looking to develop these sort of guided tour experiences in western North Carolina, focusing on crafts and music, nature, exercise and recreation and arts and culture.

Hosts can also set a schedule that works for them, whether they want to host an experience daily, weekly or monthly. Hosts can also pick their price and designate their group size and manage all booking details with Airbnb's convenient mobile app. Essentially, Airbnb Experiences hosts get their own webpage through Airbnb that travelers can use to book their experiences. Airbnb handles payment processing, provides 24-hour customer service, and covers liability insurance.

Those who are interested in learning more about the Experiences program can learn more online at www.Airbnb.com/host/experiences or may contact Jamie McMahan at the Yancey County Economic Development Commission at yanceyedc@gmail.com or via phone at (828) 682-7722 for additional details about further information and resources available for Airbnb including online webinars and training.