

Soccer Superstar Mia Hamm Kicks Off Residence Inn's Search for the Ultimate Soccer Mom
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Hamm Named Residence Inn's "2014 Resident Mom of the Year"

BETHESDA, Md., May 6, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Soccer star Mia Hamm may be an icon for a generation of women, a two-time Olympic Gold Medalist and a committed philanthropist heading her own foundation, but ask this 42-year old superstar to name her favorite role and the answer is soccer mom, hands down.



Today in New York, [Residence Inn by Marriott](#) kicked off its traditional Moms' Month celebration by selecting Mia Hamm as its 2014 Resident Mom of the Year. During the day's activities, Hamm also announced the beginning of the "Ultimate Soccer Mom" search, reaching out to moms across America to nominate themselves for the winning title.

Moms can enter on Facebook or Instagram by posting a 100-word entry and a photo, tagging Residence Inn and using the #RIMomsMonth hashtag. Everyone can join in the fun and qualify to win exciting daily prizes by posting a comment on Residence Inn's contest announcement on Facebook. The contest's grand prize winner, named the "Ultimate Soccer Mom" by Hamm and a panel of Residence Inn judges, will win a trip for four to Los Angeles to meet Mia Hamm at the new Residence Inn Los Angeles L.A. LIVE hotel in summer 2014.

"I know what it's like to raise a family while working, multi-tasking and traveling," said Hamm, a native of Selma, AL and graduate of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After retiring from professional soccer in 2004, Hamm settled with her husband, former Major League Baseball player Nomar Garciaparra in Southern California where they raise twin daughters Ava and Grace, 7, and son Garrett, 2. She's frequently on the road making public appearances and speaking on behalf of her charitable foundation.

"Our crazy schedules can make any mother feel pulled in a million directions. I'm always worrying about getting enough exercise and staying healthy while I'm traveling," said Hamm. As one of her first contributions to the Residence Inn family, Hamm designed two easy-to-follow fitness programs for moms on the go – quick routines that don't require special equipment yet leave a mom feeling rejuvenated and energized.

"I appreciate Residence Inn's commitment to enhancing the family experience on the road," said Hamm, who often travels with the kids. Residence Inn hotels feature spacious suites with full kitchens, free Internet, a pool for the kids, laundry facilities and a healthy hot breakfast, making it easier for families to stick to a routine while traveling.

"Mia Hamm is synonymous with excellence in all she's achieved," said Diane Mayer, vice president and global brand manager, Residence Inn. "That same spirit drives us every single day at Residence Inn. Mia is a perfect match for us because she brings an athlete's dedication to finding health and balance. Her real life experience touches moms everywhere, and we look forward to sharing her fitness routines on the [Residence Inn YouTube channel](#) later this month."

Hamm's athletic career is the stuff of legends. Born with a clubfoot, she wore corrective shoes as a toddler. Yet Hamm's soccer prowess kicked in at a young age, despite the many schools she attended as the daughter of an Air Force pilot. In 1987, at age 15, Hamm became the youngest soccer player on the national team. She won the Women's World Cup in 1991 and 1999, and took Olympic gold medals in 1996 and 2004. Elected Soccer USA's "Female Athlete of the Year" five years in a row (1994-98), Hamm was named MVP of the Women's Cup (1995) and was the winner of three ESPY Awards, including "Soccer Player of the Year" and "Female Athlete of the Year." In 2004, along with teammate Michelle Akers, Hamm was named to FIFA's list of the "125 Greatest Living Soccer Players," the only women and only Americans to be named to the list at that time. An outspoken pioneer for gender equality in sports, Hamm was named the greatest female athlete of the last 40 years by ESPN in 2012.

In 1999, Hamm founded the Mia Hamm Foundation, which is dedicated to bone marrow research, after her brother, Garrett, died of complications from a rare blood disease called aplastic anemia shortly after the 1996 Olympics. Her Foundation also raises funds and awareness for the development of more opportunities

for young women in sports. Since officially retiring from her beloved sport, Hamm has devoted herself to the Foundation and raising her family.

Residence Inn by Marriott

With more than 650 properties in the United States, Canada, Europe, the Middle East and Central America, Residence Inn by Marriott is the leader in the extended-stay lodging segment. Designed for long stays, the brand offers spacious suites with separate living and sleeping areas. Fully functional kitchens, grocery delivery, 24-hour markets and complimentary breakfast help guests maintain a healthy balance while on the road. Complimentary Wi-Fi allows guests to stay connected to the home and office, while health and fitness options and inviting lobby spaces provide comfortable places to work and relax.

Residence Inn participates in the company's award-winning Marriott Rewards® frequent travel program that allows members to earn hotel points or airline miles for every dollar spent during each stay. For more information or reservations, call the Residence Inn toll-free number at 800-331-3131 or visit www.residenceinn.com. For travel tips, the latest on the brand or to connect with other travelers, "like" Residence Inn on Facebook: www.facebook.com/residenceinn and follow Residence Inn on Twitter: www.twitter.com/residenceinn.

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