Rice celebrated International Education Week in November with various activities and events around campus. The Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS) kicked things off with our second annual Ping Pong Tournament, co-sponsored by the Rice Table Tennis Club and the Rec Center. About 20 students competed this year for medals and prizes!

The third and final Continuing Graduate Orientation, typically only offered to first year students, was opened up to all graduate students as it occurred during IEW. Beth O’Sullivan gave a wonderful presentation on “Socializing, Networking & Communicating Across Cultures in the U.S.” OISS partnered with the International Language Exchange (ILE) to offer a similar presentation to our undergraduate students by hosting “Speak to Me”, a cross-cultural communication workshop taught by Cory Owen.

(cont. on page 11)
Letter from the Executive Director

Dear International Students and Scholars,

As we welcome you back in this New Year, we also look back over our shoulders to remember all the great Centennial celebrations of last fall. We are now in year 101 of Rice!

“101” has many connotations, including: 1) a beginning class, i.e., English 101, or 2) many of a kind, i.e., beyond one hundred of something. I hope this year will bring a new inspiration to you, as we step into Rice’s second century – Year 101. As international students and scholars, you are an important part of Rice’s success… and may you have 101 successes this spring semester!

Do not hesitate to contact us at the OISS for any help you might need. We offer online resources, appointments with knowledgeable and caring advisors, and several workshops and trainings to help you. Stay tuned to our OISS-Announce listserv for updates.

We hope you have a great year (and 101 more)!

Adria L. Baker, Ed.D.
Executive Director, Office of International Students & Scholars
Associate Vice Provost for International Education

GSA-OISS Professional Development Mentorship Program

By Ben Colston

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) and OISS are partnering to pilot the Professional Development Mentorship Program for the Spring 2013 semester. Pei Dong is the coordinator in charge of recruiting, planning, and matching.

Six graduate students from various disciplines and countries have been accepted as volunteer mentors. They will each mentor three international undergraduate students, for a total of eighteen mentees, meeting with them at least twice a month for the duration of the semester.

The goals of the program are to provide cross-cultural mentor relationships and development opportunities while strengthening interaction between the graduate and undergraduate student populations.

OISS would like to thank GSA for their support and Pei Dong for her hard work in starting this program.
I-20 and DS-2019 Stamping Changes

By Cory Owen

In fall 2012, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) announced that they will no longer provide admission stamps on I-20s and DS-2019s for F-1/F-2 and J-1/J-2 visitors upon arrival in the U.S. Students and scholars should not worry about this change in terms of their immigration status since I-20 and DS-2019 admission stamps are not an indicator of lawful status or length of academic program.

This change is following a decision by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service’s (USCIS) to also stop stamping I-20s and DS-2019s as USCIS attempts to move to a paperless immigration system. CBP and USCIS have done outreach to educate other government agencies about this change. In most cases, students and scholars will have no trouble without an admission stamp. For example, the Social Security Administration has an official memo online acknowledging and accepting the change. USCIS addresses some concerns about the lack of admission stamps in one of their online fact sheets. If for any reason you encounter any difficulty due to an I-20 or DS-2019 without an admission stamp, please contact OISS to discuss.

Please note that CBP is continuing the practice of placing admission stamps in passports and on I-94 cards for now (although it is likely at some point in the near future that the white paper I-94 card you are used to receiving will be replaced with an electronic I-94 card – we will provide an update when that starts to happen). In the meantime, please verify each time you enter the U.S. that your I-94 card is stamped (with F-1, F-2, J-1, or J-2 plus “D/S” to indicate “Duration of Status”, which means that you are permitted to stay in your academic program in the U.S. as long as it indicates on your Rice-issued I-20 or DS-2019).

As always, please consult OISS if you have any questions or concerns regarding your immigration status.

Winter Events

By Cory Owen

Another great year of Winter Events have come and gone! We had such a great time at the activities with all those who attended. The hockey game was riveting as we went into double overtime, leading to the Houston Aeros win! Plus, the trip to the Houston Zoo was a huge success due to the fantastic weather and Adria’s leadership.

The highlight of this year’s Winter Events was our surprise upgrade at the Rockets game! We were lucky enough to be moved down to the lower bowl and had amazing seats as we watched our home team win.

Thank you to everyone for attending and we look forward to another great year of events next December!
Rice celebrated an amazing 100th birthday with numerous events, festivities, a huge number of campus visitors, and many special guest speakers. The Centennial Planning Committee did an amazing job at transforming the campus for each event ranging from the campus-wide picnic to the light and sound “Spectacle” event where the buildings of the central quad were transformed into a massive 3-D projection screen. The OISS staff celebrated the Centennial by going to the President’s Centennial Address followed by the Centennial Picnic where vendors gave away generous amounts of free food to hungry Rice Owls and their guests.

Following the picnic, the OISS hosted an International Centennial Reception which was decorated with a poster made up of flags from our students spelling out “Rice”. All the students wrote “Happy Birthday Rice!” in their native language and signed the flags with their names and home countries. We also displayed the Centennial Valuable International Perspectives (V.I.P.) entries where seven students wrote about their most memorable experience at Rice. Lastly, we displayed our Centennial International Children’s Book collection with books from around the world donated by students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

It was a wonderful experience to get to converse, not only with our current students, but also with alumni who returned to campus from various cities and countries. A number of students brought their parents with them to the Centennial festivities and we had faculty and staff from around campus drop by to visit with us. Everyone enjoyed refreshments and cake. We appreciate everyone’s participation in making this Centennial Birthday for Rice an extremely memorable and joyous occasion! If you didn’t get a chance to partake in the festivities, read more about the Centennial Celebration here: http://centennial.rice.edu/.

“My experience at Rice wouldn’t be as colorful without your devotion to helping international students”

~Mengqi Yu ’14
Filing your U.S. tax return can seem like an overwhelming burden, but it is a legal requirement that must be fulfilled. Although OISS cannot complete your tax return for you, we can provide you with resources to help you be legally compliant.

All international students and scholars present in the US for any period of time during 2012 must **file a U.S. tax return** by April 15, 2013, even if no income was received.

**Frequently Asked Questions:**

- What is Glacier Tax Prep (GTP) and when will it be available? A web-based software program that will assist “non-residents” for tax purposes to prepare their tax forms. The program can also help to determine if you are considered a “resident” or “non-resident” for tax purposes. For information on how to purchase a $2 software license visit our [webpage](#).

- I did not receive any income during 2012. What forms do I need to file? You may only need to complete Form 8843. It is recommended that you purchase a license to the Glacier Tax Prep software to assist you with this determination.

- If I did receive a scholarship/stipend/paycheck for employment, what kind of forms do I need to file? You may need to complete Form 8843 and Form 1040NR. It is recommended that you purchase a license to the Glacier Tax Prep software to assist you with this determination.

- What is a W-2 form and when will I receive it? Rice employees (including student employees) who receive reportable earned income will receive a W-2 to be filed with your tax return. W-2s are mailed or available through your ESTHER account after January 31.

- What is a 1042-S form and when will I receive it? Foreign nationals may receive a 1042-S if they are recipients of tax treaty benefits, scholarships or fellowships from non-tax treaty countries. 1042-S forms are often sent to the Permanent Address indicated in ESTHER and are usually sent out around March 15.

- What is the tax filing deadline? To be in compliance with U.S. law, please be sure to mail your tax forms to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) by **April 15, 2013**.

**Helpful Resources for tax filing:**

- [Glacier Tax Prep](#)
- Tax Workshop for Internationals – March 7, 2013, 4pm-7pm
- [University of Texas](#) international tax website - an excellent resource for any international
- For “residents” for tax purposes, check out [IRS Free File](#) (tax preparation software) information or [chart version](#)
- Additional resources available on the [OISS website](#)

*(cont. on page 7)*
Each year, US Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) makes available a limited number of H-1B petitions. The quota, or cap, for the 2014 fiscal year is 65,000. Of these, 6,800 are set aside for citizens of Singapore and Chile. An additional 20,000 are available for individuals with a master’s degree or higher from a U.S. institution.

USCIS will begin accepting H-1B petitions for the 2014 fiscal year on April 1, 2013. The start date for these petitions will be October 1, 2013.

Last year, the H-1B cap for the 2013 fiscal year was met on June 11, 2012. The previous year, the cap was not exhausted until November 22, 2011. As the economy continues to improve, it is expected that the cap will be reached even earlier this year. It is possible that USCIS could receive the maximum petitions within the first week of April.

The Cap Gap extension is a provision that allows F-1 students on post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) to maintain their status and work authorization while waiting for H-1B to start. If OPT expires between April 1 and September 30, and an H-1B petition is properly filed, OPT will automatically be extended to September 30.

Some employers are “cap-exempt.” These include institutions of higher education and certain non-profit and governmental organizations. Petitions from cap-exempt employers can be filed at any time of the year.

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**Special “Congratulations!” and “Thank You!”**

*By Adria Baker*

Cory Owen has been a respected OISS Program Manager & Senior International Advisor since 2008. She has created many programs, immigration trainings, handouts, communication portals, networks for friendships, and so much for the Rice international community. She will be moving at the end of the Spring 2013 semester, after completing her Doctorate in Education. Please join me in making this last semester for Cory very special. Stay tuned for an official “farewell” and extreme “Thank you!!” in the coming months.

But, before a send-off, “Congratulations!” are in order. Cory was recognized in front of 700+ of our international education colleagues in San Juan, Puerto Rico with a plaque for “Distinguished Service to the Field of International Education” from NAFSA: Association of International Educators’ Region III. It is quite an honor and we are proud of Cory for all she has contributed to international education exchange.

Thank you, Cory! We wish you all the best in your future successes. Congratulations on all your accomplishments!
Dean of Undergraduates’ Town Hall Meeting

By Adria Baker

Dean John Hutchinson sat down with undergraduate international students to get to know them and what they are thinking at a Town Hall Meeting in the Spring and Fall 2012 semesters. He began the informal dialogues by telling about his background as a Rice professor and a former Master at two different colleges – Weiss and Brown.

Dr. Hutchinson encouraged every international student to get the most of their education and time while at Rice. Suggestions included:

◊ Engaging in independent scholarly work with Rice faculty.
◊ Taking the opportunity to develop leadership skills. See a problem and find a way to make it better. Be an “agent of change”.
◊ Developing a sense of engagement in the community, including reaching outside Rice’s boundaries.
◊ Reaching out to so many supportive faculty members and advisors who want to help you accomplish your goals. You just need to learn who to ask.

When asked how they can begin to make change and make an issue better, Dean Hutchinson made suggestions such as: 1) applying to be an O-Week advisor, 2) talking to college leadership, and 3) running for college leadership. There have been growing examples of wonderful international student leadership over the last few years!

If you wish to speak to an OISS advisor about how to get more involved in Rice student life, feel free to contact the OISS at x8753 or email: oiss@rice.edu to set up an appointment.

Thank you, Dean Hutch, for sharing your insights with the Rice undergraduate international students!

Taxes (cont.)

Continued from page 5

◊ Tax forms are due to the IRS by April 15, 2013 to avoid penalties.

◊ Before filing your taxes, make sure you have received all your supporting tax documents from employers, Rice, or other scholarship/fellowship sponsors. You should receive a W-2 (for wages earned) or a 1042-S (for scholarships or fellowships). Some of these may be available electronically, check with the employer/sponsor.

◊ Foreign nationals who have tax treaties should pay close attention to the terms of their treaties. If you have questions concerning benefits you think might apply to you, please inquire at the Payroll office (a SSN and additional forms may need to be completed in Payroll in order to receive those benefits).

◊ Do you have an SSN or an ITIN to file your taxes? If not, please see the OISS on how to apply.
We all know that Rice is a safe place in general, but it is also important to know the many resources available to help us stay safe on and around campus.

Did you know, for instance, which number to dial if you need assistance, or that you can go to the nearest elevator to use the emergency phone and the dispatcher will know where you are? Have you noticed the many brown emergency poles with the blue lights on campus and wondered what they are for? The Safety Guide available on the Rice University Police Department (RUPD) website is a very useful resource with basic information and easy to use tips that everyone should be familiar with.

In addition, RUPD and Rice Transportation offer a “Personal Safety Escorts” service from 10:00 pm-6:00 am, 7 days a week. If you work or study late in the lab or library, just call x6000 and they’ll walk with you to any Rice University location (college, Rice building, or parking lot). You can also register your valuables with RUPD. In case your laptop, camera, phone, bicycle, etc. is stolen, it will help the search and item identification.

There are many other things that you can do, such as obeying traffic laws, wearing protective clothing, or being conscience of your surroundings to keep you and others safe and out of trouble. Remember that using good judgment and taking responsibility for your actions is the key to prevention, and it’s much easier and takes less effort than dealing with hurtful consequences later.

**International Ladies Networking Luncheons**

*By Su Yeon Yoo*

Calling all international ladies!

Then, come and get together on the first Monday of each month for networking and fun activities in McMurtry College, Room 107 from 12:00 to 1pm. Pizza will be served.

This is a great opportunity to get to know OISS staff members and to socialize, share customs, traditions, and enjoy each others’ company. Previous activities include card making, Japanese origami, and holiday themed crafts.

If you’d like to get more information about this program, please go to the group page and click “Join this group” link to the right of the web page.

Please stay tuned to the OISS-announce listserv and the International Ladies Google Group!!
New “Visa Status Check”

By Cory Owen

The U.S. Department of State has a new way to help you get updates on your visa status! You are now welcome to check the status of your visa applications online through the Consular Electronic Application Center (CEAC). Through this site, you’ll be able to see the status of your pending visa application and the delivery status once your visa has been approved.

For any visa changes or applications done inside the US (through USCIS), you will still be able to check that status online through the CIS online case status system.

Country Specific Updates

As of November 1, 2012, Taiwan was added to the list of countries that qualify for the Visa Waiver Program through ESTA.

Indian citizens on F-1 student visas may be able to waive the interview process for visa renewals if they are returning to Rice in the same program.

The visa fee collection system throughout China will be updated and CITIC Fee Receipts will not be valid after March 14, 2013.

Highlights from our Website

Our website has so much great information on there that can help you navigate through your time at Rice. Below are a few links that you may find especially useful!

- Information on Academic Resources
- Reminders for Maintaining Your Immigration Status
- All things related to Employment
- Access to previous Presentations
- Information about some of our Programs
- Quick access to our Forms and Handouts
- Our Calendar of Events
- See who does what at OISS through Key Contacts
- And of course, our Newsletter Archives
President Leebron’s “Walkabout” to OISS

By Adria Baker

Rice University’s President, David Leebron, embarked on visiting 100 offices on campus to learn more about how they function. On January 15, 2013, he visited the Offices of International Students & Scholars and Brasil@Rice. He admired the many mementos from all over the world that internationals have generously donated to our office.

President Leebron expressed how important internationals are to Rice, and how we should always strive to help as much as possible. Under his leadership, the numbers of undergraduate international students has quadrupled. Graduate international students, foreign faculty and researchers internationals have also continued to significantly increase. He enjoyed learning more about immigration responsibilities and meeting some people who came into the office while he was there.

Rice University’s Office of International Students & Scholars sponsors... FREE English & Culture Classes!!!

To sign up, please visit: http://oiss.rice.edu/content.aspx?id=112. If you have any questions please contact us at 713-348-6095.

Free Classes offered for Spring 2013

Advanced/Intermediate English Conversation:
Teacher: Catherine Spain
Class: Mondays from 1-2pm, or 2-3pm in the Ley Student Center, 2nd floor; conference room
Begins: Monday, January 14, 2013
Ends (tentatively): Monday, April 22, 2013

English Idioms & Slang Class
Teacher: Martha Alexander
Class: Tuesdays from 12 noon-1pm in OISS
Begins: Tuesday, January 15, 2013
Ends (tentatively): Tuesday, April 16, 2013

Grammar & Pronunciation
Teacher: Blake Ackerson & Lauren Johnson
Class: Wednesdays from 1-2pm in OISS
Begins: Wednesday, February 6, 2013
Ends (tentatively): Wednesday, April 29, 2013

Beginning English Conversation:
Teacher: Abbey Godley
Class: Thursdays from 12 noon-1pm in OISS
Begins: Thursday, January 17, 2013
Ends (tentatively): Thursday, April 18, 2013
International Education Week (cont.)

Continued from page 1

The GSA Coffee Break, co-sponsored by the Graduate Student Association and OISS, as well as the traditional Thanksgiving Lunch were both well-attended, and all participants enjoyed good coffee, international delicacies, and a delicious Thanksgiving meal. OISS also invited the presidents of Rice’s international clubs for lunch at the Faculty Club to show our appreciation for all the hard work they do throughout the year, while also celebrating the diversity on our campus.

The week concluded with a beloved IEW tradition—the Mini Soccer World Cup. Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe once again competed in friendly games of soccer trying to earn a spot on our fabulous trophy. With an amazing come-from-behind victory, Africa won their first-ever IEW Mini Soccer World Cup championship! Congratulations again, team Africa!!

Finally, we hosted our second IEW essay competition, looking for experiences in networking. We received wonderful submissions, and our top three authors took away a total of $1,500 in prize money. You can read a section of the winning essay to the right by Suman Khatiwada.

Honor Code & Article 12 Update

By Cory Owen

Starting Fall 2012, a change in the Article 12 policy took place. Now, if a student accused of an honor code violation chooses to leave Rice under the Article 12 provision, their transcripts will indicate “12” next to the course for which they were accused. To learn more about this change, please visit the Honor Council’s website or Rice’s General Announcements.

Remember that it is your responsibility to know and comply with the Rice Honor Code! Failure to do so can lead to severe immigration consequences. Please feel free to talk to an OISS advisor if you have any questions about this.
Upcoming Events

Career Panel
Join us as Jackie Hing (from the Center for Career Development) and alumni give tips for job interviews and the real world"

Time: 4-5:30 p.m.
Location: Sewall 309
Date: Wednesday, January 30

Culture Fair
Save the date for this year’s Culture Fair which will take place on Friday, March 15! This is a great opportunity for you to teach the Rice community about your native culture!

Immigration Workshop
Please join us for an informative session with Judy Lee from FosterQuan. She will be covering topics such as permanent residency, H-1Bs, and other employment-based questions. Don’t miss this helpful seminar to learn more about your visa options for the future.

Wednesday, February 13
4-5:30 p.m. in Sewall 309

Tax Workshop
Please join us for a tax workshop for Rice international students and scholars. We’ll have a tax specialist here from Briggs & Veselka to help so bring all your tax documents!

Thursday, March 7, 2013
5-7 p.m. in Keck Hall 100

CPT / OPT Workshops
Monday, January 28, 3:30-4:30pm (OISS 3rd Floor)
Tuesday, January 29, 12:00-1:00pm (OISS 3rd Floor)
Friday, February 1, 11:45am-12:45pm (Architecture @ Anderson 117)
Tuesday, February 5, 9:00-10:00pm (OISS 3rd Floor)
Wednesday, February 6, 8:00-9:00pm (RGA)