Celebrating International Rice

Adria Baker

Rice celebrates our outstanding international student and scholar population in different ways throughout the year. Also, include, International Education Week (IEW), which is commemorated on campus widely every fall. The OISS created the first annual International Celebration last spring – which we will host again on October 29, 2015. We supported and (sponsored by ADVANCE) for 17 years. Another example is The Rice graduate student celebration of The Graduate International Culture Night (GICN), which we will enjoy. again this year. In addition, we report often of the many assets our international population brings daily to Rice.

This year, thanks to Rice’s great Public Affairs division, we are enjoying celebrating our international campus with the banners that have been displayed throughout the campus and in various buildings. (Visit the OISS Facebook page for more pictures.) What a colorful way to enjoy individual students, faculty, countries, languages, and regions around the world that are represented here at Rice.

Stay tuned this academic year as we continue to celebrate our international campus, highlighting the great international students and scholars at Rice. It is an honor to host the best from around the world!

Thank you, Rice Public Affairs, for the festive banners you have displayed!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cover Story</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter from the Executive Director</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countries/Regions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory Resources</td>
<td>4-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Activities</td>
<td>10-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Your Calendars</td>
<td>14-16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

South Korea - Michelle Hong

Australia - Tessa Consedine

South Korea - Michelle Hong

Rice Bangladeshis
Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Rice International Students & Scholars,

What a privilege it is to begin a new academic year by welcoming new students and scholars from around the world to our campus. . . . And welcoming back our returning ones! We hope your summer was great – whether you were serving in an internship, working elsewhere, resting at the beach, or preparing to come to Houston for the first time. I can guarantee that in the Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS), we were very busy all summer long with 1) approving immigration paperwork to bring many people here, 2) authorizing employment, 3) supporting visas for immigration status and international travel, 4) cultural events, and 5) preparing workshops, training tools, and programs to ensure this will be a successful new school year for you.

One of the greatest joys I have is to meet people from all over the globe on a daily basis. Your perspectives, cultures, personalities, enthusiasms, and education bring so much to Rice and the USA. For many years, Rice has been working towards becoming an “international university”. Since Rice’s student population is 23.82% international (which is among the highest percentages among our peers), and our international scholar population was 862 in the past year, we can be confident that significant pillars of our internationalization efforts are being realized, including: 1) attracting the top students and scholars from around the world, and 2) expanding collaborative international research. You, as international students and scholars, serve as a bridge for Rice and Houston to your home countries, friends, families, schools and universities. We thank you very much for that.

We hope you enjoy your time at Rice, and please don’t hesitate to call 713-348-6095 to make an appointment to see an OISS advisor concerning travel outside the USA, your visa status, employment, social, financial, cultural and adjustment issues. We will be honored to assist you as best as we can.

Sincerely

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

Welcome, Rachel!

Jenny Brydon

Rachel Portwood, International Advisor, started in the OISS in March 2015. Rachel came to Rice with experience in F-1 visa regulations and in a short period of time, has already made the OISS a better place with her welcoming smile and work ethic. Please feel free to contact Rachel regarding immigration related matters and stop by to say hi!

Now a little bit more about Rachel... in her own words.

I grew up in Hewitt, Texas, but I’ve lived in so many places that have shaped who I am. I love spending time in Hermann Park and HalfPrice Books. I also love reading, exploring new places, being outside, hanging out with friends, going to the theatre/symphony, trying new recipes, and attempting to be crafty – I’m currently learning how to knit and trying to start an herb garden. I would love to go to the theatre/symphony, try new recipes, and attempt to be crafty – I’m currently learning how to knit and trying to start an herb garden.

Northern Lights as a dream vacation. Favorite International Spot is the most impossible question to answer – each place is so unique!

Why work at Rice OISS?: I love getting to know students from all over the world and learn about their cultures. I did my Master’s degree abroad and worked overseas, so that gave me a good idea of what it’s like and I enjoy helping others through their own experiences! I also find the immigration side of things completely fascinating.

To stay informed about OISS events and updates visit the OISS website often at:

http://oiss.rice.edu/

and the blog at

http://oiss.blogs.rice.edu/
## International Student Enrollment by Country/Region - Fall 2015 *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/Region</th>
<th>Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>Vietnam</td>
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<td>Zimbabwe</td>
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**TOTAL: 1563**

*Numbers as of 9/9/2015

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**Totals:**
- Enrolled non-immigrant degree-seeking students: **1563**
- Graduate international students: **1087**
- Undergraduate international students: **476**
- Exchange international students in 2015: **30**
- Visiting international students in 2015: **102**
- New degree-seeking international students **Fall 2015:** **452**

*Did you know...*

- The international students make up **23.82%** of the overall Rice student population?
- We had **862** foreign visitors and scholars conducting research and lecturing at Rice during the past year?
- Rice international students and scholars represent **93** different countries/regions?
Regulatory Resources and Updates

Mandatory Address Changes in SEVIS

... for all F and J Visa holders

Sandra Bloem-Curtis

The Student & Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) recently completed a significant update to their SEVIS system, implementing many changes. One of the most significant updates is the verification of F-1 and J-1 local addresses. SEVIS will now reject improperly formatted, invalid, or non-compliant addresses for F-1 and J-1 visa holders.

How does this impact you? In order for you to be in proper SEVIS and immigration compliance, you must be sure your address in ESTHER is accurate and properly formatted. This address is sent to SEVIS and directly impacts your immigration compliance.

What should I do? Please login to your ESTHER account and update/verify that your information is compliant. Follow the steps below:

1) Visit http://ester.rice.edu
2) Select Personal Information
3) Select Update Addresses/Phones
4) Update Mailing Address (if Mailing Address is not an option for you, update Permanent Address) with proper USPS formatting

Tip: visit https://tools.usps.com/go/ZipLookupAction_input, enter your address in the lookup tool, and the USPS website will provide you with the proper formatting for your address.

Proper format for addresses in the United States

Generally speaking, when indicating your local address (the address where you live, not your office address), please use the available fields as follows:

1) Address Line 1 = Street address – EX: 100 Main St.
2) Address Line 2 = Apartment number, Apartment complex name, Hotel name, residential college name – EX: Apt.5 or Jones College, Rm 405
3) Address Line 3 = PLEASE LEAVE EMPTY – SEVIS DOES NOT RECEIVE THIS INFORMATION
4) City = Properly spelled US city
5) State
6) ZIP = accurate 5 digit zip code
7) Phone = **Please note that all J visa holders are required to enter a valid local phone number

What happens next? We submit these updates to SEVIS on a daily basis. OISS will notify you if your information update is rejected by SEVIS, and guide you on how to correct it so that you are in valid immigration compliance. Please be sure to follow the steps above, check your formatting on the USPS website, and notify OISS of any change of address within 10 days of a move.

Thank you in advance for your compliance!

Coming Soon – Monthly International Spouse Orientation Program!

Rachel Portwood

Many international students and scholars bring their spouses and families with them to the United States during their time at Rice. We here in the OISS understand that family members may experience their own adjustment challenges upon arrival, and have their own questions and needs. International Advisor, Rachel Portwood, is working with the OISS team to develop a new monthly orientation program specifically designed for spouses and dependents.

Details are still being finalized, however we will send out more information on this exciting new program in the coming months. Stay tuned!
Regulatory Resources and Updates

Work Authorization for Off-Campus Jobs, Internships and Research

Rachel Portwood

Every semester OISS advisors assist many international students with authorization for positions related to their academic curricula. These work experiences range from part-time internships during the school year to jobs during academic breaks to research or full-time employment after graduation. Obtaining work authorization for F-1 and J-1 students will require some effort and preparation in advance, but the process can be pain-free if you attend one of our workshops and are diligent about following the standard procedures.

All off-campus practical training, internships, research and work experience must be approved prior to rendering services.

What about On-Campus Work? F-1 students do not need separate authorization to work on campus in most situations. Generally speaking, on campus work up to 20 hours per week during the academic semester is permitted. However, J-1 students do require authorization for all on-campus work. Please contact OISS for details or if you are unsure if your work constitutes as “on campus.”

What kind of Authorization do I need? Generally speaking, F-1 students will apply for CPT to work during their studies, and apply for OPT in their last semester in order to work after graduation. J-1 students need to apply for Academic Training.

Curricular Practical Training: CPT is authorization for F-1 students to work during your degree program at Rice. You must already have a job offer in order to apply for CPT. It can be approved by OISS within a few days once you have completed the required paperwork. You will need to provide the OISS with approval from your professor/academic advisor, proof the experience is part of your curriculum, verification of your degree program, and an offer letter. In order for your application to be processed efficiently, please note that the offer letter from your employer must contain the start and end dates of your position, how many hours per week you will work, a brief description of your duties, and the address where you will be working.

Even if you have applied for CPT before, you may wish to attend one of our workshops again as our processes have changed with tightening immigration compliance. OISS has outlined guidelines and procedures for CPT on our website at http://oiss.rice.edu/studentwork/.

Optional Practical Training: OPT is authorization for F-1 students to work after you complete your degree program with Rice. Although you do not need to have a job offer in order to apply, OPT requires more planning than CPT since it involves an application to USCIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services) and can take an average of three months to be approved. We encourage you to begin your application before you complete your Rice degree requirements – as early as 90 days before you finish. More details about the OPT process can be found on our website at http://oiss.rice.edu/studentwork/.

You might hear friends say that they received their EAD card (Employment Authorization Document) in just a few weeks, but it often takes USCIS a full three months to process OPT applications. Without your EAD card in-hand, you may not start an OPT job (even unpaid) after graduation.

Academic Training (AT) J-1 students use Academic Training for work permission, both during and after their Rice degree programs. Please see OISS’ “J-1 Academic Training Handout” for details and make an appointment to discuss your situation with an advisor.

F-1 CPT/OPT Workshops: OISS holds 10 – 15 workshops each semester in which we discuss CPT and OPT requirements and procedures in detail. We also address staying in the U.S. beyond OPT (STEM OPT extension, H-1B, and other visa categories).

Please plan to attend a workshop before you need work authorization. Visit our website to see the most up to date information on our workshops.

Fall 2015 CPT / OPT Workshops

Tuesday, September 15, 8:00pm – RVA
Thursday, September 17, 4:00pm
Tuesday, September 22, 8:00pm – RGA
Thursday, September 24, 11:00am
Thursday, October 1, 4:00pm
Tuesday, October 6, 11:00am
Wednesday, October 14, 4:00pm
Monday, October 19, 11:00am
Monday, November 2, 4:00pm
Thursday, November 12, 11:00am
Wednesday, December 2, 4:00pm
Updates and Changes for Dependents of Students and Scholars

Ben Colston

**Employment Authorization for Certain H-4 Dependent Spouses**

As of May 26, 2015, USCIS began accepting applications from qualifying H-4 dependents for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD). To be eligible, the H-4 nonimmigrant must be the spouse of an H-1B nonimmigrant who:

1. Has received approval for an I-140 Immigrant Visa petition; or
2. Has been granted an extension of H-1B status beyond the normal six-year limit.


**Part-time Study for F-2 Dependents**

Effective May 29, 2015, F-2 dependents of an F-1 student may study part time in a program that is certified by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) as long as it does not amount to what regulations define as full-time for an F-1 student. A full course of study for F-1 students at Rice is defined as 12 credits for undergraduates, and 9 credits for graduates.

F-2 dependents can still participate full-time in avocational or recreational studies, such as hobbies.


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**DPS Quick Facts**

Andy Meretoja

- You may drive with a valid, unexpired DL from another state or country for up to 90 days after moving to Texas.
- In order to be eligible for a Texas driver license (DL) or state identification card (ID), you must:
  - Wait 10 days after OISS has registered your arrival (i.e. your check-in with us)
  - Live in Texas for at least 30 days (Exception: If you have a valid, unexpired DL from another U.S. state, this wait time is waived!)
- You will need to prove your Texas residency with acceptable documents (list available on the [DPS website](http://www.dps.texas.gov/)).
- You must present all your immigration documents when applying for Texas DL or ID.
- International applicants must always visit DPS in person, and cannot apply or renew online. For convenience, check out the [Mega Centers](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/) where you can get in line online.
- DPS regulations are constantly changing, so please check [http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/) for the most up-to-date information!

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**Special Advanced Immigration Seminar**

Do not miss the opportunity to hear Silvia Graves, immigration lawyer from [Graves & Graves, Attorneys at Law](http://www.graveslaw.com/), who will come to campus on September 30, 2015!

**Who:** Speaker, Silvia Graves, Immigration Attorney from [Graves & Graves, Attorneys at Law](http://www.graveslaw.com/)

**When:** Wednesday, September 30, 2015

**Time:** 4:50pm

**Where:** Sewall Hall, Room 301

**Topics:** Employment in the USA now and after your nonimmigrant status, H-1Bs, O-1s, other nonimmigrant visas, permanent residency, immigration limitations and opportunities

Mark your calendars and bring a friend to this free seminar!
Take Caution!

Fraud Alert for Fee I-901: Reported May 6, 2015

Information directly from SEVP

Recently, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) became aware that scammers are targeting students in the Chicago area in an attempt to solicit funds on behalf of the I-901 Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) Fee. Scammers are requesting those targeted to send up to $4,000 to avoid deportation. The scammers are using the ‘Location Services’ app on students’ cellular devices to find the students’ location and threaten them with continued pursuit if they do not receive the money. The incidents are currently under investigation by the Chicago Police Department and SEVP intends to cooperate fully and will provide additional information as it becomes available.

Coincidentally, these fraud incidents began after SEVP sent out the first batch of I-901 Non-Payment letters in mid-April. The I-901 Non-Payment letters request that students in active status, with no I-901 payment on their record, pay the I-901 Fee. The letter also states that failure to remit the payment within the time allotted will result in the termination of the student’s SEVIS record and/or possible deportation.

Below, please refer to the detailed instructions when handling any future fraud incidents, should they arise:

Red Flag 1

Students should disregard any phone call from a person attempting to collect an I-901 Fee on behalf of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and SEVP. The process that SEVP has in place for the collections of unpaid I-901 Fees does not involve contacting students via phone to threaten or request money.

Red Flag 2

Additionally, scammers are reportedly requesting up to $4,000 in I-901 Fees; an I-901 Fee is $200 at the most. The only time the requested Fee will be more is if a student has a returned check. The additional amount would be limited to small, related service charges for bank processing.

What to do if your student receives this type of phone call?

Students should not give any information to the person on the phone, nor should they send any funds to the scammers. Those targeted need to immediately call their local Police Department and contact their school official to report the incident to SEVP.

School Officials

If you receive any incident reports or information that aids in this investigation, please contact the SEVP Response Center immediately at 703-603-3400 or 1-800-892-4829 between the hours of 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET or email SEVP@ice.dhs.gov.

The safety and well-being of all program participants is of the utmost importance to SEVP. We assure you, we are working diligently with law enforcement to eradicate this issue and find those responsible.

This Just Isn't Good!

Unfortunately, there are things in the USA that you might encounter that just are not good (crossing fingers that it doesn’t happen to you!). Here are some tips we hope will help you recognize scams and behaviors that are not acceptable. . . and how to deal with them:

- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is! Many scams take advantage of people who respond to advertisements or message offering something for little or nothing. This could include email messages that seem tailored just for you, calls or requests in your place of residence. Take caution, and inquire first.
- No one from Rice will ever ask you for your password. If you get an email that says it is from Rice and asks you to input your log in and password, it is not from Rice and probably a scam. Contact the Rice IT HelpDesk quickly to find out what to do.
- If you are asked to lend money or pay for something that is out of the ordinary, inquire first.

You can always ask the OISS and we can refer you to experts to inquire about legitimacy. The Rice Police (RUPD) is always a helpful resource, as well. Their number is: 713-348-6000.

The US government agency has this blog dedicated to immigration scams, with helpful comments as well.

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Volume 31, Issue I, Fall 2015
# Regulatory Resources and Updates

## J- Visa Corner

### 10 Myths and Facts about J Health Insurance Requirements

*Agnes Vajtai*

Since the US Government recently increased the level of health insurance coverage for J visa holders, and because having an adequate health insurance is one of the most important conditions of the J visa category, here is a quick update for brushing up your knowledge, and for clearing up some of the common misconceptions about J insurance requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Myth</th>
<th>Fact</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Health insurance is not necessary for the young and healthy</strong>  You need to take this very seriously. Not only because accidents do happen even with the youngest, happiest and healthiest, and healthcare in the US may cost you thousands of dollars if paying out of pocket, but also because if you don’t comply you will lose the privilege to stay in the US and will need to return home immediately.</td>
<td><strong>The US Government requires J visa holders to meet certain insurance requirements</strong>  Visitors on a J visa must maintain health insurance coverage, and effective May 15, 2015 the new requirements are: (1) at least $100,000 for each accident or illness; and (2) $ 50,000 for medical evacuation, and (3) $ 25,000 for repatriation. (4) The policy should not have more than $500 deductible and (5) more than six month of pre-existing limitation. (6) Must be backed by home country government or meet the US ratings’ requirements as well as (7) comply with the requirements of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). (8) Finally, it should be written in English.</td>
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<td><strong>Dependents are not subject to the same requirements</strong>  All J visa holders including dependents (spouse and children) are required to have health insurance that meets the new requirements.</td>
<td><strong>Proof of health insurance must be provided to OISS</strong>  You’ll be required to show proof of your (and your dependents') health insurance that meets the requirements upon check in with OISS, or if current coverage is about to expire, or if you have requested an extension.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Rice Aetna employee plan covers all the J visa requirements</strong>  The Rice Aetna employee plan covers you for most of the requirements except medical evacuation and repatriation which you will need to purchase separately since it is also required by your J visa category.</td>
<td><strong>The Student Health Center is for Rice students</strong>  Unfortunately J visitors will not be able to use the Student Health Center, so make sure that you select a primary care physician and doctor’s office at the beginning of your insurance coverage, so you will be ready when you are sick and need to visit them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>There is no need for health insurance for the time someone is out of the US</strong>  J visitors need to maintain health insurance for the entire duration of their program including time spent outside of the US. If your dependents leave the US and will not be returning you can notify OISS and we’ll close their records. That way they will not be subject to the J health insurance requirements.</td>
<td><strong>Maintaining a health insurance policy is the responsibility of the J visa holder</strong>  Please note that the way health insurance works in the US might be very different from the one you’re familiar with, it might seem very confusing and overwhelming. However, all J visa holders must be familiar with the insurance requirements and know how it affects their status. In addition primary J visa holders are responsible for their dependents’ status as well. You can request assistance from OISS and your insurance company and use many of the online resources available when navigating through the different options, but please understand that the responsibility and the obligation to comply with the regulation is ultimately yours alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Everyone who works at Rice can enroll into the Rice Aetna plan</strong>  Only benefit eligible employee will be able to enroll into the Rice Aetna employee plan. Your host department can help determine whether you’ll be in a benefit eligible position at Rice so you choose your insurance plan accordingly.</td>
<td><strong>The Rice plan starts on the first day of the month</strong>  Enrollment into the Rice Aetna employee plan is completed through the Benefits team at the Human Resources Department. Please keep in mind that your insurance coverage may not be effective at the first day of your employment, and you may need to purchase alternate insurance plan that covers you until your Rice employee one starts, usually the following month.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We hope you got all of them right but if not, you can read more details about the requirements [here](http://oiss.rice.edu/scholarhealthinsurance/), or send your questions to oiss@rice.edu, and we’ll be happy to help.
Regulatory Reminders and Other Resources

J Corner

J Visa Special Reminders

All J-1 and J-2 Exchange Visitor students and scholar visa holders should always be aware of the special regulations needed to maintain legal immigration status:

⇒ Keep your Esther account, and the OISS, updated on telephone numbers, local addresses, email addresses within 10 days of any change.
⇒ Must maintain minimum legal insurance requirements. See page 8 for details.
⇒ Must participate in cultural events and opportunities in the USA and Houston, to fulfill the cultural exchange piece of your visa. You are strongly encouraged to do what you can to share your culture, also, while in the USA. (Hint: Participating in the “International Celebration” on October 29, 2015 is a great opportunity to do this. Inquire more in the OISS.)
⇒ Do not work off-campus without proper prior approval from an OISS advisor.
⇒ (J students) To work on-campus, you must get prior work authorization, as well, from the OISS.

When you are unsure, please always check with an OISS advisor.

Plagiarism: Recognize It and Avoid It

Sherry Vanderslice

The rules of plagiarism in the United States are often stricter that in other countries; therefore, many international graduate students fall victim to plagiarism violations while attending graduate school at Rice. Plagiarism during your graduate studies can result in an Honor Code violation and/or loss of professional reputation. The Rice Honor system does not accept “I didn’t know” as an excuse for plagiarism. The best way to avoid a plagiarism violation is to learn what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it in your writing. As part of the Succeed! Workshop series, the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies is offering a workshop titled “Plagiarism: Recognize and Avoid It” on Oct. 3rd, 3-4:40 PM in Duncan Hall room 1064. This workshop will teach the proper use of paraphrasing, quotations and citations. You can register for the workshop by going to graduate.rice.edu/succeedregistration.

Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies 2015 Succeed! Workshop Series

Don’t get caught with an Honor Code violation or loss of professional reputation. Learn what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it in your writing. This workshop will teach proper use of paraphrasing, quotations and citations to avoid plagiarism.

Topic: Plagiarism: recognize and avoid it
Presenter: Jan Hewitt, Professional Communication, Sr. Lecturer
Date: Oct 2nd, 2015
Time: 3:00- 4:30 pm
Place: Duncan 1064
Register at http://graduate.rice.edu/succeedregistration or scan

Homecoming Social for Graduate Students & Alumni

Graduate international students and alumni are invited by the Office of Alumni Relations to the Homecoming weekend (November 13-15, 2015) for a social with pizza and beer at Valhalla

Date and time : Friday, November 13th, 6 pm
Where: Valhalla
What: Social with beer and pizza
Invited by: Dan Stypa, M.S.
Associate Director of Alumni Engagement
Rice University, Office of Alumni Relations

Coffee and Conversation for International Undergraduates

Throughout the 2015-2016 academic year, OISS will be partnering with other offices to provide continued programmatic support for international undergraduate students. This program initiative, called Coffee and Conversation, will include a reception with President Leebron, and informational sessions on leadership, stress management, and networking.

See calendar on page 15 for fall schedule. Coffee and tea will be served.
Cultural Activities

A Visit to the Nation's Capital

Ben Colston

This summer I had the opportunity to visit Washington D.C as part of the Education USA Forum. While I was there I was able to see many of the national monuments, including the White House, Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, and World War II Memorial. These are all considered part of the National Mall: http://www.nps.gov/nama/index.htm.

I strongly recommend making our nation’s capital one of the places you visit while you are here in the US. If you do, it would be best to give yourself at least three full days to visit the monuments and memorials, the Smithsonian museums, and some of the beautiful area in and around the city. I was told Great Falls Park is well worth a visit, and only a few miles from the city. And make sure you visit the monuments at night, as they are all beautifully lighted.

While it is possible to visit the museums and monuments at the mall on foot, you should be aware of the distance. The capital building is about 2 miles from the Lincoln memorial. Bikes are available to rent. You can also join a tour that stops at each site.

In my limited time I was only able to visit the monuments and one of the museums. So I plan to return with my family in the near future. The best part of visiting Washington DC is that everything is completely free, including all the museums, the monuments, and even the zoo. You can find information about the free museums and zoo at http://www.si.edu/Museums.

LinkedInternationals Rice – New Student Organization Seeks to Provide Mentorship for Those Interested in U.S Opportunities

Jenny Brydon

Junior bioengineering major, Momona Yamagami, created a student organization called LinkedInternationals Rice in Spring 2015. The purpose of the club is to provide mentorship and education for those interested in working or continuing their education in the U.S. after graduation. The club aims to do this through a variety of methods. First off, the club matches upperclassmen and underclassmen international students by major. Throughout this past Spring semester, teams of two met up to discuss opportunities and support whether in organized meetings or over coffee. Feedback from the Spring 2015 mentor/mentee pairings was extremely positive.

In the future, the club hopes to also provide sessions on networking, work authorization for international students and cultural differences in the workplace. In addition, the club seeks to provide more of a connection between international alumni and current students. Ms. Yamagami has recently made contact with Alumni Affairs and has sent out information about the club through their alumni communication methods. LinkedInternationals is also planning a forum with alumni for the Fall semester.

Yamagami states, “We hope to provide international students interested in working in the U.S. after college with support and advice pertaining specifically to international students.”

If you have questions regarding LinkedInternationals Rice or are interested in joining the group, please contact Ms. Yamagami at my13@rice.edu

Volume 31, Issue I, Fall 2015
Cultural Activities

REAP International: To be Inspired is Great. To Inspire is Incredible

Elmira Ganiyeva

We are always busy looking for inspirations, but have we ever thought of inspiring others? REAP (Rice Experiences Advertised to Prospects – Internationally) which was created by OISS in 2005 to increase Rice’s visibility to prospective international students through hearing about Rice students’ experiences can serve a great opportunity for you to become an inspirer for many young people and an “ambassador” for Rice.

You may consider this, if you are:

- a currently enrolled, degree-seeking international student on a non-immigrant visa at Rice;
- interested in visiting a high school, university/college, or overseas advising center in your home country during your trip home;
- willing to share your Rice experiences and insights about all the opportunities that Rice has to offer.

Students who wish to participate in this program choose one or two places where they would like to give a talk about their experiences at Rice to a group of people in their home country. Upon completing all of the requirements and expectations of the program, students receive an honorarium and a certificate for their service. The program is sponsored by OISS. We organize several special REAP information sessions twice a year, before spring and summer breaks. Stay tuned for OISS announces.

Here is what former participants say about their REAP experiences:

Qianru Xiong, Sophomore, Sid Richardson College:

I love participating in such a great program. I love my university and I am always happy to let other people know how great a university Rice is. REAP International program helps me professionally bring Rice to more people. Last summer I gathered some friends in my hometown to present our universities together in two institutions—our high school and one big educational agency. I thought that if each one of us could talk for about thirty minutes then we could hold a 2 hours professional session to attract more interested students and parents. Therefore, our influence could be bigger. We treated our event very seriously. A week before the official day, I communicated with the two institutions and decided topics to be discussed. I also organized a practice run among fifteen professional counselors.

Excitingly, the classrooms of presentation were very full in both places. About 50-70 people (parents and students) attended each session. I shared many pictures demonstrating how Rice was my perfect match through my interaction with the community: classroom, dormitory, dining commons, library, student clubs, and places around the university like museums and zoos. After the session, half of the students and parents stayed to communicate with me in person to learn more about the admission requirement, student life and resources of Rice University. It was a great success and I felt very happy and proud to present my school.

Talking about Rice in China

Peter Owuor, Graduate Student, Materials Science & NanoEngineering:

It was a wonderful experience for me to visit my country Kenya as Rice Ambassador. Due to the short notice I gave my former place of work for my visit, I had expected to find very few number of students but to my amazement, so many turned up despite keeping them waiting for more than two hours!!!(Nairobi traffic nightmare). I decided to make it an open session where they asked any question they had about Rice.

Answering questions from students in Kenya
OISS Logo by Rice International Student, Will Wang

Andy Meretoja

This year the OISS t-shirt that was given to all new international students was designed by one of our very own international students. Will Wang is an Architecture major from China, who is in his last year at Rice University. We interviewed him on his logo creation.

Q: The t-shirt design is based on something that you originally created for the OISS International Education Week Theme & Logo competition. Can you tell us a little bit about your inspiration behind the design and what made you want to participate in the IEW competition?

A: I love what I do. There is always joy in the drafting and crafting. When someone else actually appreciates it, I feel accomplished and rewarded. Inspiration for the design is simple. Owl symbolizes our school and the globe refers to the international population at our school. With a bit of graphic touch I hope the logo summarizes that international students and scholars flourish here at Rice.

Q: The theme of your design is “global community”. What does global community mean for you?

A: I think global community means a group where all voices can be heard. Each voice can bring information that may be inaccessible somewhere else. Isolation promotes hostility whereas communications help people bond.

Q: Do you have a message you’d like to send to all the new international students at Rice who are now wearing your design?

I can only wish them the best of their college experience. It may get easy sometimes, difficult others, but steadfast efforts always return something nice. Also remember to stay hydrated. Houston sure has a warm welcome for you.
Cultural Activities

Seasonal Events at OISS

Day at NASA

Andy Meretoja

As part of the Summer Events organized by OISS, Rachel and I got to spend a fun Saturday at Space Center Houston with nearly 60 international students and scholars. Among the exciting activities, we got to see NASA’s newest Mission Control Center which will take over ground operations for the International Space Station (ISS) later this year, as well as a sunrise in space from the perspective of the ISS!!

Our next NASA trip will take place during Rice’s Midterm Recess on Tuesday, October 13th. Here are some of the great things you can experience if you join us:

⇒ Tour the Johnson Space Center!
⇒ See the Saturn V rocket!
⇒ Touch a moon rock!
⇒ See Mercury, Gemini & Apollo capsules that have been in space!
⇒ Get a live briefing on what NASA is doing right now with the ISS or the Curiosity rover on Mars!

Information on how to get your tickets will be sent to OISS-Announce as soon as we have confirmed the details. Hope to see you all at NASA!

Spring Recess Event - Bayou Wildlife Park

Aki Shimada

On April 3rd during the Spring Recess, OISS coordinated a trip to Bayou Wildlife Park. 36 Rice students, scholars and their family members participated in this fun event of interacting with exotic animals from across the globe. After the visiting the animals on the trams and feeding them, we all enjoyed a little picnic with peanut butter & jelly sandwiches. The group had a great time on this gorgeous spring day.

Nepal Earthquake Relief

Aki Shimada

On April 25th, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal which caused at least 8,000 death and more than 23,000 injured people. Countless people are left homeless and in need of medical help, food and other aid. The Rice Nepali students and scholars have experienced anguish of being so far away from home, and not been able to reach their loved ones on the phone immediately after the earthquake. Finally, they were able to reach the family members and confirm all of their safety.

In search of ways to help and encourage their countrymen, the Nepali students and scholars partnered with OISS and called for assistance to the Rice community. A book to write thoughts of support and love for the people of Nepal, as well as a donation box was set out in OISS for about two months. The book filled with our thoughts and prayers was forwarded to Nepalese Association of Houston who is working with the government of Nepal to support their people. The collection was donated to the Red Cross, with a designation for Nepal earthquake.

Naresh Pandey and Dr. Narayan
Mark Your Calendars

INTERNATIONAL LADIES NETWORK

Please join the OISS staff members for networking, food and fun activities with other International ladies. The luncheons will take place on the first Monday of the month in the GSA Lounge, RMC basement from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM. Pizza will be provided.

**Fall 2015**

**October 5, 2015**
*Volunteering in the U.S.*

Come learn about volunteering culture and opportunities in the U.S. We will have special guests, details TBA.

**November 2, 2015**
*Modern Hardanger Embroidery*

Come hear a cultural presentation about Modern Hardanger—Norwegian Embroidery.

**December 7, 2015**
*Holiday Themed Crafts*

Join us for some networking and owl-themed holiday crafts.

All activities are subject to change, stay tuned to the OISS-Announce listserv. You can subscribe at https://mailman.rice.edu/mailman/listinfo/oiss-announce.

**Spring 2016**

**February 1, 2016**
*Valentine’s Day Themed Craft*

Join us for networking and a Valentine’s Day themed craft

**March 7, 2016**
*Self Defense/Personal Safety*

Learn about self defense and how to stay safe from the Rice University Police Department.

**April 4, 2016**
*End of Semester Party*

Join us for wraps as we wrap up the semester with an End of Semester Party!

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**Free English & Culture Classes**

*Sign up - Monday, September 21, 10 AM*

[https://oiss.rice.edu/english-class](https://oiss.rice.edu/english-class)

**Advanced/Intermediate English Conversation:**
*Teacher: Catherine Spain*

**Class:** Mondays from 1-2 p.m., or 2-3 p.m. in the Ley Student Center, 2nd floor; conference room

**Begins:** Monday, October 5, 2015

**Ends (tentatively):** Monday, December 7, 2015

**Grammar & Pronunciation**
*Teacher: Lauren Hanson & Chris Sneller*

**Class:** Wednesdays from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. in OISS

**Begins:** Wednesday, October 7, 2015

**Ends (tentatively):** Wednesday, December 2, 2015

**English Idioms & Slang Class**
*Teacher: Emily Brown*

**Class:** Tuesdays from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. in OISS

**Begins:** Tuesday, October 6, 2015

**Ends (tentatively):** Tuesday, December 1, 2015

**Beginning English Conversation:**
*Teacher: Laura Russell*

**Class:** Thursdays from 12:00 – 12:40 p.m. in OISS

**Begins:** Thursday, October 8, 2015

**Ends (tentatively):** Thursday, December 3, 2015
Mark Your Calendars

Calendar of OISS Fall Events

Free English & Culture Classes See page 14 for details

September 21, Monday, English Class Sign-up, 10 am
- Mondays 1 pm - 2 pm or 2 pm - 3 pm, Advanced/Intermediate Conversation and Culture - Catherine Spain
- Tuesdays 12 pm (noon) - 1 pm English Idioms and Slang - Emily Brown
- Wednesdays 12 pm (Noon) - 1pm Grammar and Pronunciation - Lauren Hanson & Chris Sneller
- Thursdays 12:00 pm (Noon) - 12:40 pm Beginning Conversation - Laura Russell

Advanced Immigration Workshop
September 30, Wednesday, Sewall Hall, Room 301, 4:00 - 5:30pm

Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies 2015 Succeed! Workshop Series
October 2nd, Friday - Plagiarism: Recognize and Avoid It, Duncan1064, 3:00 - 4:30 pm

NASA Trip
October 13, Tuesday Mid Term Recess, Day Tickets: Early bird @ $22 through Oct 1, afterwards $25 until sold out available in OISS

Graduate Continuing Orientation
- October 7, Wednesday - Tips from Student Leadership, presented by GSA Officers
  GSA Captain Lounge (Student Center Basement) 12:00 (Noon)-1:00
- *November 6 Friday - Networking for Meetings and Employment, Beth O'Sullivan, Jones Graduate School of Business, Farnsworth Pavilion 12pm (noon) 1pm

*All graduate international students are invited

Rice International Undergraduate Coffee and Conversation
- September 18, Friday - Reception with President Leebron, Sewell Hall Art Gallery, 3:30 pm
- October 14, Wednesday - Leadership in a Cultural Context, Miner Lounge/RMC, 2:00 pm
- November 12, Thursday - Stress Management, Miner Lounge/RMC, 4:00 pm

International Ladies Network Hours (See page 14 for details)
- October 5, Monday GSA Lounge (Basement of Student Center), 12 pm (noon) - 1 pm
- November 2, Monday GSA Lounge (Basement of Student Center), 12 pm (noon) - 1 pm
- December 7, Monday GSA Lounge (Basement of Student Center), 12 pm (noon) - 1 pm

International Education Week 2015
- November 16-20, http://oiss.rice.edu/iew
- November 19, Thursday Thanksgiving Luncheon
- November TBD Saturday Annual World Mini Soccer Cup

International Celebration
- October 29, Thursday, Ray Courtyard of the Student Center, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Stay Tuned for Winter Events

Volume 31, Issue I, Fall 2015

Rice International Football Clinic 2015.
Thank you, Coach Bailiff!
Random Quotes on Gratitude

We, at the Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS), are grateful to be able to work with such amazing people! We believe that Rice University attracts the best from around the globe. We hope you enjoy these quotes on gratitude from famous people in our history.

Have a wonderful school year! The OISS Team

“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.” U.S. President John F. Kennedy

“Gratitude is the healthiest of all human emotions. The more you express gratitude for what you have, the more likely you will have even more to express gratitude for.” Zig Ziglar, U.S. author, salesman & motivational speaker

“Gratitude is the sign of noble souls.” Aesop, ancient Greek storyteller credited with “Aesop’s Fables”

“Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all others.” Marcus Tullius Cicero, Roman politician, lawyer, orator, philosopher, poet

“… maybe we must give up trying to pay back the people in this world who sustain our lives. In the end, maybe it’s wiser to surrender before the miraculous scope of human generosity and to just keep saying thank you, forever and sincerely, for as long as we have voices.” Elizabeth Gilbert, Contemporary U.S. novelist, memoirist

“Cultivate the habit of being grateful for every good thing that comes to you, and to give thanks continuously. And because all things have contributed to your advancement, you should include all things in your gratitude.” Ralph Waldo Emerson, U.S. 19th century essayist, lecturer, poet

“Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.” Marcel Proust, French novelist, critic, essayist

“A grateful mind is a great mind which eventually attracts to itself great things.” Plato, classic Greek philosopher, mathematician

“There is always, always, always something to the thankful for.” Unknown

“To speak gratitude is courteous and pleasant, to enact gratitude is generous and noble, but to live gratitude is to touch Heaven.” Johannes Gaertner, German art historian

“When I started counting my blessings, my whole life turned around.” Willie Nelson, musician, songwriter, producer, actor, activist, singer

“If you haven’t all the things you want, be grateful for the things you don’t have that you wouldn’t want.” Unknown

85 Rice internationals and friends enjoy the annual IMAX movie together