Harvey: Hitting Hard...Helping Harder

Adria Baker

As the first days of the academic year began, and our new internationals were just settling into the expectations of the semester, an unprecedented storm to Houston rolls in. Some of our new students were just beginning to learn where to shop for food, or meet new people. Our continuing students had just returned from visits with families, or summer internships. Many of our international scholars had just moved into their homes somewhat close to Rice, and oftentimes with families and young children.

The hurricane warnings surprised us, as our focus was on our bright new academic year. We never imagined in our preparations that the storm event would last as many days as it did. In the end, the impact on many Rice internationals has taken quite a serious toll. Many students and scholars have had to move. They evacuated under severe situations, and are still trying to balance getting settled with continuing their academic studies and research.

Nevertheless, Rice international students and scholar “hit back” on Harvey by responding to the community needs. Almost immediately, we were getting requests from Rice international students and scholars about information on volunteering for the community. Many had just arrived to the USA and Houston only two weeks before, yet they have been at the forefront to help strangers in need.

We, at the OISS are extremely grateful to work at such a globally-minded university who has such considerate, hard-working and outwardly-focused internationals. Thank you for giving back to Houston (and to one another) in many special ways. Please keep us posted on your needs, so we can do what we can to try to help.

(On a cultural side note, I had never realized how many English idioms and slang were weather-related until I heard myself make statements such as our “inboxes and phones were flooded with messages of concern of others”, or that “the situation was fluid, due to the ever-changing needs of the community”. We expressed “well-wishes for friends and neighbors greatly impacted, so they can weather the storm of competing responsibilities”. I have since become keenly conscience of my words.)

#YouAreWelcomeHere (So VERY True!)

The harsh rhetoric of the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign was broadcasted very publicly. Regrettfully, this became a forewarning to surprising and challenging Executive Orders in early 2017, which included two travel bans. The tone implicates uncertainty of the U.S.A. remaining open to students from around that globe. This is the exact opposite of what US universities and colleges wish to communicate. In particular at Rice, we truly value that approximately 24% of our overall student population is international!

In an effort to counter any concern, a nationwide, grassroots campaign was started, which expresses to international students in the USA that “You are VERY welcome here!” It is called #YouAreWelcomeHere. The enthusiasm about this message truly caught the attention of many institutions, who have since done their own support of the message.

Under Jenny Brydon’s guidance last summer, a very capable and enthusiastic team of students created Rice’s version of the #YouAreWelcomeHere video. The final version was ready just in time to show the new international students at iPREP (for undergraduates) and the Graduate International Orientation (for graduates). We are truly grateful for the hard work, persistence and excellent creativity, of the students who created Rice’s #YouAreWelcomeHere video.

In sum, at Rice, we realize that one of our distinguishable attributes is that we have a strong international student and scholar presence here...and we do not take this for granted! You are so welcome here!!
Letter from the Executive Director

The OISS has organized strategic meetings, trainings and workshops, to support the unique requirements that international students and scholars face while in the USA. Please stay tuned for announcements of our offerings, including: 1) immigration, employment and safety workshops, 2) hospitality programs, 3) continuing orientations and 4) impromptu gatherings. All seek to gear our programs for the Rice international community. We try very hard not duplicate academic departments or university college programs and trainings.

What are your unique needs? We always want to hear from you. Usually, making an appointment is the most efficient way to talk to an OISS advisor, so you do not have to wait long. We have some walk-in hours, you can always write us, and PLEASE come to see us anytime when you have an emergency. We are grateful to help in anyway possible, are so happy to be in a position to help any Rice Internationals!

Sincerely,

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

Advanced Immigration Workshop
Do not miss the opportunity to hear Andrew Gee, a well known immigration attorney and Rice alumni. He will come to campus on Wednesday October 4, 2017! Mark your calendars and bring a friend to this free advanced immigration seminar!

Who: Andrew Gee, Immigration Attorney Harry Gee, Jr & Associates
Date: Wednesday, October 4, 2017
Time: 4:00 pm — 5:30 pm
Where: Sewall Hall 301
Topics: Visa options for employment in the USA now and for your future plans, including status, H-1Bs, O-1s, other nonimmigrant visa options, permanent residency. Current immigration limitations and opportunities will be discussed.

OPT/CPT Fall Workshops (1 hour)
Sept. 28, Thursday, 8:00pm (Rice Graduate Apartments)
Oct. 2, Monday, 4:00pm (Sewall Hall 301)
Oct. 13, Friday, 11:00am (OISS)
Oct. 24, Tuesday, 11:00am (OISS)
Nov. 8, Wednesday, 1:00pm (OISS)
Nov. 16, Thursday, 11:00am (OISS)
Dec. 13, Wednesday 11:00am (OISS)

Important Immigration and Visa Updates: State Department Tightens Rules for Visas to U.S.
NYTimes.com
In a cable to American embassies around the world, Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson wrote that visitors who require a visa before entering the United States must then follow through on their stated plans for at least three months. If in that period they do something they failed to mention in an interview with a consular official — such as marry an American citizen, go to school or get a job — it will be presumed that they have deliberately lied.

That would make it difficult, if not impossible, for the individual to renew a visa, get a new visa or change their immigration status. If the person was still in the United States, it would make those visitors eligible for deportation.

To stay informed about OISS events and updates visit the OISS website often at:
http://oiss.rice.edu/
Traveling Outside the U.S

Elizabeth Thomas, International Advisor

Cruise the Caribbean, try mole sauce in Mexico, go curling in Canada – we encourage you to explore some of the many destinations nearby! When traveling abroad and seeking re-entry to the United States, it is important to present proper documentation to the CBP officer. Based on the documentation and information provided, the Customs officer will determine your eligibility for admission to the U.S.

HOW TO OBTAIN A TRAVEL SIGNATURE THROUGH RICE OISS
Please stop by OISS with your immigration document and passport. Our front desk staff will review your documents, return your passport, and keep your I-20 or DS-2019 for one full business day. Your immigration document with a travel signature will be ready to pick up the following day at 3:00PM.

VISA RENEWAL
If your visa is expired, you must obtain a visa renewal letter from OISS in order to renew your visa. You may request a visa renewal letter on our website. The letter will be ready for you to pick up from OISS on the following business day at 3:00PM.

WHAT IS A TRAVEL SIGNATURE?
A travel signature confirms that you are properly maintaining your F or J visa status and that the information on your immigration document is up to date. If you need to request a reprint of your I-20 or DS-2019 due to a change in program, funding, etc., please email oiss@rice.edu.

WHERE IS THE TRAVEL ENDORSEMENT LOCATED ON MY IMMIGRATION DOCUMENT?
I-20: Final section of page 2
DS-2019: Bottom, right-hand area of page 1

HOW LONG IS A TRAVEL SIGNATURE VALID?
A travel signature is valid for six months. If more than six months have passed since your last signature, we recommend obtaining a new travel endorsement.

SEEKING RE-ENTRY TO THE UNITED STATES
Please be sure to have the following documentation with you at the Port of Entry:
⇒ Passport valid at least six months into the future,
⇒ Valid F or J visa (Exceptions: Canadian citizens and Automatic Revalidation of Visa Validity),
⇒ Original I-20 or DS-2019 certificate with travel signature from the previous six months,
⇒ Students on OPT must also present their original Employment Authorization Document and a job offer letter.

ONCE YOU ARE BACK
Visit OISS to turn in your new I-94. You may also email your I-94 to oiss@rice.edu upon arrival.

Whether you’re visiting family in your home country or off swimming with sea turtles in the Galapagos, we hope your re-entry to the U.S. goes smoothly! Please contact OISS if you have travel questions.

Online Course Guidance

Sandra Bloem-Curtis

Online courses can be a great tool in managing your class schedule, but if you are on an F-1 or J-1 visa you need to be aware of the restrictions that go along with it.

Please note that F-1 students may have no more than 3 credit hours of online coursework count toward their full-time status requirement. J-1 students may not have any online courses count toward their full-time requirement. Full-time requirements for undergraduates is 12 credit hours and full-time for graduates is 9-credit hours.

Failing to follow these requirements may result in the termination of your visa status, so please see an OISS advisor if you have questions.
Regulatory Resources and Updates

Beware of DHS Hotline Scam

By Foster, LLC

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) recently warned the public about an apparent scam involving the DHS OIG hotline telephone number. The fraud alert states that scammers have modified their caller IDs to appear as if their calls are coming from the DHS OIG hotline. These scammers purport to be representatives of the DHS or U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) and may request personally identifiable information, claiming that the person answering the phone is a victim of identity theft or that there are issues with their immigration paperwork.

DHS advises that recipients of these calls should hang up immediately. Please be aware that U.S. Government agencies do not conduct business by calling to demand a payment. U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (CIS) notes “USCIS officials will never threaten you or ask for payment over the phone or in an email. If we need payment, we will mail a letter on official stationery requesting payment. Do not give payment over the phone to anyone who claims to be a USCIS official.”

Employers are encouraged to make sure their employees are aware of reported scams and the appropriate ways to protect themselves. If your employees receive any suspicious communication purporting to relate to immigration status, contact your Foster immigration attorney. Your attorney will be happy to evaluate the communication and to provide confirmation of the individual’s status and any next steps that may be coming up in his or her immigration process.

For periodic, updated information on immigration-related scams and scam tactics, visit the CIS webpages on Common Scams and the Avoid Scams Initiative. Applicants who have been the victim of an immigration-related scam may file complaints with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to report anyone falsely claiming to be a representative of any Federal Government agency or business. Any suspicious email may be forwarded to the USCIS webmaster atuscis.webmaster@uscis.dhs.gov, which should review the emails received and share with law enforcement agencies as appropriate.

*Foster will provide future updates on fraud alerts and scams impacting foreign nationals on their website at www.fosterglobal.com and in future Immigration Updates. *

Rental Scam Alert

Please note a recent scam that has been brought to our attention. This scam involves scammers posing as apartment complexes/landlords.

Please be sure to ALWAYS verify the legitimacy of apartments and/or leases before going any further. Eager to receive a great price, International students and scholars might reply to an advertisement and wire a housing deposit, only to arrive in the U.S. and discover the apartment was fake and their money is gone.

If you're not living in your school's residence halls, avoid making a payment on a rental property until you know it's the real deal. It might be worth your time to stay in a hotel for a few days and finish your apartment hunting after your arrival. You can also have a trusted friend visit the space for you to verify that everything checks out.

If you think you might be caught in a scam, your state department of consumer protection and state attorney general's office are trusted institutions you can turn to. If you receive a strange email or phone call, write down the contact information of the organization contacting you and talk to OISS before you give out any financial or personal information.

Don't be afraid to report a scam if you think you might have been victimized. You might be able to help other students avoid falling into the same situation.

What We Ask You to Do:

- Look out for scams. Here are some of the most common red flags:
  a. Rent offered below market.: Too good to be true
  b. Request to wire money.

...continued on page 6
Regulatory Resources and Updates

... Rental Scam Alert

c. Request to use another listing service or escrow account to transfer money

d. Dramatic landlord story: The landlord has received a job assignment abroad and must rent the unit ASAP. You are invited to drive by the building, but no one can show it to you because everyone is already living abroad. And you need to commit in the next 24 hours because dozens of people are waiting to sign the lease.

e. Can’t or won’t meet in person: For whatever reason, the landlord/agent refuses to meet you in person at the property. They may even send you an access code to unlock an electronic lockbox to gain entry by yourself to the house, condo or apartment you are looking to rent.

What you should always do:

i. Conduct basic research.

ii. Be aware of high-pressure sales tactics.

iii. Be wary of landlords that have little interest in your background.

In addition to an internet search, more skilled researchers can check to see if the property is in foreclosure or has been sold to a bank. Both of which are units that should be avoided as potential targets for scamners or simply because there will likely be poor management.

- Report scams immediately and with as much detail as possible (including copies of the communications with the scammer and money transfer details) to:

  a. Us by marking the listing as Suspicious on the site and calling 888-658-7368 x2 or emailing support@apartments.com

  b. Your local police department

  c. The Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3)

  d. The Federal Trade Commission

  e. If you sent money by Western Union or Money Gram, those vendors’ customer service departments may be able to stop the transfer:

  f. Western Union Complaint Procedure

  g. MoneyGram Complaint Procedure

If you are in doubt about the legitimacy of an housing option or feel you might be the victim of any other scam, feel free to contact OISS.

How to Use Your Health Insurance

Sandra Bloem-Curtis

You are sick or you got hurt, now what?
When you are sick or injured, deciding where to receive treatment is very important. Being prepared can help you make these important decisions when you need to seek care immediately. Calling your primary care physician or the student health center on Rice’s campus is the best place to start. Explain your symptoms to the physician, and they can help advise you on where to seek treatment.

Normal sickness or minor emergency
Go to the Rice Student Health Center during regular business hours, appointments are preferred. As a student, you already pay for access to the Health Center.

Minor emergency or if Student Health Center is closed
Contact your in-network Primary Care Physician or Urgent Care clinic. 

Major emergency
Go to the emergency room

Life-threatening emergency
Dial 911 (off-campus) or x6000 (on-campus) for an ambulance to be sent to your location

Need your insurance ID card?
SAS - https://consolidatedhealthplan.com/members/online_id_card_login
Graduate Student Corner: Employment
Irena Aleksic

Employment! A very driven topic for the international graduate student population and a vital component of your U.S. experience. As a nonimmigrant, what options are available to you? What resources does Rice provide to help you in your internship/job search? These are important questions and the Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS), along with the Center for Career Development (CCD), has answers that should provide a great support for you as you engage the U.S. workforce.

International F-1 Student Employment FAQ’s

Q: What types of employment options do I have?

A: There are four types of employment authorizations for F-1 students:

- On-campus employment
  Curricular Practical Training (CPT) – Work must be tied to a course, thesis research or is a requirement for your degree. Generally, students complete 1 year of study in the U.S. prior to becoming eligible for CPT. CPT is approved on a semester basis.
  Optional Practical Training (OPT) – Typically used after you complete your degree. OPT gives you a 12-month full-time work authorization to acquire professional experience in your field of study. Students must complete at least 1 year of study in the U.S. prior to becoming eligible for OPT.
  STEM OPT Extension – For students in STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics). The STEM extension is an additional 24-month extension on the 12-month OPT period. It is employer-specific and the employer must be enrolled in E-Verify.

Q: Is there a limit on CPT?

A: There is no limit on part-time CPT. However, if you complete 12 months of full-time CPT, you become ineligible to participate in OPT.

Q: What is the difference between volunteering and unpaid employment?

A: Volunteer work is for humanitarian purposes only. Unpaid employment refers to any work/service provided even if it does not generate an income. This can refer to anything where the services rendered can be considered for-profit.

Important Links:
- Center for Career Development (CCD),
- Prep for interviews via Handshake,
- Find jobs and internships here, Hire Owl, Sallyportal, OISS Employment Info & Workshops

**REMEMBER! You must always receive employment authorization from OISS before starting any job.**

Continued Orientation for New Graduate International Students
Continued Orientation Sessions, sponsored by OISS, are designed to provide new international graduate students with continuing support, information, and resources for their first year at Rice. Lunch will be provided at each session.

October 12, Thursday at Farnsworth 12.00pm—1.00 pm Grad support services—Dr. Jennifer Wilson
November 17, Tuesday at Farnsworth 12.00pm—1.00 pm Networking for meetings and employments—Beth O’Sullivan

Volume 33 Issue I, Fall 2017
Cultural Activities

OISS’s Favorite Hangouts

**Andy Meretoja: Cockrell Butterfly Center at the Houston Museum of Natural Science**

One of my favorite places in Houston is right around the corner from Rice! The Houston Museum of Natural Science is a great place to visit in its entirety, but my favorite part is the Cockrell Butterfly Center. Walking in feels like you’re entering a magical paradise, a hidden world right there in the middle of Houston! There are hundreds of beautiful butterflies flying around this rainforest environment giving you an opportunity to see them up-close. And when I say up-close I really mean it, sometimes one even lands on you!

Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. (last entry at 5:00 p.m.)

Tickets: $9 ($8 with a student ID!)

For more information, visit [http://www.hmns.org/cockrell-butterfly-center/](http://www.hmns.org/cockrell-butterfly-center/)

Psst! I also still recommend Brazos Bend State Park where you can see live alligators! To learn more, check out the article in our Fall 2011 Newsletter at [http://oiss.rice.edu/newsletter-archives/](http://oiss.rice.edu/newsletter-archives/)

**Elizabeth Thomas: The Houston Police Officer Memorial**

My favorite thing to do in Houston is visit the Houston Police Officer Memorial in Buffalo Bayou Park. I love the unique, geometric design of the monument and the downtown views! It’s a great spot to take visitors.

**Elmira Ganiyeva: The Museum of Fine Arts**

The Museum’s extensive collection of art and fascinating exhibits are located in two buildings, the Caroline Wiess Law Building and the Audrey Jones Beck Building. Even the hallway that connects these two buildings is a piece of art, featuring James Turrell’s The Light Inside. You can find all kinds of art collections, including African, Asian, American, Greek and Roman Art, Modern Art. They have great exhibits as well. My favorite exhibit is Jesus Rafael Soto’s The Houston Penetrable. Swiss artist Pipilotti Rist’s Pixel Forest and Worry Will Vanish are on in the Museum now through September 17, 2017. Pixel Forest is a beautiful LED installation with media player while Worry Will Vanish Dissolution is a two-channel video and sound installation. Must See! Visit [https://www.mfah.org](https://www.mfah.org) for more information about the Museum’s extensive art collection. Every Thursday general admission is free and it is open until 9:00PM.

**Agnes Vajtai: Buffalo Bayou Park**

Out of the so many beautiful outdoor places in and around Houston this park is a real jewel, and one of my favorites with its unbeatable scenery, and tons of activities for the entire family.

Located in the heart of the city, and only about 20 minutes from Rice, it offers gorgeous downtown views, many art works, waterfalls, and beautiful plants and trees all year round. It has boat and bike rentals, dog park, skatepark, picnic and play areas. You can explore both sides of the Bayou by walking, jogging or biking on the approximately 10 miles long trails, paths and many bridges. You may spot water birds, turtles, snakes and others, not to mention the large bat colony that also calls this place home, and can be seen at sunset.

Whether you just want to relax with a cup of coffee in the cafeteria overlooking the Bayou, complete your exercise routine or looking for a photo that makes everyone jealous at home, this park has it all. Buffalo Bayou Park is just a perfect place to spend a day outside so give it a try and see yourself; it will not disappoint!

Convenient metered parking is on the North side of Allen Parkway between I-45 and Waugh Drive. Other option is to take the light rail to downtown stations (Central Stn. or Preston Stn.. NB), walk to popular locations and seek for the stairs down to Buffalo Bayou near the Aquarium, Hobby Center, Hard Rock Café or Wortham Theater Center.
Cultural Activities

Irena Aleksic: Market Square
One of my favorite places in Houston is Market Square in downtown. Historic Market Square Park is a great place to meet friends, have a picnic or enjoy one of their free outdoor movie nights! You are welcome to bring your own blanket/chairs and snacks plus there is a different movie each week! The park is pet-friendly and your dog(s) can enjoy one of two “dog runs” where pups get to run and play in an enclosed area. The park is free and open every day from 6 in the morning until 11 at night. There are many different groups that also meet here for bicycling, yoga and music. The park also hosts fun events like Blanket Bingo so be sure to check their calendar online. Another great thing about this place is that many restaurants and pubs are within walking distance. One of my favorite restaurants to visit here is Batanga (serves tapas, or “small plates,” you can share). They have a wonderful patio by the clock tower and live music as well. Getting to Market Square is easy; you can hop onto the Metro Rail from the Fannin Station near Rice (click here) and the ride is about 15 minutes. If you do not already have a Metro Q Card, be sure to get one here! More information can be found at: www.marketsquarepark.com or by clicking here.

Betsy Caradec: Cockrell Butterfly Center at the Houston Museum of Natural Science
Houston offers unique museum experiences for all. The Cockrell Butterfly Center located at the Museum of Natural Science is a great place to be one with nature. Explore a living butterfly habitat, marvel at remarkable live and preserved specimens of some of the world’s largest and weirdest arthropods, and enjoy the interactive observatory as the butterflies sometimes land on you. Houston is also known for its distinct dining experiences, such as the Downtown Aquarium (Aquatic Dining Experience) and Sweet Cup Gelato (Homemade Unique Gelato Flavors).

Priscilla Von Sorella: Places to stay active
Reigning as the most air-conditioned city in the world, Houston has a variety of interesting fitness destinations to keep city dwellers active! As a native Houstonian, my favorite places to go are: Black Swan Yoga – a donation based yoga studio in the Heights that offers a variety of classes, Revolution Studio – an indoor spin and cycling studio in River Oaks, and Buffalo Bayou Park – a winding 124-acre green space featuring views of Houston skyline, fountains, and a volleyball court. Together, these places offer a great combination of resources to maintain a fitness-centered lifestyle throughout all seasons of the year!

Sandra Bloem Curtis: Discovery Green
One of my favorite places is Discovery Green, a large park located in downtown Houston near the George R Brown Convention Center. It is a fun and beautiful park to explore and they are always hosting great free events. Be sure to check it out! http://www.discoverygreen.com/

Adria Baker: Bayou Wildlife Park and Zoo (http://www.bayouwildlifezoo.com/)
I love going to this park. Full of exotic animals running up to your tram and eating out of your bucket. You can pet the foreheads of elk, see lazy water buffalo, discover a zonkey (yes, a mix between zebra and donkey) enjoy amazing camels, and watch a baby giraffe wobble around. So many laughs are a part of my memories there, which include several trips with Rice Internationals. We always have a fun time.
Cultural Activities

G’Day from Down Under
Jenny Brydon

During the second half of August, I had the opportunity to visit Australia and New Zealand for work with the purpose of creating more academic connections in the region. I visited four Australian high schools and three universities (University of Melbourne, University of Sydney and University of Auckland). All of the universities were impressive in their academic offerings, had beautiful campuses, and amazing facilities for study and research. I also had the opportunity to visit the US Consulate in Melbourne and meet with US Consulate staff in Melbourne, Sydney and Auckland who worked for EducationUSA. In addition to promoting Rice, I also had time for a bit of fun. Now let’s focus on that!

Jenny’s Highlights

Melbourne. In my view, Melbourne has a relaxed vibe with excellent coffee and friendly people. I can’t even count the number of times I heard “no worries” here. There is plenty to do and see however, I didn’t have much time. I would come back to Melbourne in a heartbeat.

Sydney. W-O-W! A beautiful, bustling, diverse city! The Sydney Harbor views are breathtaking especially at sunset. As an animal lover, my one big excursion had to be the zoo. I saw koalas napping, kangaroos lounging, received “a smile” from a Tasmanian devil and pet a pinecone lizard named Kevin. Sorry, no pictures of Kevin, but he was very cute. I also got to cheer on Rice Football in the Sydney Bowl – they didn’t win, but what an experience to get to play in Sydney!

Auckland. During my time in Auckland, I did a bit of shopping on Queen’s Street, including buying a rugby shirt for dad and a wool scarf for mom (shhh! don’t tell them, they are a surprise!). I, unfortunately, did not get the opportunity to eat a meat pie or see much of the island. To be honest, I was focused on getting back to Houston and to all of you after Hurricane Harvey struck.

All in all, my vote is to go down under – you’ll have a terrific time!

Special, special thanks to Adria Baker for allowing me to go on this amazing trip and have the honor of representing Rice. Also thank you to Emma Aitken, a member of the Rice international community, who helped me organize this trip. I also want to thank the EducationUSA staff members who assisted me in-county.
Helpful Resources for Rice Internationals

Sustainable Transportation Options at Rice

Lisa Lin

New and improved transportation options available throughout the city make car-free living more possible than ever before. In addition to the Rice Shuttle System, here are some ways to get to the places you want to go without owning a vehicle.

Public Transit

The Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, or METRO, is the regional public transportation agency that operates bus, light rail, bus rapid transit, and paratransit services. Undergraduate students can get a free METRO Q Fare Card for rides on all METRORail and bus services. Graduate students get a $500 METRO Q Fare Card for $55. Go to the Cashier’s office in the Allen Center to obtain and reload your Q card. With multiple light rail and bus stops close to campus, this is a great way to explore the city. Also, METRORail’s Downtown Transit Center stop is one block from the Megabus station, which connects you to Austin, Dallas/Fort Worth, San Antonio, and New Orleans. This double-decker bus has free Wi-Fi and power outlets.

Car Sharing

Zipcar is a car sharing program, much like a car rental service but more convenient. With multiple locations and vehicles on campus, Zipcar is perfect for running errands or a weekend day trip. Reserve a vehicle by the hour or day through the mobile app and only pay for the time you use it. International driver’s licenses are acceptable.

Ride Sharing

SuperShuttle is a shared-ride service that can take you to Bush Intercontinental Airport or Hobby Airport. Use discount code OWLS1 to receive 10% off rides. Bookings can be made on the mobile app.

Launching August 2017, Croozen is a new ridesharing app that was created to coordinate trips between drivers and riders who share a mutual destination. As a Texas-based rideshare company, Croozen’s mission is to provide an all-inclusive, safe and enjoyable travel experience for ALL users. With Croozen’s focus on serving universities, use this app to find shared rides to music festivals, Chinatown, sporting events, or even to the airport.

Biking

Houston BCycle is a bike share program perfect for short trips across campus, to Rice Village, or to Hermann Park. When it launches on campus with 8 stations this fall, it will be part of a larger network of 38 stations and 275 bikes across the city.

Once you’re ready for a longer term rental, consider Rice Bikes, the on-campus student-run business located in Housing & Dining’s garage. They also offer bikes for sale, bike repair, and accessories.

With the stress of traffic congestion, ongoing insurance and maintenance costs, and increased parking fees, being car-free might yield to a more carefree way of living in Houston. For more information, contact Lisa Lin at lisa.lin@rice.edu.

Christmas International House – Dec. 16, 2017 to January 1 or 2, 2018

Christmas International House (CIH) is a 52-year-old nationwide program that will give you a chance to visit other cities around the nation and be the guest of the American Community for one or two weeks. You will participate in programs set up by your host group, and make new friends with your hosts and other students from around the world. Register for the program by going directly to the Christmas International House web site: www.christmasih.org.

Please read the website carefully, as each city’s program is different in size, structure, length of stay, and activities. This will not be a time to meet with other friends outside the program or to take a tourist trip but rather learn first hand from your host family.

Also, although the programs are run by churches, proselytizing is not a part of the CIH experience. It is a peacemaking program, working to improve relations among peoples of the world and an outreach to our country’s new international visitors. Today, more than ever, we need understanding of other cultures and peacemaking throughout the world.

Helpful Resources for Rice Internationals

Tips from the Center for Career Development (CCD):

How can you go about your job search efficiently?

The most important thing to understand about the Job Search is that networking, rather than an exact qualification-to-position alignment, is the key to a successful job search. By reaching out to the amazing Rice alumni network, you can gain insight into career paths you never thought possible, connect with professionals who can help you get an interview at your target companies, and open doors to positions that once seemed inaccessible. However, you should not just begin frantically reaching out to alumni for jobs. Finesse is needed when approaching potential contacts and the CCD Career Counselors can assist you in tailoring your outreach messaging to be most effective. In addition, having an organized job search strategy is important. Make sure you are well reflected in your paper documents, such as your Resume, CV, and/or Cover Letter. The CCD Career Counselors are here to help students create an effective, individualized job search strategy that is tailored to each student's interests.

What can you do to increase your chances of getting a callback or an interview?

1) Schedule a resume (or CV) and cover letter review appointment with a CCD Career Counselor. While you may think that you have done a good job crafting your resume, a minor mistake or inconsistencies in formatting can lead an employer to question your attention to detail! If the cover letter is not effectively showing the employer how your previous skills and experiences align with the role, then you will likely not receive a callback.

2) Be careful about when and how often you are contacting recruiters. Do not send recruiters messages at 3am on a Sunday morning. Additionally, you should be patient when waiting to hear back from a recruiter. If you send an email on Monday, a follow up on Tuesday, and another follow up on Wednesday, that is much too much and will likely turn the employer off.

3) Do not apply blindly to positions! Many students try to apply to over 100+ jobs/internships and hear nothing back. However, if asked whether they reached out to an alumnus at the organization, if they tailored their resume and cover letter to the position, or if they researched the company before applying...silence. Doing research before the application is submitted is crucial.

What are some important things to remember doing the interviewing process?

Practice makes perfect! The more comfortable you are in interview situations, the better off you will be. The CCD has a variety of resources, including individual mock interview appointments, to help you prep for phone, video, and in-person interviews. You are encouraged to attend one of CCD's Interview Workshops to understand professional etiquette and dress, how to best answer situational and behavioral interview questions, and how to follow up after the interview (hint: send a thank-you note!). Some tips that should be taken into consideration during every interview:

1) Be on time! On time is 10 minutes early.

2) Listen to the question and try to understand what the interviewer is truly asking. If asked “Tell me about a time where you were able to overcome a challenge despite all odds,” the employer not only wants to know a story about the challenge, but the situation in which the challenge occurred as well as what the obstacles were and how you overcame them. How did you show determination and perseverance and what were the results? How could you apply your determination and perseverance in the role to which you are applying?

3) Prepare questions for the interviewer! This is the best time to ask about work-life balance, organizational culture and fit, employer expectations for the role, and future growth potential. Do not come to the interview without at least 4-5 questions prepared.

What resources are available to assist you in your job hunt?

The CCD has a plethora of resources to help you in your job search! They host many events to connect students to the Global Rice Network. From Handshake (which has thousands of jobs and internship postings) to on-campus interviews (which brings top employers to campus) to Career Expos and networking events designed to connect you with employers and alumni. Additionally, they have a variety of tools to help you research companies and industries, such as Vault and CareerBliss). Online resume building and video interview platforms, such as Optimal Resume and Focus2, can help you as well. A CCD Career Counselor can help direct you towards which resources would be the best fit for your career development goals. Schedule an appointment today!
Mark Your Calendars

**FREE English & Culture Classes!!!**

General Sign-up will take place online starting on Monday, September 18, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. Instructions can be found at [http://oiss.rice.edu/english-class/](http://oiss.rice.edu/english-class/).

Sponsored by *Rice University’s Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS).*

If you have any questions please contact us at 713-348-6095.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Class Day and Time</th>
<th>Begins</th>
<th>Ends (Tentatively)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Idioms and Slang</td>
<td>James Bartlett</td>
<td>Thursday 12:00 – 1:00 p.m., OISS</td>
<td>Thursday, October 5, 2017</td>
<td>Thursday, December 7, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning English Conversation</td>
<td>Heather Dyussekova</td>
<td>Tuesday 12:00 – 1:00 p.m., OISS</td>
<td>Tuesday, October 3, 2017</td>
<td>Tuesday, December 5, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced/Intermediate English Conversation</td>
<td>Catherine Spain</td>
<td>Wednesdays 1-2 p.m., or 2-3 p.m., The Ley Student Center, Meyer Conference Room</td>
<td>Wednesday, October 4, 2017</td>
<td>Wednesday, December 6, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Pronunciation</td>
<td>Chris Sneller</td>
<td>Wednesday 12:00 – 1:00 p.m., OISS</td>
<td>Wednesday, October 4, 2017</td>
<td>Wednesday, December 6, 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**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, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Pizza will be provided.

**DATES FOR 2017—2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2017</th>
<th>Spring 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 6, 2017</td>
<td>February 5, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 4, 2017</td>
<td>March 5, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April 2, 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information, please see [http://oiss.rice.edu/international-ladies](http://oiss.rice.edu/international-ladies).

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](https://mailman.rice.edu/mailman/listinfo/oiss-announce).
Mark Your Calendars

Calendar of OISS Fall Events

Free English & Culture Classes: See page 13 for details.
Tuesdays from 12:00 – 1:00 pm in OISS, Beginning English Conversation — Heather Dyussekova
Wednesdays from 12:00 – 1:00 pm in OISS, Grammar & Pronunciation — Chris Sneller
Wednesdays from 1-2 pm, or 2-3 pm in the Ley Student Center, Meyer Conference Room Advanced/Intermediate
   English Conversation — Catherine Spain
Thursdays from 12:00 – 1:00 pm in OISS, English Idioms & Slang Class — James Bartlett

Advanced Immigration Workshop See page 2 for details.
October 4, Wednesday 4:00 - 5:30pm, Sewall Hall, Room 301

International Postdoctoral Associate Luncheon See below for details.
October 4, Wednesday Noon, at Esther M.. Cohen Room, Faculty Club

CPT/OPT Workshops : Visit- https://oiss.rice.edu/studentwork/
September 28, Thursday, 8:00-9:00pm (Rice Graduate Apartments - at night!)
October 2, Monday, 4:00-5:00pm (Sewall Hall 301)
October 13, Friday, 11:00am-12:00pm (OISS)
October 24, Tuesday, 11:00am-12:00pm (OISS)
November 8, Wednesday, 1:00-2:00pm (OISS)
November 16, Thursday, 11:00am-12:00pm (OISS)
December 13, Wednesday, 11:00am-12:00pm (OISS)

Graduate Continuing Orientation See page 7 for details.
October 12, Thursday at Farnsworth 12:00pm—1:00 pm Grad support services—Dr. Jennifer Wilson
November 17, Tuesday at Farnsworth 12:00pm—1:00 pm Networking for professional meetings—Beth O’Sullivan

International Ladies Network (Fall) See page 13 for details.
November 6, Monday at the GSA Lounge, RMC basement from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM
December 4, Monday at the GSA Lounge, RMC basement from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM

Thanksgiving Luncheon - Part of International Education Week (IEW) - see below
November 17, Friday at Farnsworth Pavilion

International Education Week (IEW) 2017
November 13-17, Stay tuned for IEW 2017 at  https://oiss.rice.edu/iew/
November 15, Wednesday, 3.00pm—5.00pm GSA-OISS International Coffee Break
TBD: Annual World Mini Soccer Cup

More international celebrations to come!

International Postdoctoral Associate Luncheon
Meet with members of OISS and GPS, as well as catching up with other Rice postdocs from multiple disciplines.
Please RSVP by emailing Jenny Brydon at jibrydon@rice.edu with. Include your name, department, email and phone number.

October 4, Wednesday at Esther M. Cohen Room, Faculty Club Noon

Stay Tuned for Winter Events!
Random Quotes on “Kindness”

You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late.
Ralph Waldo Emerson, *American essayist, lecturer, and poet*

Carry out a random act of kindness, with no expectation of reward, safe in the knowledge that one day someone might do the same for you.
Princess Diana, *Princess of Wales*

Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to evaporate.
Albert Schweitzer, *French-German theologian, organist, writer, humanitarian, philosopher, and physician*

One of the most difficult things to give away is kindness, it usually comes back to you.
Anonymous

Kindness gives birth to kindness.
Sophocles, *Ancient Greek playwright*

Spread love wherever you go. First of all in your own house. . . kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness.
Mother Teresa, *Saint, missionary*

Kindness is in our power, even when fondness is not.
Samuel Johnson, *British poet, essayist, moralist, literary critic, biographer, editor*

Always be kind, for everyone is fighting a hard battle.
Plato, *Classic Greek philosopher*

That best portion of a good man’s life; His little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love.
William Wordsworth, *British poet*

I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.
Maya Angelou, *American author, poet, songwriter, playwright, dancer, producer & director, performer, civil rights activist*

generous, good, affectionate, amiable, charitable, compassionate, considerate, cordial, courteous, friendly, gentle, gracious, humane, kindhearted, loving, sympathetic, thoughtful, tolerant
Thesaurus.com, *Synonyms of “kind”* (http://www.thesaurus.com/browse/kind)

KINDNESS is what Rice internationals have extended to the Houston and Rice communities, and to one another as exemplified during the challenges of Hurricane and Tropical Storm Harvey.
*Office of International Students & Scholars (OISS)*