

December, 2007

General Information

► *Congratulations Graduates*

Congratulations to the following international students who are expected to complete their degrees this Fall:

Oksana Novikova
Master of Business Administration

Kazuyo Nozawa
Master of Arts

Mark Walde Loewen
Master of Arts

We are proud of your achievements and appreciate your many valuable contributions to the Regent community. We wish you well in your future endeavors and look forward to hearing about the various ways in which you will be *Changing the World* as Christian Leaders in the years to come!

► *Farewell to Our 2007*

Handong Exchange Students

The OISS would like to offer a fond farewell to our two Exchange Visitors who attended Regent this year from Handong University in South Korea:

Kyung-hwa "Esther" Baek
Jee Hae "Joy" Lee

Esther and Joy were active members of the international student community, and we will miss their presence on campus very much. Best wishes to both of you in your future endeavors, and God bless!

► *University Holiday Closing*

Please be reminded that all Regent University offices (including the OISS) will be closed for the holidays from Monday, December 24 through Tuesday, January 1. Please plan accordingly and be sure to submit all immigration requests (including travel signatures) before the December 7 deadline (see details on page 3).

► *International Education Week*

Congratulations and special thanks to our international students for your marvelous contributions to Regent's International Education Week, which was held from November 12 - 16. Whether you sang your hearts out at the International Chapel Service, participated in the international flag procession, prepared a special tea from your country, or helped to educate the Regent community on your home countries and cultures, you are all a vital part of the Regent community, and we are delighted that you are here. Special thanks also to the dedicated ISO Board who spent much time and effort coordinating these special events through their terrific teamwork.

► *ISO Christmas*

Party on December 14

Please see the enclosed announcement regarding the ISO/International Student Organization's 2007 Christmas Party, and be sure to mark your calendars for this popular ISO event!

The December, 2007 newsletter contains information about the following topics:

General Information

- Congratulations Graduates
- Farewell Handong Students
- University Holiday Closing
- International Education Week
- ISO Christmas Party
- New Student Assistance Needed/Leadership
- November & December Birthdays
- New Meal Cards
- ISO News
- December 7 Deadline for Immigration Requests
- Congratulations/New Birth

Important Immigration Information

- Attention All F-1 Students
- F-1 Students Who Will Not Graduate and Will Not Return to Regent
- Reminder to F-1 Students Completing Degrees This Fall
- Reminder to J-1 Students Completing Studies This Fall
- Departing the U.S. Soon?

Upcoming Events

- Spring, 08 OISS Information Sessions
- Spring, 08 OISS Trip to Colonial Williamsburg

Presented by:

Office of International Student Services (OISS)
Regent University
201 Student Center
(757) 226-4130
www.regent.edu/oiss

► *Christian Leadership Opportunity/New Student Assistance*

The OISS is looking for student volunteers to serve as Big Brothers and Big Sisters in Christ to assist our newly admitted international students who will join Regent for the Spring, 08 semester. Students from the following countries have been admitted to Regent and would really benefit from the guidance and wisdom of our experienced international students who have been in their shoes and have overcome the initial difficulties of their first few weeks in the U.S.:

Ethiopia, Hong Kong, India, Nigeria, Norway, South Korea, Uganda

If you will be around campus in late December and early January, and would like to partake in this special Leadership opportunity, please email Leeanne Johnson (ljohnson@regent.edu) **before Monday, December 10**. Thank you!

► *November & December Birthdays*

Congratulations & blessings to the following students who had birthdays in November:

*Towera Nyirenda
Kazuyo Nozawa*

...and to those who have birthdays in December:

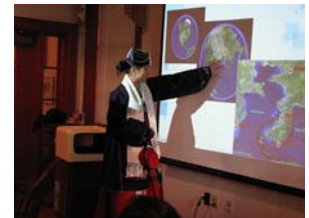
*Hanisha Besant
Rebeca Ferreira
Augustina Amakye
Richard Helsby
Alejandro Arana*

► *New Meal Cards Now Available at Regent Ordinary for Student Housing Residents*

Starting this week, Student Housing residents can now purchase a \$50 Meal Card, which is good for 8 different Meal Options. The Meal Cards are a convenient alternative to paying cash or using a debit card for each meal that you purchase. The cards are valid through June 30, 2008 and can be purchased at the Regent Ordinary.

► *ISO News!!!*

It is difficult to believe that we are nearing the end of the Fall semester. It seems like only yesterday ISO met all the new incoming International students at the **OISS Orientation** and then later for the **Welcome Reception**. Some of you graced us with your presence at the **Nansemond Indian Tribal Pow Wow** in mid August, while many of you joined us in worshipping God with one accord during the **International Worship** in October. Of course, we really were blessed in September when we had the privilege of celebrating the August-September birthdays during the **Movie night**. We enjoyed dinner while watching Denzel Washington's movie "Deja Vu!!" However, nothing could compare to the awesome time we had when we worked so closely with many of you during the **International Education Week** in the month of November. Whether it was carrying the flag of your country, or carrying your voices in worship to heaven during the campus-wide **International chapel** or making presentations about your beloved country, or brewing hot spicy chai during the **International Tea Hour** - you did it all with a smile and for that, we are so proud of each one of you.



While many of you made it to the **Thanksgiving feast** in November and many are planning on coming to the **Special Christmas Gala** in December, the ISO board wants to remind all of our International brothers and sisters to stay tuned about the upcoming events for **Spring 2008!!** A **trip to Washington, The International Spring Festival** (in collaboration with OISS), the **Graduation Dinner**, many more **movie nights**, and **International chapels** are just ways and means to let each one of you know that you are special and we are just so grateful that we serve such a wonderful community of international believers.

Merry Christmas from the ISO Board!!!

God bless,

Javkhaa, Varsha, Tal, and Hanisha!

► ***December 7 Deadline
for Travel Signatures & All
Other Immigration Requests***

Please be reminded that the **deadline** to submit a Travel Signature Request form for your I-20 or DS-2019 is **Friday, December 7 or 1 week BEFORE your departure, whichever comes first.** The Travel Signature Request form can be downloaded from our website at: www.regent.edu/oiss

The December 7 deadline applies to all other requests for the Fall term as well, including program extensions, OPT applications, transfer-out requests, etc. Please plan accordingly!

IMPORTANT REMINDER: I-20s/DS-2019s can not be signed by the OISS staff outside the office. Students who do not submit their Travel Signature Request forms by the established deadline (December 7, 2007) will need to leave their I-20/DS-2019 in the OISS with a completed express mail envelope where we can send you the form, at your expense, once we return from Christmas Break. **Kindly plan accordingly and submit your requests as early as possible. Thank you!**

► ***Congratulations/New Birth***

Congratulations and blessings to Carlos “Tal” Lucchini and his wife, Clarissa, on the birth of their beautiful son, ***Eduardo Sasatani Lucchini on September 4, 2007.*** We are delighted to welcome baby Eduardo into the Regent community!

Important Immigration Information

► ***Attention ALL F-1 Students***

Please check your F-1 program end-date, which is listed in Section 5 on Page 1 of your current/latest I-20. There are two dates listed there: the date that your studies began, and the date by which you are expected to complete your studies. **If the end-date in Section 5 of your I-20 is January, 2007 (or sooner) and you will NOT graduate this January, you MUST apply for an F-1 Program**

Extension BEFORE Friday, December 7. Application packets are available on the OISS website and in our office. Failure to submit the request for an F-1 program extension by the deadline can result in the loss of your lawful F-1 status and ability to complete your degree at Regent. **It is YOUR responsibility as an F-1 student to apply for a timely program extension, so please take care of this important matter immediately.**

► ***Attention All F-1 Students
Who Will Not Graduate and Will
Not Return to Regent after the
Fall, 07 Semester (including students
who will withdraw/transfer/return home for good)***

All F-1 students who will not graduate and will not return to Regent after the Fall, 2007 semester **MUST** notify the OISS for immigration purposes **BEFORE** you leave Regent. You will need to complete the form called “Request for Approval to Withdraw or Cease Attendance at Regent University for F-1 Immigration Purposes”. **Failure to complete this form can result in serious immigration problems for you at a later date.** Students who terminate their studies prior to graduation and who notify the OISS, in advance, will have 15 days to depart the United States. Students who terminate their studies without notifying the OISS are **NOT** subject to the 15 day grace period, will need to depart the U.S. immediately, and may experience immigration problems in the future.

► ***IMPORTANT Reminder to
F-1 Students who are Completing
their Degrees this Semester***

If you are completing your degree this semester, please be reminded that you are now required to apply for post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) **BEFORE** your graduation date. If you are planning to apply for OPT and have not made an OPT appointment yet, please do so immediately. If you have not yet attended an OPT information session, please be sure to attend the final session on Thursday, December 6. **OPT**

applications will not be processed by the OISS after Friday, December 7.

Students who are graduating and are not applying for OPT should be reminded that you must either depart the U.S., request a “Transfer Out” to a new school, request a new I-20 for a NEW degree level at Regent (if applicable), or apply for a different immigration status **within the 60 day grace period** after completing your degree. If you have any questions, please contact the OISS as soon as possible.

► ***IMPORTANT Reminder to J-1 Students Completing their Studies this Semester***

All J-1 students who are completing their studies this semester, please be reminded that you are required to notify the OISS of your departure from the U.S. In addition, you must depart the U.S. within 30 days after the program completion date on your DS-2019 if you are not changing to another status or transferring to a different school. Failure to depart the U.S. within the 30 day grace period can result in serious immigration problems for you. Please do not hesitate to contact the OISS if you have any questions.

► ***Departing the U.S. Soon?***

If you plan to leave the United States (even for a short trip) and will be returning for the continuation of your studies, you will need the items listed below for a smooth reentry into the U.S.:

1. A **“Certification of Enrollment”**, which shows your past and present enrollment/registration status (full-time or part-time) at Regent. This can be obtained from the Registrar’s Office in Room 235, Student Center and takes several days to process.
2. **Financial documentation** showing proof of the financial support which is listed on your I-20 or DS-2019. (This can be a bank statement, a letter from your academic department, etc.)
3. A **valid passport** (one that is not expiring within 6 months).
4. A **valid F-1 or J-1 visa** (An F-1 or J-1 visa is not required for Canadian students.) The visa is the stamp in your passport which has your photo on it. Be sure to check the expiration date and the number

of entries you were granted on your visa. **If the number of entries will be used up, or if your visa will expire before the date you plan to reenter the U.S., you will need to apply for a new F-1 or J-1 visa for your reentry back into the U.S.** If you had a change to F-1 or J-1 status approved in the U.S., you will also need to apply for an F-1 or J-1 visa to match your new F-1 or J-1 status in order to reenter the U.S. after any departures. It is strongly recommended that you apply for the visa from your home country, and not as a third-country national in another country. Due to significant changes regarding visa applications in Canada and Mexico, all students **MUST** consult with the OISS before planning to go there for a visa application as a third-country national. If you must apply for a new visa, please stop by the OISS for a copy of the “F-1 and J-1 Visas” handout. Also, please be sure to make your visa application appointment for the earliest date possible.

5. **FOR F-1 STUDENTS: All of your I-20s with page “3” of the most recent one signed by the OISS/CEM within the past 12 months for reentry purposes.** Check the BOTTOM part of page 3 of your most recent I-20. If there is no travel signature there, you **MUST** request a signature from the ISO. If you have a travel signature already (on page 3), but that signature will be more than 12 months old before your return to the U.S., you **MUST** request a new travel signature from the OISS to be able to reenter the U.S. (*For Example:* Students who had their I-20 signed for travel in May 2006 will not need another travel signature until May 2007.) The Request for I-20 Travel Signature form is located on the OISS webpage entitled, “Online Forms.”
6. **FOR J-1 STUDENTS WITH DS-2019s: All of your DS-2019s with page “1” signed by the OISS within the past 12 months for reentry purposes.**

Check the “Travel Authorization” section on the bottom right corner of your DS-2019. If there is no signature there, you **MUST** request a travel signature. If there is a signature, and it will be more than 12 months old before your return to the U.S., you **MUST** request a new travel signature from the OISS. The Request for Travel Signature form is located on the OISS webpage entitled, “Online Forms”.

SPECIAL NOTES:

Students Who Have Graduated/Will Graduate and are Doing OPT—To reenter the United States after a departure, please be reminded that you will need a valid passport, a valid F-1 visa, a valid Employment Authorization Document (EAD), a letter from your employer stating your dates of employment and salary, and all of your I-20s with page “3” of the most recent one signed for travel purposes

WITHIN THE PAST 6 MONTHS. F-1 regulations state that you will be readmitted to the U.S. after degree completion with proper documents to “resume employment”.

Students Who are Planning to Visit Other Countries—You must contact the embassy of that country (at least 1-2 months in advance) to see if you will need a visa, **EVEN IF YOU ARE JUST GOING TO CANADA OR MEXICO.** Contact information for different embassies in the U.S. can be found on the “Resources” page of the OISS website.

Special Registration Students--Please be reminded that you **MUST** depart the United States through authorized ports **ONLY**. Failure to do so could result in a denial at the U.S. Port of Entry upon your return.

Travel to Canada, Mexico, or Adjacent Islands (Other Than Cuba) for Less Than 30 Days--If you are planning a trip to any of the countries listed above for **LESS THAN 30 DAYS**, you may not need a new F-1/J-1 visa to reenter the United States if **ALL** of the following conditions apply:

1. Your I-94 is clearly marked for "D/S" (Duration of Status).
2. You make it clear to the Immigration Border Patrol Officer before leaving the U.S. that you will return in less than 30 days, and you do NOT surrender your I-94 card upon your departure because you will need it to reenter the U.S.
3. You travel with your current/valid passport & I-20/DS-2019 with the required travel signature (not more than 12 months old for currently enrolled students).
4. You do NOT apply for a new F-1 or J-1 visa while in Mexico or Canada. (If you apply for a new visa there, you **MUST** reenter on your newly approved visa. If that application is delayed, you will need to wait in that country until the application is processed. If that application is denied, you will NOT be able to return to the U.S. on your previous visa).

Special Note: According to the ICE website, citizens from the following countries: Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Sudan, North Korea, and Cuba are **NOT** eligible for the automatic visa revalidation for trips to Canada, Mexico, or adjacent islands for **LESS THAN 30 DAYS** and **WILL** need a valid F-1 or J-1 visa to reenter the U.S., even after a short trip.



Upcoming Events

► *Spring, 08 Events Calendar*

The OISS's Spring, 08 Events Calendar will be sent to all international students in January once our room reservations have been confirmed. For planning purposes, here are some **tentative** dates and sessions to mark on your calendar. Please note that these dates are not final and that they may change in January.

Maintaining Lawful J-1 Status

Friday, January 18

Maintaining Lawful F-1 Status

Friday, January 18

F-1 Optional Practical Training

Thursday, January 24

Friday, February 15

Thursday, March 13

Friday, April 4th

Employment Rules & Options for F-1 Students

Thursday, January 31

Employment Rules and Options for J-1 Students

Thursday, January 31

F-1 Curricular Practical Training

Friday, February 8

Thursday, March 27

Friday, April 11

Life After OPT (H-1B, R-1, TN, etc.)

Friday, February 1

► *Spring, 08 OISS Trip to Colonial Williamsburg*

Once the weather starts to warm up in March or April, the OISS will organize a special trip for our international students to Colonial Williamsburg (which is about 1 hour from Regent by car)! Please check the OISS email messages and Spring, 08 newsletters for details so you can join us for this special event and fellowship opportunity.

*The OISS would like to wish
our students & their families
a warm, safe, and blessed Christmas.
We look forward to serving you in 2008!*