

January/February, 2008

General Information

OISS Hours & Staff Information:

The Office of International Student Services (OISS) is here to serve Regent's international student population throughout the year. Walk-in hours (for those who do not have an appointment) are from 2 – 5 p.m., Monday–Friday during the Fall and Spring semesters. Morning assistance (between 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.) requires an appointment. **If you need to meet with the OISS staff between 8 a.m. – 12 p.m., please call the office ahead of time so we can arrange a time to meet with you.** Thank you for helping us serve you!

Office Staff

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Welcome New Students:

For the Spring, 08 semester, the OISS was very pleased to welcome five new international students to the Regent community from the following countries: Hong Kong, India, Norway, South Korea. Our new students will be studying the following programs: Digital Media, Divinity, Journalism, Law, MBA. Please help us make our new students feel at home by greeting them with a warm Regent welcome when you see them on campus and at various Spring, 08 international student events.

January and February Birthdays:

Congratulations and blessings to the following students who had birthdays in January:

Kola Aiyedogbon
So-Young Ahn
Rachel Blisson

Yohane Kina
Sarah Purnell

...and to those who will celebrate birthdays in February:

Andrey Kovalev
Olunmi Oloruntoba

Edith Prakash

Weekly Emails from OISS:

If for any reason you are not receiving the weekly email messages from the OISS, please contact the office **immediately** so that we can add your name to this important distribution list. The monthly newsletters and the weekly emails contain important notices that all F-1 and J-1 international students are expected to read.

Congratulations/New Birth:

Congratulations and blessings to Manuela Nyamekyeh and her husband on the birth of their beautiful baby daughter, **Genelle Asantewaa Asamoah**. Baby Genelle was born on **October 30, 2007** and we are delighted to welcome her into the Regent community!



2007 ISO Christmas Party

The January/February, 2008 OISS newsletter contains information about the following topics:

General Information

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- Congratulations/New Birth
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- Tax Filing Assistance Software Available Through OISS
- Software Passwords Available in February
- 8843 Forms to be Filed by ALL F-1 & J-1 Student Visa Holders

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- Message from Current ISO Board
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Immigration Information

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- Voice-Over Work at CBN
- F-1 Student Employment
- May, 08 Graduates & Program Completion Forms

Presented by:

Office of International Student Services (OISS)
Regent University
201 Student Center
226-4130 / www.regent.edu/oiss
Walk-in hours: 2-5 pm, Monday – Friday

Watch Your Mail for Important

Tax Forms (W-2s and 1042S Forms):

Students who worked in the United States at any time during the year 2007 should be receiving some tax forms in the mail from their employers. The type of forms that you might receive are called “W-2” forms. Other students who received scholarship or fellowship grant funds in 2007 might receive a 1042S form, but these forms will not be issued until mid-March. **These important forms will be needed for your United States tax filing, so please watch out for them in the mail.**

Tax Filing Assistance Software Purchased by OISS for International Students:

As many of you know, the OISS purchases a special international student tax filing software each year that our international students can use for a low cost of \$10 per person. The software is called “**CINTAX Complete International Tax Preparation Software**”. The \$10 software fee is waived for new students who attended the Fall, 07 or Spring, 08 international student orientation because the charge was included in the orientation fee. Regent staff members are not qualified to assist students with their individual tax filing/forms, so please be sure to take advantage of the special software which the OISS has purchased for your use, and which was created especially for foreign citizens who are unfamiliar with U.S. tax filing procedures. (Another alternative is to hire an off-campus international tax specialist/consultant to assist you with your tax filing obligations as a foreign national in the U.S.)

CINTAX Software Passwords Available in Student Services Office in early February:

Passwords for the special international student tax filing software (**CINTAX**) will be available at the front desk of the Student Services Office (201 Student Center) in early February. **Please check your OISS emails for details.** The software company is still sending the school information about this year’s software program and the Payroll Office has until March 15, 2008 to mail the 1042S forms. There is no cost to use **CINTAX** this year for new students who attended the Fall, 07 or

Spring, 08 international student orientations. The cost for all other students is \$10. Checks for the software passwords should be made payable to: “Regent University”. Please check your email messages for further details.

8843 Forms (Statement for Exempt Individuals and Individuals With a Medical Condition) Must be Filed by All F-1 and J-1 Students Who Were in the United States in 2007:

ALL international students who were physically present in the United States during the year 2007 are expected to complete an 8843 Form “Statement for Exempt Individuals and Individuals With a Medical Condition” (whether or not you received any U.S. income, scholarship, or grant funds). For students who received U.S. income, scholarship, or fellowship grant funds, the 8843 should be filed with the 1040NR or 1040NR-EZ tax forms. For students who did not receive any type of U.S. income, scholarship, or fellowship grant funds in 2007, the 8843 form should be filed by itself. **The 8843 form can be completed through the special international student tax filing software (CINTAX) which was purchased by the OISS.**

Getting Involved

Get Ready for Regent’s International Festival— March 15, 2008:

International Students: Mark your calendars for the return of Regent’s exciting International Festival, which is scheduled for Saturday, March 15, 2008! This is Regent’s biggest and most popular international event of the year where our international students delight in preparing special displays (with photos, arts & crafts, clothing, pottery, etc.); wearing their unique and colorful international dress; preparing ethnic foods; and offering unique talents and performances from their home countries (songs, dances, origami, etc.). **Students who participate in the festival will gain free admission to the event, and all international students are encouraged to participate!** If you are interested in joining this year’s festival, please

contact the OISS at: ljohnson@regent.edu; or the ISO at: iso@regent.edu

Message from Current ISO Board:

Dear International Friends,

A special welcome to our new international students! We are very happy to have you all here at Regent. ☺ We also want to introduce to you **our new treasurer**, who stepped in when Tal Lucchini returned to Brazil earlier this month. Please welcome **Alejandro Arana** to the ISO Board. We are excited about this spring semester that is full of special events designed for you. We will have our monthly **International Worship Service** in the **Moot Court Room (Robertson Hall) between 11:45 a.m. and 12.45 p.m. on Friday, January 25, 2008**. Our speaker will be **Dr. Cornelius Bekker** from the School of Global Leadership and Entrepreneurship. Dr. Bekker is a godly man and a wonderful preacher who teaches on the dynamics and process of spiritual formation for authentic Christian leadership. We hope you'll take advantage of this great opportunity to listen to God's Word, share testimonies, and worship the Lord together. Our next **movie night** will take place **Saturday night, January 26, 2008 at 7 p.m.** in the Library Auditorium. More details to come...

Blessings, Javkhaa, Varsha, Hanisha, and Alejandro (2007-2008 ISO Board)



ISO Board Positions & Spring Elections:

At the end of each Spring semester, the International Student Organization (ISO), along with Regent's other student organizations, will be holding elections in order to appoint new board members for the 2008-2009 academic year. There are four ISO board positions in total: President; Vice President; Treasurer; and Secretary. If you have a servant heart and a strong desire to assist others, please consider this potential calling to serve

your fellow students as an ISO board member. Tuition scholarships are granted to ISO board members for the time and service they provide. Position descriptions can be found in the "ISO Constitution", which is located on the ISO website. Go to this link, and click on "About", then click on "Constitution":

<http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/iso/>

Toward the end of the spring semester, a special "Garden Party" will be held where the candidates for the various board positions will have the opportunity to say a few words regarding their experiences and desires for the positions in which they wish to run. This is a terrific way to get involved with the international student and Regent communities, to develop important leadership skills, and to serve your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Congratulations & Special Thanks:

The OISS would like to congratulate Guido "Alejandro" Arana for his appointment to the ISO (International Student Organization) Treasurer position. Alejandro is a new student in Public Policy who joined Regent with his wife and two sons during the Fall, 07 semester. We are grateful to have Alejandro's skills and dedication serving the needs of the international student population for the Spring, 08 term.

The OISS would also like to express our very special thanks to Carlos "Tal" Lucchini who did an outstanding job serving as the ISO Treasurer for the Fall, 07 semester. Tal's special eye for detail and meticulous planning for the 2007 ISO Christmas Party made for a wonderfully successful event, which was enjoyed by all. Tal returned with his wife and two daughters to his home country of Brazil this January, and we wish them many blessings in their future endeavors.

"OPT", "Life After OPT", & Other OISS Information

Sessions for the Spring, 08 Semester:

The OISS Spring, 08 Events Calendar was mailed to all students in early January and will be added to the OISS website as well. All times and dates for "OPT", "Employment Rules and Options" and other Information Sessions are included. May, 2008 graduates who wish to apply for OPT early should check their calendars for the mandatory OPT

session dates and details. Upcoming Information Sessions for January and February are as follows:

► **Overview of Employment Rules & Options for F-1 Students**

- Thursday, January 31st, 3 p.m.
118 Student Center

► **Overview of Employment Rules & Options for J-1 Students**

- Thursday, January 31st, 4 p.m.
118 Student Center

► **Life After OPT (Discussion of other immigration options, such as H-1B, R-1, TN, etc. by a local immigration attorney)**

- Friday, February 1st, 4 p.m.
112 Student Center

► **Curricular Practical Training (CPT)**

- Friday, February 8th, 3 p.m.
112 Student Center

► **Optional Practical Training (OPT)**

- Friday, February 15th, 3 p.m.
112 Student Center

Important Immigration Information

Warning about Form I-515/ 30 Day Admission Notice:

Any students who received an I-515 at the U.S. Port of Entry should contact the OISS immediately. An I-515 allows you to stay in the United States for 30 days only and must be processed immediately. If you have an I-515, please call OISS (226-4130) to arrange an appointment and bring your passport, I-20/DS-2019, I-94 card, and the I-515 with you to your appointment. Failure to take care of this in a timely manner could result in your inability to continue your studies at Regent.

Important Reminder to All Students About the On-line Credit Restrictions:

Please be reminded that USCIS regulations do not permit F-1 student visa holders to count more than one on-line class or three credit hours per semester toward the full-time status requirement. **If you had**

a semester where you tried to take more than one on-line class or three credit hours to count toward your full-time status requirement, it is important that you contact the OISS immediately. The sooner the matter is addressed, the better off you will be.

Change of Address Reporting Reminder:

To report a change of address, ALL currently enrolled F-1 and J-1 international students must do the following within 5 days of the change:

► During web-registration periods at the start of each term, all students are required to confirm or enter their correct addresses in Genisys during the web-registration process before they can register for classes. The U.S. address that you enter/confirm in Genisys during web-registration is the address that Regent will report to the government in SEVIS. It is your important responsibility to make sure your current U.S. address is listed correctly in Genisys at web-registration periods.

► If your address changes during the middle of the semester/outside of web-registration periods, you must report the new address to TWO separate offices WITHIN 5 DAYS of the change: the OISS AND the Registrar's Office. Students can still use Genisys to report the new address to the Registrar's Office outside of web-registration periods, and should use the "Information Change Form" on the OISS website to report the change to the Office of International Student Services.

Important Note: Failure to fulfill your responsibility of reporting a change of address to Regent within 5 days is considered to be a violation of your immigration status, so please take care of this important matter as soon as possible.

OISS Spring, 08 SEVIS Reporting:

As a reminder to all F-1 and J-1 students with I-20s and DS-2019s, please note that all U.S. institutions are required to report the following information to the USCIS (United States Citizenship & Immigration Services) through the electronic data reporting system called "SEVIS":

- When a student enters the U.S. with an I-20 for initial attendance but fails to register with the OISS within 30 days;
- Whether the student has enrolled at the school, dropped below a full course of study without prior authorization by the DSO, or failed to enroll;
- The current address of each enrolled student;
- The start date of the student's next term or semester;

- Any student who fails to maintain status or complete his or her program of study;
- A change of the student or dependent’s legal name or U.S. address;
- Any student that has graduated early or prior to the program end date listed on the SEVIS I-20;
- Any disciplinary action taken by the school against the student as a result of the student being convicted of a crime; and
- Any other notification request made by SEVIS with respect to the current status of the student (such as change of major, CPT, OPT, etc).

Voice-Over Work at CBN— Restricted for F-1 and J-1 Student Visa Holders:

Please note that the on-campus employment benefit does NOT cover work done/services provided at CBN. If a company/organization normally pays/reimburses a person for a service they provide, such as the case with the voice-over work at CBN, then that is considered to be employment from an immigration perspective, even if the person is only given a gift card and not a pay check. F-1 and J-1 student visa holders do not have proper employment authorization to assist with voice-over work at CBN as a part of the “on-campus” employment benefit and should not participate in voice-overs unless they have discussed the details with the OISS and have received proper written authorization for off-campus employment to cover this type of work. Failure to consult with the OISS will result in a violation of your lawful immigration status, so please be very mindful of this important matter.

F-1 Student Employment Rules & Regulations:

Employment is considered to be the rendering of services for compensation--financial or other. The five general types of employment options available to F-1 students who have maintained lawful F-1 status are: *On-campus Employment, Curricular Practical Training, Optional Practical Training, Severe Economic Hardship Employment, and Internships with International Organizations.* F-1 students are generally not eligible to work off-campus until they have been lawfully enrolled for at least 1 full academic year and are also not permitted to work off-campus without prior written approval on the I-20 from the OISS, or without an EAD (Employment Authorization Document) from

USCIS. CBN does not have a contractual agreement with Regent University and is therefore considered to be “off-campus” employment. **Dependents in F-2 status are NOT permitted to work in the U.S. under any circumstances.** In addition, F-1 students are not permitted to engage in any type of “self-employment.” Working in the U.S. without proper authorization is a serious violation of your F-1 status which can lead to deportation as explained in section 12 on page 2 of your I-20. If you are interested in working in the United States, we look forward to seeing you at our Information Session entitled “Employment Rules and Options for F-1 Students” on Thursday, January 31st at 3 p.m.

Attention May, 2008 Graduates-- Program Completion Forms Due in OISS by the End of March:

All F-1 and J-1 student visa holders who are graduating in May, 2008 are required to complete the OISS Program Completion Form for immigration purposes at least 45 days prior to their program completion date. The form is needed by the OISS so that we can update your SEVIS record and prepare accordingly to assist you with any post-graduation immigration needs, such as a transfer of your immigration status to a new school for a higher degree level. The Program Completion Form can be found at this link on the OISS web site:

<http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/onlineform.cfm>

