November/December 2013
OISS Newsletter

General Information

Congratulations, Graduate!
Congratulations to Abigail Oduro who is expected to complete her BS degree this Fall. The OISS is so proud of Abigail’s achievements and we appreciate her many contributions to the Regent community. We wish her well in her future endeavors, pray for God’s abundant blessings, and look forward to hearing about the various ways in which she will be Changing the World with the leadership skills she acquired here at Regent!

OISS Director Will be Away in November:
Please note that OISS Director, Leeanne Johnson, will be out of the office from November 13th-19th.

Reminder: End of Daylight Saving Time!
“Fall Back” & “Spring Ahead”:
On Sunday, November 3rd, Daylight Saving Time will end and the days will become much shorter. On Saturday, November 2nd, everyone in the eastern part of the U.S. will turn their clocks back one hour to return to Eastern Standard Time (EST) before they fall asleep. Don’t forget to turn your clocks back one hour on Saturday night (for example, from 11 p.m. to 10 p.m.), or else you will be 1 hour early for everything on Sunday! In the Spring, we will all “Spring Ahead” by turning our clocks ahead one hour. (Special Note: You might want to apprise your family members in your home country about the time change so they can call you at the appropriate hours.)

Is Seasonal Affective Disorder (S.A.D.) Getting You Down?
Some people experience a type of depression called “Seasonal Affective Disorder” (SAD) around this time of the year, when the days are becoming shorter, darker, and colder and there is not much sunlight to be had. Just a few of the symptoms of “SAD” include: loss of energy, hopelessness, oversleeping, appetite changes, difficulty concentrating, and anxiety. If you are experiencing any unusual changes in mood/behavior, or if you would like some support, assistance, or tips for any stress, difficulty, or depression you may be experiencing, please:

- See "Robbie" who serves Regent students in the capacity of Staff Counselor: SC218 / 352-4101 / rkuschel@regent.edu
- Visit the Psychological Services Center on campus: CRB118 / 352-4488 / www.regent.edu/acad/schcou/psc/
- For after-hours assistance, you can contact Regent C.A.R.E.S.--Communication & Response for Every Student: 352-4738 / www.regent.edu/students/cares/

►More information about SAD can be found here: http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/seasonal-affective-disorder/DS00195

The November/December 2013 OISS Newsletter contains information about the following topics:

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--End of Daylight Saving Time
--S.A.D. & Support
--December Birthdays
--Congratulations, C. Norgbey
--University Holiday Closing
--Founder’s Inn Airport Shuttle
--Christmas International House

Getting Involved/Events:
--OPT Information Session
--Thanksgiving Dinner
--Furniture Sale
--RUE, OSAL & Events Calendar

Immigration Information:
--Attention F-1 Studs/Expiring I-20
--Not Graduating & Not Returning?
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Outgoing Student Messages:
--Abigail Oduro
--Jennifer Harris

Regent University, Office of International Student Services (OISS)
201 Student Center Phone: 757-352-4130 www.regent.edu
Office Walk-in Hours: 2-5 p.m. Monday – Friday
December Birthdays:
Congratulations and blessings to these on-campus international students who have birthdays in December:

Andrea Francis
David Jimenez Cardenas
Solomon Ketsela
Timothy Lim Teck Ngern

► Congratulations, Christopher Norgbey!
Congratulations to Christopher Norgbey, one of our new students from Ghana who is serving as the newly appointed COGS Senator for the School of Divinity! Way to go, Christopher!

► University Holiday Closing:
Please note that the University (and all offices) will be closed on Thursday, November 28 and Friday, November 29, 2013 for Thanksgiving, and on Monday, December 23, 2013 through Wednesday, January 1, 2014 for Christmas Break. Please plan accordingly and submit all immigration requests (including travel signature requests) before the November 21 deadline (see details on page 4).

► Founder’s Inn
Airport Shuttle Reminder:
Looking for a ride to the airport? The Founder’s Inn has a shuttle that goes to the Norfolk International Airport and is available to Regent students. The cost for students is only $10 one way! Reservations must be made, in advance, by calling 424-5511 and asking for “Guest Services”. NOTE: The shuttle departs from the Founder’s Inn.

► Looking for a New Opportunity this Christmas?
How about spending it with an American family? Christmas International House is a Christian ministry designed to offer hospitality to students during the Christmas holidays through churches and civic groups in different parts of the United States. Applications are accepted between September 15 and November 15 or until all spots are filled. Visit the Christmas International House website for more details: http://www.christmasih.org/

Outgoing Student Farewell Messages

Abigail Oduro, December 2013
BS Candidate
“Looking back, my time at Regent has been one of growth and maturity in many ways. I came to the U.S not only to learn from my teachers and my classes, but also to learn from my classmates and different cultures. I have had the utmost pleasure of learning from the most wonderful teachers, who take an interest not only in class activities, but in the general well-being and future of students. Throughout my stay here, I have come across people from different backgrounds and cultures, and have been given the opportunity to be involved in school programs and activities, all of which has been a blessing and an influence to me, and provided me with friendships and experience. In retrospect, I can see God’s handiwork throughout my journey to Regent and at Regent. I have grown and learnt a lot in ways I would not have been able to back home. I thank God for this opportunity and for all the people that came alongside me, supporting, encouraging me. Through it all, I was always reminded that God brought me here for a purpose and has a plan for my life, I only have to trust him. And this is what I want to leave for everyone. Psalm 37:5 says “Commit your ways to the Lord, trust also in him, and He shall bring it to pass.” God has a far greater plan for each of us than we can fathom. All we have to do is trust in him with all our hearts. Allowing God to lead and order your footsteps gives the best times anyone can ever imagine or think.”

Jennifer Harris, May 2014
BS Candidate (will complete her degree online for Spring 2014)
“Being at Regent has really been an eye opener for me. During my time here, I have been blessed to have the likes of Leeanne and my advisor, Bernie, help me have a successful stay. I will miss this beautiful campus. However, as I go back home, I am very aware that an important phase of my life is over, and the next phase, Law School, is completely in the hands of God. I am blessed to have met the other international students here and to have experienced the genuine love that is so evident on campus. However, I must admit that I am very glad to be nearing the finish line and to be heading back home to Ghana.
Thank you Regent!”
Getting Involved & Upcoming Events

► Information Session: Optional Practical Training (OPT) Information Session
(Mandatory for those who plan to apply for OPT this Fall)
Friday, November 1, 1:00 p.m.
Room 252, Student Center
All F-1 students who are planning to apply for OPT this Fall must attend one of three information sessions offered this fall where OPT applications will be distributed and the application process will be discussed. (This is the last of the 3 sessions offered this fall.) All other F-1 students are invited to come learn about OPT as well. For students who are graduating in December, the OPT applications must be received by the USCIS within 60 days of the official university Term End date, and within 30 days after the OISS recommends you for the benefit in SEVIS. It takes the USCIS approximately 3 months to process the applications. Please arrive on time. Attendance will be taken.
(OPT Details can be found here: http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/employment.cfm)

► Traditional American Thanksgiving Dinner!
Thursday, November 28, 12-3 p.m.
Regent Ordinary
Thanksgiving is a special time of year to spend with family and friends. The Office of Student Activities & Leadership (OSAL) will host this traditional American Thanksgiving meal for Regent students and their loved ones. Please RSVP by November 26, 2013. For more information, please email activities@regent.edu, call 757-352-4927, or visit www.regent.edu/activities

► Furniture Sale
Wednesday, December 4
Library Balcony
Furniture that can no longer be used by Regent University will be sold with prices starting at just $5.00!!! All items will be sold “as-is”, and must be picked-up by 5 p.m. the same day. This event is open to current students, faculty & staff!

► RUE, OSAL, & University Events Calendar
For a list of the many exciting activities/events offered by OSAL (Office of Student Activities & Leadership), please check the RUE (weekly Regent Upcoming Events) on Wednesdays, or visit the OSAL website:
http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/student_activities_and_leadership/home.cfm
For a complete list of the campus-wide events, visit the University Events Calendar:
http://www.regent.edu/events/calendar/home.cfm?view=month

Immigration Information

Attention ALL F-1 Students— Expiring I-20s:
Please check the program completion/I-20 expiration 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 completion date in Section 5 of your I-20 is December, 2013 (or sooner) and you will NOT complete your studies/degree by that date, you MUST apply for an I-20/F-1 Program Extension at least 1 month prior to the completion date on your I-20. Application packets are available on the OISS website and may take you several weeks to complete. 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. NOTE: It is YOUR responsibility as an F-1 student to apply for a timely I-20/Program Extension, so please take care of this important matter immediately.
Not Graduating & Not Returning to Regent After the Fall, 2013 Semester?

All F-1 students who will not graduate and will not return to Regent after the Fall, 2013 semester are required by federal immigration regulations to notify the OISS BEFORE they withdraw from (leave) Regent. You will need to submit the OISS form called “Request for Approval to Withdraw, Cease Attendance, or Take a Leave of Absence.” Failure to submit this form to the OISS before you withdraw from Regent can result in serious immigration problems for you in the future. According to federal immigration regulations, F-1 students who notify the OISS PRIOR to their withdrawal will have 15 days to depart the United States. F-1 students who do NOT notify the OISS PRIOR to their withdrawal are considered to be in violation of their immigration status. These students are NOT entitled to the 15 day grace period, will need to depart the U.S. immediately, and will likely experience immigration problems during any future attempts to reenter the United States or apply for a U.S. visa. Please contact the OISS for any questions you might have.

DEADLINE for I-20 Travel Signature Requests:

Please note that the deadline to request a “travel signature” on your I-20 for Christmas Break travel is Friday, November 22, or 2 weeks before your departure date, whichever date comes first. Each travel signature is valid for 12 months at a time for enrolled students. Check *page 3* of your I-20 to see if you have a hand written travel signature and make sure it will not expire before the date you will return to the United States. If you do not have a signature, or if you are in need of a new travel signature, the request form can be found here:

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

► NOTE: Before you can submit the Travel Signature Request to the OISS you must attach a Certificate of Enrollment from the Registrar’s Office, which can be requested from the Registrar’s Office by using this form:

http://www.regent.edu/admin/registrar/documents/FormStudent-ALL_CertLetterRequestForm_008.pdf

Departing the U.S. Soon?

For a complete list of everything you will need for a smooth reentry into the United States, after a temporary departure of 5 months or less, please read the OISS webpage called, “Departing & Reentering the United States”.


This page should be read several weeks prior to your departure. If you have any questions or would like the OISS to check your documents before you go, feel free to stop by the OISS between 2-5 p.m. (“walk-in” hours).

► Students who will need to apply for a new F-1 visa should read this page of the OISS website carefully and should make the visa appointment as soon as possible, for the earliest date possible, to help insure that the visa will be processed on time for your return trip to Regent:

http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/documents/F1J1VisaHandoutMay242012.pdf

(It is important to note that the embassies will be operating on limited days and hours during the holidays and that it may take longer than usual for a visa application to be processed. If you are in need of a new visa to re-enter the U.S., you may not make it back to Regent on-time for the start of classes, so you should discuss this with your School/Academic Advisor and consider the decision very carefully. The OISS does not recommend international winter break travel for students who need to apply for a new F-1 visa for their return to the United States.)

► REMINDER About the I-94 Arrival/Departure Records: As a reminder from May and September, all nonimmigrants who enter or re-enter the United States (including F-1 students) are now expected to go to this CBP website and print a copy of your I-94 Arrival Record to keep in your possession as evidence of your lawful entry and current immigration status: www.cbp.gov/i94

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you have trouble retrieving the I-94, or if it does not list you with “F-1” student immigration status, please notify the OISS Director immediately so we can help resolve this problem for you. This is VERY important! See this government Fact Sheet for more details:

Change of Address Reporting Reminder:
To report a change of address, ALL currently enrolled F-1 international students must follow the important instructions included below in order to maintain lawful F-1 immigration status:

► **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. Your current U.S. address should be listed as your “Permanent” address in Genisys. It is each student’s important responsibility to make sure your current U.S. address is listed correctly in Genisys during web-registration periods.

► If your address changes **OUTSIDE of the web-registration periods/during the middle of the semester or summer**, 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 OISS: [http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/information_change.cfm](http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/iss/information_change.cfm)

► For questions on how to update your address in Genisys, please contact the Registrar’s Office: 757-352-4038.

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**New Student Country Trivia:**

The answers to last month’s country trivia are included here:

The typical food is paella and we speak 4 languages.

**Answer:** Spain

Our language might seem aggressive and we don’t speak directly.

**Answer:** South Korea

To greet an elder’s hand, younger people take that person’s hand and place it on their forehead.

**Answer:** Thailand

We have the 2nd largest fresh water lake in the world.

**Answer:** Kenya

We bow when we greet.

**Answer:** Japan

This country is famed for her gold and cocoa resources.

**Answer:** Ghana

Most people in this country do not have siblings.

**Answer:** PR China

We have the largest democracy in the world.

**Answer:** India

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Merry Christmas, safe travels, & happy New Year!

On behalf of the OISS, we wish you a blessed and merry Christmas, and a safe and restful holiday! We look forward to serving you in the new year!