

INTERNATIONAL SERVICES NEWSLETTER

Spring Semester, 2004

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SPRING FESTIVAL

The International Spring Festival recently brought together student groups to display the many cultures right here on our campus. The two-week events included the following:

April 1

Pakistani Student Association:
Traditional kite flying competition.

April 2

Indian Student Association:
Demonstration and cricket lessons.
Japanese Student Association:
Photos in traditional clothes and
Haunted Mansion

April 5

Latin American Student Association:
Latin Dance Lessons, pinata,
and cultural demonstration.

April 6

Nepalese Student Association:
Cultural Movies and Dance Show
Muslim Student Association:
Afternoon Open Discussion on
Islam
Evening Open Forum on Islam

April 7

Vietnamese Student Organization:

Vietnamese Movie, Traditional
Dragon Dance Lessons, and
“Boat People” Monologue

Cultural Exhibits were displayed
April 8 and 9 in the Student
Center Lobby. Student groups
representing India, Japan, Latin
America, Malaysia, Nepal,
Pakistan, United States, and
Vietnam shared cultural exhibits
with the students, faculty and
staff. Winners of the Cultural
Exhibit competition were:

1st Place: Indian
2nd Place: Pakistan
3rd Place: Nepal

The Talent and Fashion Show
April 9th featured performances
from the Indian, Japanese,
Persian, USA, Latin American,
Nepalese, Pakistani and
Vietnamese student
organizations.

Talent Show Winners:
1st Place: Vietnam
2nd Place: Japan
3rd Place: Nepal

Fashion Show Winners:
1st Place: Vietnam
2nd Place: Japan
3rd Place: India

Overall Spring Festival Winners:
1st Place: Indian
2nd Place: Vietnamese
3rd Place: Pakistan

Winners of the Spring Sports Night
were recognized as follows:

Basketball: Africans
Racquetball: Karthik Mudaliar
Volleyball: Pakistan
Badminton:
Women: Hydie Anto
Men’s Doubles:
Chris Nguyen & Qining Qin

An International College Bowl was a
part of Spring Festival with the final
round being held during the Talent
Show Friday night. In an extremely
close competition, the overall winner
was the Indian Student Association.

All of the local tv stations covered
the Cultural Exhibits, including a
special live broadcast by Darwin
Singleton. Everyone looked great on
television!!

A special thanks to all of our Spring
Festival participants. This year’s
was certainly the loudest one ever.
Please be sure to mention a word of
thanks to all of our faculty judges.
Competition was fierce and the
judges had a very tough job in
selecting winners.



FALL 2003 PRESIDENT'S LIST

Heather J. Adamus
Victor A. Bade-Afuye
Abhishek Banerjee
Znar S. Barwary
Vangel Biraltchanov
Melissa Chang
Alberto A. Chavez
Kim Courchesne
Tam C. Do
Yogesh Dwivedi
Marie-Anne Grondin
Sudha S. Joga
Erin M. Kinnear
Paola B. Kouadio
Yoong-Huei Lai
Pei Yee Lee
Wai Y. Lo
Khoa D. Lu
Mizusa Masuda
Maria I. Mendibur
Regulo A. Moy
Nhan L. Ngo
Nhi T. Nguyen
Mamoru Nozawa
Katarina Palenikova
Javier I. Perez
Maria Richardson
Jia Rui
Ana Ropic
Sumie Sakamoto
Saori Uchiyama
Ana M. Montes Ulldemolins
Marcela Vernaza
Haifei Wang
Tatsuya Yamazaki
Syed-Ali M. Zaidi

FALL 2003 DEAN'S LIST

Husain A. Abdulla
Mohammed Adnan
Saad Saud Al-Dughaiter
Fadi Abdul Al-Saidi
Mustapha Amalou
Satair Ayyobzadeh Shirazi
Priya Karsan Bhakta
Maria Laura Carlino
Mei Ying Chong
Romendra Chudal
Emilia N. Chukwuemeka
Josephine Davis
Navdeep Dhinooy
Carlos Agustin Diaz
Jo-Arnt Farbu
Rafya Faridi
Masanari Fujikawa
Felister Gachoka
Shenoda Garas Gadalla
Li Gao
Dinesh Reddy Gomaram
Oleksandr Grygorash
Waqas Ul Hassan
Yumi Hatakeyama
Shanta Hirachan
Cathy Vu Ho
Yuta Hosoya
Shabbir Hossain
Shamim Hossain
Xiaofei Hu
Tam Duc Huynh
Mobilia Claire Imobioh
Bashir Abdi Ismail
Nobuyo Kawamura
Aman Ullah Khan
Joo Un Kim
Risa Koshiba
Andrea Kurekova
Frida Kristina Lejdebrink
Ker Yee Lim
Chi Thi Ly
Hoa Thi Mai
Asta Masedunskaitė
Ana M. Milicevic
Azusa Miyazaki
Kazuhiro Mori
Md Tareq Morshed
Adriana Mariko Murayama
An Duong Phuoc Ngo
Quoc Huy Nguyen
Maitram H. Nguyen
Nga Hoang Nguyen
Quy Nguyen
Thao B. Nguyen
Tony John Nguyen
Nauman Nazir
Mina Ogawa
Shingo Okuiwa
Error Raymond Pennerman
Ivana Surlan Pejatovic
Claudia Melanie Perez-Uribe
Ciby Peuse
Diana Pho
Marek Jan Podgorski
Hashem Qaysieh
Robert Paul Reid
Mariano Ruiz
Michi Saeki
Lauren G. Sandiford
Nimita A. Shah
Vikram Siddamsetty
Dinesh Oppath Sivasankaran
Mukarram Mohamad Syed
Yukie Takeda
Michelle Toth
Ha T. Tran
Phi Dung Tran
Nobuo Ueda
Javier Ricardo Vazquez
Jorgen Vestli
Chao Gao Xu
Mohit Yadav
Tomoko Yokoyama

IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY TO SPEAK

Immigration attorney Steve Springer will be speaking at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 27 in the Student Center Ballroom.

He will be speaking on employment opportunities for international students as well as other immigration issues facing internationals. As he was an international advisor for several years, he knows not only immigration issues, but also the F-1 issues.



IMPORTANT IMMIGRATION CHANGES

Now, more than ever, it is important that all F-1 students be aware of and abide by all immigration requirements.

You must register as a full-time student no matter what. The only exception is a well-documented medical condition or graduation during that particular semester. If you are graduating, you must notify us to take less than a full course load at the beginning of your final semester. If you are not a full-time

student and do not meet the reasons above, you will be reported to INS as out of status. No exceptions.

If you are allowed to drop a course, you must also fill out the proper paperwork with the Registrar. Failure to officially drop the course with the university will result in an F on your transcript.

Under the new regulations, anyone out of status for more than 5 months is not allowed to apply for reinstatement with INS. Thus, your only option would be to return to your home country.

If you are out of status, our office will not be able to provide you with good-standing letter.

If you are going home for a visit and sitting out a semester, you are not to re-enter the United States more than 30 days prior to the start of the next term. If you re-enter the country before this time, you are jeopardizing your immigration status.

New students trying to enter the U.S. more than 30 days before the start of their I-20 will be returned home and their visas cancelled. Do not let this happen to any of your friends who will be joining us in the future.

If you are visiting a country other than your own, you may need to obtain a visitor's visa. Most Embassies have web pages regarding current visa requirements and forms.

Let the Office of International Services know when traveling outside the US to verify your documents.

Anyone required to attend Special Registration with INS must leave the U.S. at the designated airports listed by Immigration and have their departure documented. It is not enough just to surrender your I-94 card. Failure to follow the procedures set out by INS at your special registration will keep you from being allowed back into the U.S. It has happened to some of our students already--don't let it happen to you too.

If you are traveling inside the U.S., take your passport, I-20 and I-94 with you. Any officer of the law can now ask for your immigration documents. If you have a car, it would also be a good idea to keep a copy of your passport/I-20/I-94 in the glove box with your car registration.

Check your passport and I-20 expiration dates. Passports should be renewed six months before expiration as processing time can be several months.

Your I-20 must be extended before the expiration date. Unless you have compelling reasons or a documented medical problem, we will not be allowed to grant the extension. Suspension or dismissal from the University does not allow you to apply for an extension.

If you are transferring to another school, notify our office for the proper INS notification. We do not want to transfer you out in SEVIS until you are registered for classes and 100% sure you will be staying there.

If you move, please notify us of your new address within 10 days so we may report the change. These are very difficult times and as always we are working to assist you in all ways possible.

STUDENT HAPPENINGS

Psychology grad student Motoko Saito has recently had two research projects accepted at the South Eastern Psychological Assoc. Conference. Her research is entitled *Influence of Cultural Background on Attitudes toward Suicide and Emotional Expressivity in Suicide among American and Japanese Students*.

Mechanical Engineering grad student Sumeet Borwankar recently won a contest through a local radio station entitled Paradise RV2. The reality show put 7 strangers on an RV with opportunities for listeners to vote unpopular contestants off. For all his diplomatic efforts, he won a trip for two to Jamaica and had lots of fun enjoying Florida during spring break. So does this mean he's a fun-loving, likeable guy in addition to a hard-working grad student???

It's no surprise that Mika Perkiomaki and Elina Ryhanen got married recently, but they are also hard at work back home with their new business Exercise Masters (www.masters.fi)

Elina is also working on her Ph.D. in Exercise Science at the University of Jyväskylä. Congratulations to both of you.

Congratulations to all of you who are graduating this semester—your hard work has finally paid off. Now get

out there and find those great jobs, whether here in the U.S. or back home. And let us know your success stories so we can share them here.

EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION

You must apply for your post-completion practical training (OPT) before your graduation. You are no longer able to apply for the card after graduation.

As processing time varies from 80 to 160 days, we recommend you apply early. Your application must be received and noted by immigration prior to your graduation date, so don't wait until the week before graduation to apply.

When you apply, you will select a date to begin your employment period which can be as late as 60 days after graduation.

You **cannot** travel outside the United States while your EAD is pending or you forfeit the privilege. You must remain here during the processing time.

Travel while on your OPT is risky even after you receive your card. There is no guarantee that you will be allowed back into the U.S.

You cannot postpone your graduation to delay applying for your OPT. You must apply when you finish your coursework even if the job market is low.

You may receive an additional year of OPT after proceeding to a higher degree. This means one year upon completion of your bachelors and another year upon completion of masters. Same applies to masters and doctoral degrees.

If you begin a new program while on your Optional Practical Training, the remaining time on your EAD is cancelled.

In order to be approved for Curricular Practical Training (CPT), you must register for a one-hour internship class. See us regarding CPT approval, even if it is in the middle of a semester. It is our understanding that intern hours may be added at any time.

POINTS OF INTEREST

You must file a form 8843 with the Internal Revenue Service each year, even if you did not make any money. Forms are available at International Services and must be sent in each year by June 1. If you file income taxes, the 8843 is sent with your tax return by April 15.

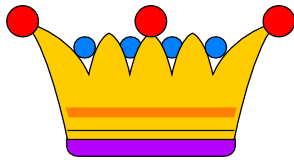
The Student Health Services recently held a Health Fair for all students. There were lots of free samples and free health tests not covered by insurance. Watch for these every Spring and for the International Student Health Fair held during each Fall Orientation to save you money.

Are you having trouble with your mail?? The post office indicates that many of you are not addressing your mail properly to your families back home. Make sure your packages are

addressed properly by checking <http://www.southalabama.edu/postoffice/> or their window if you are having problems.

GRADUATION

Spring Graduation is May 8 at 2:00 p.m. in the Mitchell Center. We hope all of you will come out and support our students who will be graduating.



HOMECOMING WINNERS

Our congratulations to Fahad Subzwari and Maryam Yazdanshenas who won Homecoming King and Queen this year. We are proud of you both.

NEW STUDENT ORGANIZATION

We'd like to welcome our newest Student Organization, the Japanese Student Association and to congratulate them on their recent participation in the Spring Festival. Their talent and contributions are outstanding and Nobuyo Kawamura has done a great job this year as president in getting the organization off the ground.

As we are already anticipating a new group of Japanese students from National Collegiate Network this summer, we are sure they will continue to be an active part of CISO.

GREEN CARD LOTTERY

You can get information on the DV Lottery at the official BCIS website of www.bcis.gov. Don't forget to pay attention to the deadlines and nationalities restrictions

NEED A RIDE???

Baptist Campus Ministries is still running their regular ride assistance to Wal-Mart. Pick-up is at Four Seasons Apartments, the campus post office, and the dorms.

Call their office 344-5904 for more information regarding the scheduled times.

IMPORTANT CHANGES FOR THE NEWSLETTER

The International Services Newsletter is now available on the International Services site <http://www.southalabama.edu/intnatsrv/> so you can view it at any time.

Beginning with our next issue, we will not be mailing the printed copy of the newsletter to everyone but will instead be sending you an e-mail to your university e-mail address when the newsletter is on the web site.

We hope you are all checking your university e-mail address regularly as this address is used often for any official notices by the university.

YOUR HELP WANTED AND NEEDED

Fall Semester 2004 is just around the corner, and as always, your help is needed to assist with new student orientation and with pick-up and temporary housing of these students as they arrive on our campus.

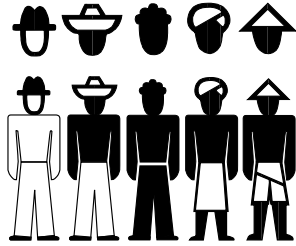
These things are an important service that we provide to our students and means a commitment on your part if you choose to help. It is also a very rewarding experience for you to help out your new fellow students and make new friends.

Please come by the Office of International Services and let us know if you want to be a part of this important service.

HEALTH INSURANCE ASSISTANCE

Be sure to see Kelley Lynd in Enrollment Services (Admin. 255) for any questions you have about your student health insurance.

It is important that you understand the coverage limits and the best way to use the insurance. She will assist you in filing claims and understanding your benefits.



C.I.S.O. ELECTIONS

A BIG THANK-YOU to this year's CISO officers for all their hard work and dedication.

President: Sunil Mentreddi
Vice-President: Carlene Joseph
Secretary: Fahad Subzwari
Treasurer: Maryam Yazdanshenas

Elections for next year's officers of the Council of International Student Organizations will be held very soon.

If you are interested in running for an officer of CISO, please contact Brenda at the Office of International Service.

CISO can use everyone's support at the meetings, whether participating on behalf of a student organization or not.

If you are interested in getting your fellow countrymen and women active in CISO, please come to the CISO meetings or see Brenda. We would like to see every country actively represented on this campus.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

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