Dear Students,

We hope you are enjoying your classes and having a wonderful semester so far. We hope that you find this newsletter informative and helpful. Please visit our website at http://www.laspositascollege.edu/international and click on the “Photo Gallery” tab as we have some photos from our New International Student Orientation in January. As always, the ISP welcomes your feedback, questions, and story ideas.

St. Patrick’s Day—Monday, March 17

Originally a religious holiday in Ireland to celebrate St. Patrick who taught Christianity to the Irish, in the United States and in many other countries, it is now a day to celebrate the culture, traditions and many accomplishments of the Irish people. People wear green on this day because Ireland, also called “The Emerald Isle”, is blessed with natural beauty. To celebrate, people may choose to eat corned beef and cabbage, and potatoes, watch parades, or go to pubs with friends and drink Guinness (the legal drinking age in the U.S. is 21). It is said that everyone is lucky enough to be Irish on St. Patrick’s Day so wear green and enjoy the day.

St. Patrick’s Day Parade and Festival
Dublin
Saturday, March 15 and Sunday March 16

This is the 25th Anniversary of the St. Patrick’s Day Parade and Festival. The Lion’s Club Parade begins the festivities on Saturday, March 15 at 9:30 am on Amador Plaza Road, goes on to Dublin Boulevard, turns on Village Parkway, and then ends on Amador Valley Boulevard.

This 2 fun-filled day Festival is at the Dublin Civic Plaza on Dublin Boulevard from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. There will be Irish music and dance, food and drink, artists booths, commercial vendors, non-profit displays, carnival rides, games and more.
Last Day to Withdraw with a “W” - April 11

Please be advised that International students may NOT drop a class with a “W” unless you are still enrolled and attending at least 12 units. U.S. Immigration does not recognize “W’s” as part of your required 12 units to maintain full-time status. Before dropping a class, please see Cindy or Sean to avoid falling out of status.

Spring Break

There will be no classes during Spring Break, March 24—29. The ISP Office will remain open, however, during our regular business hours. Enjoy the break!

Travel Signature

If you are travelling outside the United States during the Spring Break, please make sure that you come in to the ISP Office before you leave so that we can endorse your I-20 for your return to the U.S. and review your travel documents.

Easter—March 23

This is not an official holiday. It is a religious holiday in which Christians celebrate the resurrection (coming back to life) of Jesus Christ which they believe occurred after his death by crucifixion in 27—33 AD. In the United States, the holidays has become partially secularized. Many non-Christians celebrate the Easter traditions of decorating Easter eggs on Saturday evening and having children hunt for them on Sunday morning, by which time they have been mysteriously hidden all over the house and garden. According to the children’s stories, the eggs and other treats are hidden overnight by the Easter Bunny which children find in an Easter basket waiting for them when they wake up. Many families attend Sunday mass in church in the morning and then participate in a family feast or party in the afternoon that includes the eating the colored eggs and ham. Easter is celebrated each year according to the lunar calendar on the Sunday following the first full moon after the Vernal Equinox (the first day of Spring) and many of the Easter traditions of eggs, rabbits, and Easter lilies are signs of spring and rebirth.
Tax Information

The United States tax system requires every nonimmigrant present in the U.S. in 2007 (even for one day), WHETHER YOU WORKED OR NOT, to file a tax form with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). This also applies to your spouses and dependents/children on F-2 visas. The forms that you need to file depend on your status. For federal tax purposes, you must first determine whether you are considered a “RESIDENT or a NONRESIDENT alien”. If a student spends more than 5 years in the United States in F-1 status, he/she will be considered a resident alien and must be taxed like a U.S. citizen. Note that any part of a calendar year in which a student is present in the U.S. counts as a full year.

“Non-resident aliens” who earned wages that are less than the amount of one personal exemption ($3,400 for 2007) are not required to file a tax return but they must still file Form 8843 for themselves and any spouse and/or dependents in F-2 status.

You must file Form 1040NR-EZ or 1040NR in addition to Form 8843 if you had U.S. earned income in excess of $3,400, had wages or scholarship income exempt by treaty, had taxable scholarship income or are due a refund of taxes. Also note:
- Your bank interest is NOT considered taxable income.
- You are only required to declare U.S. source income.
- Social Security and Medicare taxes should NOT be withheld from your wages.

Employer documents: In order to fill out your federal and state tax forms, you will need the following forms depending on the income you receive: W-2 and/or 1042-S. These forms were mailed to you by your employer by January 31 of this year. If you worked in 2007 and did not receive a W-2 and/or 1042-S, you should contact your employer’s payroll department. IF YOU RECENTLY MOVED, MAKE SURE THAT YOUR EMPLOYER KNOWS YOUR NEW ADDRESS.

Deadlines: If you worked in 2007, the last day to meet your federal and California state tax obligations is April 15, 2008.

If you did not earn any income in the U.S. in 2007 or for spouses and dependents/children, your deadline for filing a federal Form 8843 is June 15, 2008.

Tax Assistance
The ISP Staff are neither qualified nor permitted to give individual tax advice. Students with complicated tax situations are recommended to consult either the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) http://www.irs.gov or at 1-800-829-1040, the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program (visit http://vita-volunteers.org/index.htm to find the location nearest you) or a tax preparation service, Certified Public Accountant or Tax Attorney who is knowledgeable about nonresident tax law.

Also, the University of Texas at Austin has a great website at http://www.utexas.edu/international/taxes/ designed for International Students to assist you with a step by step process, forms and completed examples.
In addition, the Office of International Programs at San Francisco State University (SFSU) has scheduled Tax Information Workshops for International Students on:

Tuesday, March 4 from 9:30 am—11:30 am
Monday, March 17 from 12:30 pm—2:30 pm
Thursday, April 3 from 11:00 am—1:00 pm

All workshops will be held in the Rosa Parks Room, Lower Level of the Student Center on the campus of SFSU. Advance registration is required. You may register at http://www.sfsu.edu/~oip/oipworkshops.htm. There is a $10 per person fee for non-SFSU students, which includes a packet of useful information and all necessary tax forms. Come to the ISP Office for more information about these workshops.

All tax forms are available to download at the U.S. Internal Revenue Service website at http://www.irs.gov

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**Calling All Potential Graduates!**

Do you believe you are ready to complete your degree or certificate this semester? If so, please schedule an appointment with Gilberto Victoria or Nancy Wright in the Counseling Office, Building #700 soon to review your progress toward a degree or certificate completion. Following this appointment, you can apply to Admissions and Records in Building #700 for your formal course evaluation for graduation by filling out a “Request for AA/AS Degree or Certificate of Completion/Achievement Form”. **The deadline is April 18.** It is also very important that you notify the ISP Office of your plans. Students planning on transferring to a University must notify the ISP to insure your SEVIS record is transferred in a timely manner. Students who would like to apply for Post-Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) must begin the application procedure in April.
International Scholarships Available

In addition to the Annual LPC Scholarship Program (go to http://www.laspositascollege.edu/financialaid/2008lpcscholarships.php for more information) the World Cultures Alliance (WCA) is offering 4 scholarships of $150 each. 3 of these scholarships are only for LPC International Students, while the 1 remaining is for any WCA member. To be eligible, applicants must have attended LPC for at least one semester with good academic standing and be currently enrolled at LPC. Applicants will need to complete the WCA Scholarship Application Form, write a Personal Statement, provide a current LPC transcript, and a photocopy of their I-20. Come to the International Student Program (ISP) Office in Room 1502 to pick up an application. The Deadline to submit the application is Friday, April 5 at 1:00 pm. Good luck!

March Birthdays

Lyazzat Galimova—March 2
Victoria Budiman—March 9
Mario Tiscay—March 10
Tran Thi Bao Tran—March 14
Marcia Tafarel—March 15
Christian Gyamfi—March 18
Yoon Kyung Bae—March 19
Dina Ra—March 19
Rebecca Forson—March 31

Maligayang Kaarawan (Tagalog for Happy Birthday)

Birthday Tradition in the Philippines
A mixture of East and West, Birthday cakes are baked in various sizes and shapes. The celebration includes noodles representing long life, balloon decorations and piñatas. Filipino families display blinking colored lights to show that someone is having a birthday at their home. Earlier in the day, the family goes to Mass to thank God.

Daylight Savings Time

Sunday, March 9

Welcome an extra hour of daylight at night. U.S. Americans use the phrase “Spring Ahead, Fall Back” to help remember to turn the clock ahead in the Springtime. Turn your clocks forward 1 hour when you go to bed on Saturday night, March 8.
**Early Music Concert Series**

Saturday, March 15 @ 7:30 pm  
Library  
The Baroque  
$5 Admission for LPC Students  
Take an excursion through Europe during the baroque period featuring the music of Spain, France, Germany and Italy. The concert includes Louise Carslake, flute and recorder, David Wilson, baroque violin, David Morris, baroque cello and viola de gamba, and Yuko Tanaka, harpsichord.

Enhance your concert going experience with historical information about the music, the performers, and the instruments by attending a class offered on Thursday, March 13 from 7:00—9:00 in Room 712.  
The cost of the class is $5.00

For more information, contact Marilyn Marquis, Artistic Director at 925-424-1209 or mmarquis@laspositascollege.edu

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**Payment of Fees**

Tuition fees are due during the first 2 weeks of the semester. If you have not yet paid your fees, it is very important that you come see Cindy or Sean in the ISP Office as soon as possible. Failure to pay your fees on times results in an automatic “Administrative Hold” on your LPC record and will prevent you from registering for classes, obtaining transcripts and may affect your ability to transfer in a timely manner.
Contact Us

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