



# International Student Program Newsletter

## April, 2007

Vol. 1, No. 2

### Website Updates

We are pleased to announce that we have made some updates to our International Student website <http://www.laspositascollege.edu/international>. We designed this website to be a resource for continuing as well as prospective students. Be sure to check our International Student Links on the page for resources that we think will be useful to you. We hope to make even more updates in the coming weeks, so please check the website often.

### Spring Break – April 9, 2007 to April 13, 2007

There are no classes during Spring Break, but the International Student Program (ISP) Office will remain open. Many U.S. American students take a vacation and go to a warmer climate like Southern California or Mexico during this week. Other students choose to do an alternative break and do volunteer activities. If you are interested in volunteer opportunities, please check out <http://www.volunteersolutions.org/vccc/volunteer> or come to the ISP Office. If you are looking for other activities to do, please contact one of the Tour Agencies listed on our International Student Links link on our website at [www.laspositascollege.edu/international](http://www.laspositascollege.edu/international). If you plan to leave the country – including visiting Mexico or Canada, remember to get your I-20 signed by Cindy before your trip. Have a wonderful break!

### World Cultures Alliance – International Student Club

Meets every other Tuesday (April 3, April 17, May 1, and May 15) from 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm in the Library Conference Room 2014. Come to your meeting and help plan and organize future activities and trips.

### Easter – Sunday, April 8

This is not an official national 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 holiday 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 eating the colored eggs and ham. Easter is celebrated each year according to the lunar calendar on the Sunday following the 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

## Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival

Saturday and Sunday, April 14 & 15, and April 21 & 22

Come celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> annual festival, one of California's most prominent celebrations of Japanese and other Asian traditions and culture with numerous exhibits and performances and of course – great food. There will be a Grand Parade featuring over 1,500 participants including marching bands, dancers in kimono (traditional Japanese dress), the Cherry Blossom Queen and her court, tradition musicians and dancers, and a “*mikoshi*” (a portable shrine) on Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> starting at San Francisco City Hall at 1:00 pm that ends at Post and Fillmore streets in San Francisco's Japantown.

Please visit <http://www.nccbf.org/> for more information



## Major League Baseball

The Bay Area is fortunate to have 2 professional Major League Baseball (MLB) teams. The American League West Champion **Oakland Athletics** (A's) open their season this month play the following games at McAfee Coliseum:

April 9 – 11 vs. Chicago White Sox

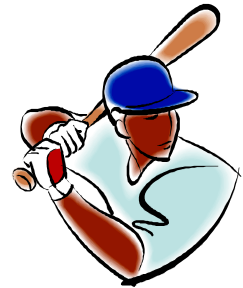
April 13 – 15 vs. New York Yankees (the highest payroll in MLB: \$195,229,045 compared with \$79,938,369 for Oakland)

April 17 – 18 vs. Los Angeles Angels

April 25 – 25 vs. Seattle Mariners

April 27 – 29 vs. Tampa Bay Devil Rays

Single day tickets range from \$9 to \$44. Bleacher seats are \$12. You can purchase tickets for the A's at <http://oakland.athletics.mlb.com>



The **San Francisco Giants** open their season at spectacular AT&T Park, home of the 2007 All-Star Game in July. Watch as Barry Bonds chases Hank Aaron's MLB Career Home Run record of 755. The Giants play the following home games this month:

April 3 – 5 vs. San Diego Padres

April 6 – 8 vs. Los Angeles Dodgers (the main rival of the Giants)

April 18 – 19 vs. Saint Louis Cardinals (won the World Series last year)

April 20 – 22 vs. Arizona Diamondbacks

April 30 – vs. Colorado Rockies

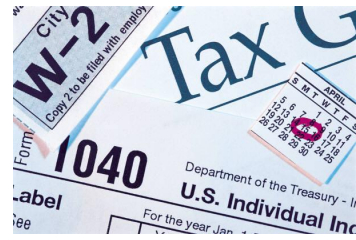
Single day tickets range from \$10 - \$110. Prices are higher for games on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday as well as games played against the Oakland A's, New York Yankees, and Los Angeles Dodgers as well as on Opening Night. You can purchase tickets for the Giants at <http://sanfrancisco.giants.mlb.com>

## Student Activities Questionnaire

Thanks again for your help in completing the student activities questionnaire. Based on your answers, the top activities you wanted to participate in were, in order going on a week-end BBQ/ picnic, attending an International Night, visiting a museum, going on a Bay Cruise/ Alcatraz, and going to an amusement park. Your responses to our Student Activities questionnaire will be used to plan a group activity at the end of the semester. More information will be available soon.

## Tax Deadline – April 16, 2007

As reported in last month's newsletter, the United States tax system requires every nonimmigrant present in the U.S. in 2006 (even for one day), whether you worked or not, to file a tax form with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). See last month's newsletter for more information about preparing and filing your tax returns. It is available on our website at [www.laspositascollege.edu/international](http://www.laspositascollege.edu/international). Then click on "Newsletter".



## Deadline to Withdraw is April 6

April 6 is the last day to get a grade of "W" instead of a letter grade that will affect your grade point average (GPA). Please be advised that International Students may **NOT** drop a class with a "W" unless you are still enrolled and attending 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.

## Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> - April 13

A Friday occurring on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of any month is considered to be a day of bad luck in many traditions around the globe. A fear of this day is called parakavedekatriaphobia. Try saying that one! The origin of Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> superstition has been linked to the belief that there were 13 people at the Last Supper of Jesus who was crucified on Good Friday. Strangely, there is evidence to suggest that Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> is actually unlucky for some. Psychologists have found that some people are especially likely to have accidents or fall ill on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>. This has been attributed to such people feeling a heightened state of anxiety on that day. Good luck and have a safe day!



The World Cultures Alliance presents:

**An Evening with Amazing Race winner Tyler MacNiven**

Monday, April 23. 6:30 - 8:30 pm Little Theater



Join us for a presentation from Tyler MacNiven, co-winner of CBS' *The Amazing Race*, Season 9. He will share his experience with his partner B.J. (the so-called "hippies") on the hit reality TV competition. Tyler's rise to fame began with his unique approach to gain admission at Stanford University. Later, with only a drawing to aid him, Tyler walked the length of Japan with the hope of finding his father's birthplace. Along the way, he befriended many Japanese people and learned much about their culture and himself. He will show clips of this adventure in an award-winning documentary he made titled "*Kintaro Walks Japan*". Tyler will also show for the first time some of his footage from a soon to be release documentary "*I ran Iran*" in which he attempted to walk across the Islamic Republic of Iran. Opportunities for questions are welcome. DVDs and CDs will be sold. A \$5 suggested donation will be collected at the door.



**Calling All Potential Graduates!**

The deadline to apply for Graduation was March 30, 2007. If you believe you are ready to Graduate, please schedule an appointment with Gilberto Victoria or Nancy Wright in the Counseling Office, Building # 700 to complete a "Petition for Graduation" Form. It is also very important to notify the International Student Office of your plans. Students planning on transferring to a University must notify ISP to insure your SEVIS record is transferred in a timely manner.

**Employment Opportunities**

Did you know that all F-1 students who are completing their degree are eligible for 1 year full-time employment off campus in a field related to their major? This is called post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT). Students who would like to apply for post-completion OPT must begin the application procedure to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in April. Please come in to the International Student Program Office for more information and to complete your application.

**I-20 Program Completion Date**

Please check to make sure that your passport and I-20 are still valid. If your I-20 is expiring soon, (you can see your program completion date in item #5 of your I-20 Form) please come in to the International Student Program Office to extend your program. You will need an updated (within 3 months) Financial Statement to complete this application. Failure to extend your program will result in your being "out of status" and subject you to possible deportation and/or future exclusion to the U.S.



## Summer Plans

Summer is considered to be an “annual vacation” for F-1 students and you are not required to take classes for this term to maintain your lawful status. It is an optional term, when you are free to take some classes (there is no minimum number of units to take) or even no classes as you wish. Keep in mind that summer is an abbreviated term with limited offerings of classes that are taught at an accelerated (a much faster) pace than classes offered during the Spring or Fall. It is helpful to think that you will be responsible for as much learning in your 6 or 8 week session as you would in a semester course lasting 4 months. Therefore, there can be a lot of reading and writing for these classes. If you will take classes and have questions, please see Gilberto Victoria, or Nancy Wright in the Counseling Office, Building # 700.

## Summer Session Schedules

A limited number of Summer 2007 Class Schedules have been printed. We don't have any schedules to give out, but you can check the Summer 2007 class schedule on our web page at [www.laspositascollege.edu](http://www.laspositascollege.edu). They are also available for purchase in the Bookstore for \$1.09.

## Fall Session

The Fall 2007 class schedule should be available on our web site in early April. Students should schedule an appointment to meet with either Gilberto Victoria or Nancy Wright in the Counseling Office, Building # 700 as soon as the class schedules are available and then come to the ISP Office to enroll in your classes.

## ESL Discussion Group

Come join a free informal group to practice your listening and speaking with ESL teachers! Groups meet each Friday, from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm at the Cafeteria. Feel free to come and participate, even if you can't stay the entire hour. There are no books or homework required. Topics are student driven and have included current events, academic preparation, and cultural differences. Please contact Tiina Hukari for more information.

## TOEFL Preparation Study Group

Marilyn Marquis has kindly offered to facilitate a study group in the Integrated Learning Center (ILC), Building # 1200 on Friday afternoons from 2:30 pm - 4:30 pm. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet with other students, have the expertise of an ESL instructor and improve your English all at the same time.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual International Film Festival

Friday, April 20

The International Club of Chabot College will have an Indian buffet dinner at 6:30 pm and then show the film “**Water**” in Hindi with English subtitles at 7:00 pm. This film, released in 2005 to critical acclaim, is a moving drama about the plight of



Indian widows. Dinner will be held in the Old Art Gallery, in Building #1000 at Chabot College in Hayward. The movie will be shown at Chabot College from 7:00 pm to 9:30 pm in Room 1232. Admission is \$5.00 which includes dinner.

### **Amusement Parks**

The following are some of the amusement parks in the Bay Area. Many parks have extended hours of operation during Spring Break.



#### **Six Flags Discovery Kingdom**

2001 Marine World Parkway  
Vallejo, CA 94589

[www.sixflags.com](http://www.sixflags.com)

(707) 643-6722

Experience wildlife and wild rides at the combination theme park, wildlife park, and oceanarium that contains more rides, shows and attractions than any other theme park in Northern California.

#### **Gilroy Gardens Family Theme Park**

(formerly known as Bonfante Gardens)

3050 Hecker Pass Road

Gilroy, CA 95020

[www.gilroygardens.org](http://www.gilroygardens.org)

(408) 842-2121

A non-profit organization, this is California's only horticultural theme park designed for families with young children and garden lovers featuring 19 rides, 27 attractions, 6 majestic gardens and the world famous Circus Trees. Attractions are designed to educate guests and foster a greater appreciation of the natural world and man's ability to shape it.

#### **Paramount's Great America**

4701 Great American Parkway

Santa Clara, CA 95054

(408) 988-1776

[www.pgathrills.com](http://www.pgathrills.com)

This amazing amusement park offers something for the whole family. You'll find thrilling rides for children, family rides, 3-D animation shows at the Paramount Action FX Theater and loads of adrenaline-packed excitement. It also boasts on the world's tallest double-decker carousels. For more details on opening dates, please check the website

#### **WaterWorld USA**

1950 Waterworld Parkway

Concord, CA 94520

[www.sixflags.com](http://www.sixflags.com)

(925) 609-1364

This East Bay water park is fun for people of all ages and is filled with dozens of water activities to enjoy. Some of its most popular rides include high speed water slides, double tube slides, shotgun slides, a wave pool, and a 20,000 square foot activity pool. Park amenities include free innertubes, lounge chairs, and lifejackets, a raft ride slide where six

people go at a time, a public picnic area outside the park, lots of parking, lockers to rent, a first aid station, arcade, souvenir boutique, ATM, and changing rooms with shower facilities.



**Las Positas College**  
**International Student Program**  
3033 Collier Canyon Road  
Livermore, CA 9455

Cindy Balero,  
International Student Program Coordinator  
925-424-1548  
[cbalero@laspositascollege.edu](mailto:cbalero@laspositascollege.edu)

International Student Program  
Building # 1500, Room # 1502  
Office Hours: M-Th 9:00 – 4:00  
Friday 9:00 – 1:00

Sean Day  
International Admissions Specialist  
925-424-1540  
[sday@laspositascollege.edu](mailto:sday@laspositascollege.edu)

