



ISP News



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March, 2009

Dear Students,

We hope you are enjoying your classes and having a wonderful semester so far. The International Student Program (ISP) maintained its record enrollment of 112 students from 43 countries. The countries represented are as follows:

- South Korea - **33**
- Brazil - **10**
- China, Vietnam - **5**
- Japan - **4**
- Indonesia, Nigeria, the Philippines- **3**
- Ecuador, Ghana, Hong Kong, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Mexico, Mongolia, Peru, Taiwan (Republic of China), the United Kingdom- **2**
- Afghanistan, Australia, Burma (Myanmar) Cambodia, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Honduras, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mali, Pakistan, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Venezuela - **1**

We're honored that you've chosen to study at Las Positas College. Please visit our website at <http://www.laspositascollege.edu/international> and click on the "Photo Gallery" tab as we have some photos from our Spring 2009 New International Student Orientation in January. We hope that you find this newsletter informative and helpful. As always, the ISP welcomes your feedback, questions, and story ideas.

Daylight Saving Time

Sunday, March 8

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 7. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission also encourages you to check your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and replace their batteries while changing your clocks.



St. Patrick's Day—Tuesday, 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 14 and Sunday March 15

The 26th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade sponsored by The Lion's Club, begins the festivities on Saturday, March 14 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. Visit the website <http://www.dublinstpats.com/> for more information.

Wheels Bus Fee Increase and Service Reductions to Route

Effective March 22, 2009, the Wheels Bus fare will increase from \$1.75 to \$2.00 for adults. The FareBusters (10 ride tickets) will increase from \$14 to \$16, and the Monthly SuperSaver pass (unlimited rides) will increase from \$53 to \$60.



Additionally, there will be a complete new schedule for the Route #12 bus that serves Las Positas College. According to the “Wheels Press Release” while the total number of daily trips will remain approximately the same, some trips will have different arrival and departure times relative to the previous schedule. Passengers should carefully consult the new schedule and plan their future itineraries accordingly. The approximate service span (beginning and ending of service) on the line will not change and there are no changes to the weekend service.”

The route map and schedule are being finalized and will be available soon on the website <http://www.wheelsbus.com>.

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 Mr. Gilberto Victoria 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 17.** 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) should begin the application procedure in March in order to work as soon as they graduate.



Last Day to Withdraw with a "W" - April 10



Please be advised that International students may NOT drop a class with a "W" (Withdrawal) 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.

Got your SEP?

Students are reminded that they should have Student Educational Plan (SEP) on file. This is an important plan to meet your degree, college or university transfer or career requirements. It is also a requirement of your admission to the college according to the International Student Agreement you signed as part of your application. If you haven't completed your SEP or need to update it with a change of your program or major, please see Mr. Gilberto Victoria in the Counseling Office in Building #700.

Tax Information

The United States tax system requires every nonimmigrant present in the U.S. in 2008 (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 (\$3,500 for 2008) 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 \$3,500, 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 2008 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 2008, the last day to meet your federal and California state tax obligations is **April 15, 2009**.

If you did not earn any income in the U.S. in 2008 or for spouses and dependents/children, your deadline for filing a federal Form 8843 is **June 15, 2009**.



Tax Assistance

The ISP Staff are neither qualified nor for legal reasons, 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.



A special Foreign Students and Scholars site is available on the IRS website at: <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=96431,00.html>

Also, the University of Texas at Austin has a helpful website with frequently asked questions at <http://www.utexas.edu/international/taxes/>

In addition, the Office of International Programs at San Francisco State University (SFSU) has scheduled Tax Information Workshops for International Students on:

Thursday, March 5 at 2:00 pm
Wednesday, March 18 at 11:30 am
Monday, April 6 at 10:00 am

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 to <http://www.sfsu.edu/~oip/flstudent/index.html> or by calling the SFSU Office of International Programs office at 1-415-338-1293. 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 (IRS) website at <http://www.irs.gov>

World Cultures Alliance (WCA) Club

The World Cultures Alliance (WCA) is a club that represents and promotes the diversity on our campus. Please join our club by e-mailing President Stephanie Issa at wcalpc@hotmail.com to find more about the club and our fun and educational activities planned for this semester.

The WCA Club meets every Monday from 3:30 - 4:00 pm in the Library, Room #2014.

Early Music Concert Series

Saturday, March 14 @ 7:30 pm
Las Positas College Library (Building #2000)

Sex Chordae

\$5 Admission for LPC Students

Enjoy music for voice and viols from late renaissance England by Willam Byrd, John Dowland, Orlando Gibbons, and Mathew Locke.



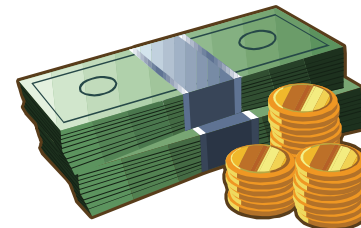
Each concert begins with a short pre-concert talk and concludes with a reception where the audience can meet the performers and ask questions about the concert. Enhance your concert going experience with historical information about the music, the performers, and the instruments by attending a class offered on Thursday, March 12 from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm in Room 712.

The cost of the class is \$5.00

For more information, please visit the website at <http://www.lpcearlymusic.org/> or call 925-424-1467

Scholarships Available

There are numerous scholarships available through the Annual LPC Scholarship and Awards Program . To apply, applicants must have completed at least 12 units with good academic standing at LPC **PRIOR** to this current Spring term (sorry new students) and be currently enrolled at LPC. International students **DO** qualify for all the scholarships except those that are (financial) need-based. We had several International students who were awarded scholarships last year.



There is no limit to the number of scholarships that an individual may be awarded so do apply for **ALL** scholarships for which you qualify.

Applicants will need to complete the Scholarship Application Form, write a Personal Statement, and provide a current LPC transcript. Some scholarships also require a letter of recommendation from an instructor.

Please visit the Financial Aid website at for a list of LPC Scholarships, Forms and instructions at <http://www.laspositascollege.edu/financialaid/2008lpcscholarships.php>

The Deadline to submit your application is **Monday, March 16, 2009 at 6:00 pm in the Financial Aid Office**, in Building #1500.

Good luck!

Friday the 13th

March 13 falls on a Friday, making this day a “Friday the 13th”. A Friday occurring on the 13th day of any month is considered to be a day of bad luck in many traditions around the world. A fear of this day is called *paraskavedekatriaphobia*. The origin of the Friday the 13th superstition has been linked to the fact that there were 13 people at The Last Supper of Jesus, who was betrayed and crucified on Good Friday. Strangely, there is evidence to suggest that Friday the 13th is actually unlucky for some. Psychologists have found that some people are especially likely to have accidents or fall ill on Friday the 13th. This has been attributed to such people feeling a heightened state of anxiety on this day.



March Birthdays

Cheoljae Lee - March 1
 Lyazzat Galimova - March 2
 Xilei Yan - March 6
 Victoria Budiman - March 9
 Najeeya Salman - March 14
 Marcia Tafarel- March 15
 Yoon Kyung Bae (Maki) - March 19
 Dina Ra - March 19
 Manpreet Kaur - March 22
 Young Jung Choi - March 30
 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.



3033 Collier Canyon Road
Livermore, CA 94551

International Student Program
Building # 1500
Room # 1502
Office Hours: M-Th 9:00—4:00
F 9:00—1:00



ISP is on Facebook

We have created a International Student Program group on Facebook, a social network site that is very popular among college students in the U.S. and throughout the world. On our facebook page, you can meet and keep in contact with your fellow International students. It can be a wonderful resource to ask other students about courses, housing and activities. Facebook is free to join. If you're not already a member, you can sign up at www.facebook.com. To join our International Student page, first log in and then go to "Home". Then you will see "Groups" under "Applications" on the right. Click "Groups" and then type in "Las Positas College International Students" in the "Search for Groups" box. Then press enter on your keypad and when you see our group, simply click on "Join Group" on the left. If you have any questions or difficulties finding our group site, please let us know. See you on facebook!

Contact Us

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