Boise State International Insider
News for International Students
March 15, 2012
International Student Services

Coming Events & Activities

Every Wednesday, 3:30 - 5:00pm - Coffee & Conversation in the Student Diversity Center. Free refreshments!

Every Thursday, 6:00 to 7:00pm - T.E.A. Time (Thursday English Afternoons). Join us in the Writing Center (LA200) to practice your English skills.

Every Friday, noon to 1:00pm - Wisdom Café in the Student Diversity Center. (See below for details)

March 16th, 2:00 to 5:00pm - Party in the Student Diversity Center in honor of Cesar Chavez

March 17th, 6:00pm - International Food, Song & Dance Festival

Student Spotlight
By: Cindy Fernandez

Thamer Alammar is an international student from Saudi Arabia. He is majoring in Finance. Thamer decided to come to Boise State because he wanted to have a degree from the United States. His favorite thing about Boise is all the nice and easy going people. Some of Thamer’s hobbies are playing soccer and going camping. Some things that he misses the most from Saudi Arabia are his family, the food and the warm weather. Thamer speaks Arabic and he has also visited the United Kingdom, Switzerland, France, Lebanon, UAE, Syria and Egypt. Something that not many people know about Thamer is that he really likes to help and give back to the community.

Volunteers needed for the International Food, Song and Dance Festival Saturday, March 17, 2012.

As the purpose of this event is to promote a multicultural international fostering environment for BSU students and Boise residents, ISA would like to extend an invitation to all students to be a part of this awesome event. The festival will feature an exhibit where clubs and ethnic groups present their unique cultures (5:00-5:55pm) and a dinner where international students, volunteers, clubs and ethnic groups serve international cuisine and entertainment, including singing, dancing, fashion show, talent show, acting, etc. (6:00-8:30pm).

We are looking for volunteers who have had first-hand experience with international cultures and would like to present their fantastic knowledge and experience, via posters, presentations, personal stories, etc. at the festival. Volunteers needed for other tasks too.

Add your name to our volunteer sign-up sheet by emailing Danh Nguyen, Festival Coordinator, at DanhNguyen@u.boisestate.edu

SPRING BREAK PLANS?
ISS is planning two Spring Break Day Trips for you. If you are planning to be in Boise during Spring Break and you are looking for something to do, consider joining ISS for some day trips.

One trip will take you to Donnelly, ID for a dip in Gold Fork Hot Springs. http://goldforkhotsprings.com/
The second trip will include a meal, a hike, and a visit to the historic town of Idaho City. Idaho City was once a booming gold mining town and was the state capitol of Idaho.

REMINDER: If you plan to leave the US during Spring Break, and if it has been at least 6 months since we last signed your I20, please get your I20 signed before your trip. Drop it off at ISS and we will have it ready for you within 48 hours. Do not wait for the last minute! If we signed your I20 for the winter break, you do not need it to be signed again at this time.
A note from Christy:
About Coffee and Conversation
International Student Services initiated the Coffee and Conversation weekly gathering last year to encourage student to student interaction, service and support. As many of you know, the event has been amazingly successful, and we think that is wonderful! One result of the growth is that our food items are quickly running out. We want everyone to come, to engage in conversation across borders, and to enjoy a snack. However, our budget is stretched, so we need your help. In the spirit of International Student Services’ commitment to students serving students, we want to offer you a second way to participate. We invite you to occasionally contribute a snack item we can make available to everyone present. You are always welcome to come, regardless of whether or not you bring a snack to share. Thank you for your willingness to help us grow our goal of students serving students across borders at Boise State University.

Staff Spotlight
By: Sindy Chiu

Merrilou Burris, Management Assistant of International Student Services (ISS)
Merrilou is one of ISS team members who is happy to assist international students in any way she can. She was born and raised in the Seattle area of Washington State. She had loving parents, two older sisters and a younger brother her family adopted when she was four years old. Her brother came to her family from South Korea. All the time she was growing up her parents took in foster babies. They kept them from when they were born until they were adopted. Over the years they had more than 60 babies in their home. It was so much fun for them! She went to a small college, got married, put her husband through graduate school and had a baby. In 1981, she moved with her 3 year old daughter back to Seattle from St. Louis, Missouri. It was just the two of them from then on. Now, she shares a house in Nampa with her daughter, her son in law and two granddaughters. Her family is her joy. She started working at Boise State University in January, 2009.
The greatest achievement to date is raising her daughter to be a good person, good wife and good mother. She faced challenges such as financial and emotional issues that come with being a single mother. Her faith and her family were the most helpful things through that challenging time. Merrilou considers that life itself is the best motivation. She aims to do better each day. Merrilou says that “it is good to know that we have the opportunity to improve ourselves and make choices we can be proud of.” Her great passion with helping Boise State international students is a strong motivation for her. She states she is enjoying the experience of working with international students and, hopefully, making a positive difference in students’ experiences at Boise State.

IT’S SCHOLARSHIP TIME!!!! Continuing International Student Scholarships

Continuing International Student Scholarships waive the entire non-resident portion of tuition and fees for continuing international students for up to one academic year. To be considered you must meet the following qualifications:

- You must have successfully completed (by the end of the current semester) one year (two semesters and a minimum of 24 credits) of full-time coursework at Boise State University. Courses that are repeated within the same academic year do not count towards meeting the credit completion requirement.
- You must be on an F-1 student visa.
- You must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher.
- You must be making satisfactory academic progress toward a degree at Boise State.
- Recipients cannot major in over enrolled programs; these currently include nursing, pre-nursing, radiologic sciences or pre-radiologic sciences. Programs are subject to change.
- Self-supported online programs are also closed to nonresident tuition waiver eligibility.
- You must not have already been awarded a tuition fee waiver for the 2012-13 academic year.

Deadline to submit the Continuing International Student Tuition Waiver Scholarship Application is April 15th, 2012.

A PARTY IN THE STUDENT DIVERSITY CENTER THIS FRIDAY!
Join us in the Student Diversity Center tomorrow Friday March 16, 2-5pm to celebrate Human Rights and Labor Activist Cesar E. Chavez. There will be birthday cake, karaoke and games to find out more about the life of this amazing man.
IT IS TAX TIME! You can get FREE assistance filing your tax refund forms by visiting VITA at 2717 S. Vista Avenue, Boise, ID 83705.

They are open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2 - 8pm, and Saturday, 10am - 4pm. I was told that international students should come on Thursdays between 3 and 8 PM. A nice guy named John helps international students prepare tax forms. He is only there on Thursdays.

When you go to VITA, bring your passport (with the I-94), social security card, the W-2 and the 1042-S (the 1042-S is available on the GLACIER online; you recently received an email about it. It can be downloaded as a pdf. Print it and take it with you). Bring your bank routing number and account number for the direct deposit of the refund.

The offices are located in the back side of the building (a brown colored apartment complex). Come in from the right-hand entrance, where the parking lot is situated. VITA is on the ground floor, and there is a big sign that says Free Tax Preparation. You can take bus route (Valley Ride) # 3 to get there, and get off at the Vista and Canal bus stop.

ISS is looking for other resources to refer you to. Watch the newsletter for updates. Some of the on-line programs have been helpful to students in the past. Be careful when visiting local tax preparation businesses that charge a fee. Be sure they are well informed on preparing tax form for international students. Please let us know if you have any questions, but please be aware that ISS is unable to provide tax preparation assistance.

Volunteering Opportunities

There are two International Economic Summits coming up in the valley with some great opportunities for volunteers! First, there is a very large Summit on April 24 with over 500 students at Taco Bell Arena. For this event, a group to pick up a large take-out order of lunches from the campus Subway and transport it across campus to TB arena and sell the lunches to the students is needed. Availability needed from approx 10:00 to 1:00pm. There is also need for a group to organize and count game materials as they come back during the game - Availability needed from approx. 9:30 am to 1:30. Or, if a group has an interest in photography/videography, we would love to have several people taking photos and video during the day. If people are available for the whole day (8 - 3) there are a few openings for bankers, scorekeepers and quiz monitors. Our second area summit is May 2 at the Meridian School District Office #2 - approx. Locust Grove and I-84. We have more openings for bankers and scorekeepers for this summit - Availability needed from 8 - 3. If someone is only available part of the day, we can certainly find a job for them! We’d LOVE to have you join us for a fast-paced, energy-packed day! For more information contact: Linda Gault, Operations Manager (208-426-1193) / lindagault@boisestate.edu

The Student Diversity Center’s ~Wisdom Café~

Where: noon to one pm…Fridays. Where: The Student Diversity Center.

What: Exploring wisdom passages and spiritual identity development from multiple world views.

Why: A chance to clear the path...to open the self to the spiritual frontier...

This Friday: What is the spiritual quest?
PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN EVENING WITH

NARAYANAN KRISHNAN
ONE OF CNN’S TOP TEN HEROES OF 2010

PRESENTED BY
MICHAEL T. BISHOP & CHERYL MONDECH-POTTS
IN CONJUNCTION WITH
BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY’S
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

SUNDAY, MARCH 25, 2012
4:00 PM - 5:30 PM
BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY
HATCH BALLROOM

GENERAL ADMISSION - FREE
DONATIONS ACCEPTED WITH 100% GOING TO AKSHAYA TRUST

JOIN US AFTER THE EVENT FOR A FUNDRAISING DINNER WITH MR. KRISHNAN AT THE TAJ MAHAL RESTAURANT
$50 PER PERSON TO SUSTAIN AKSHAYA TRUST
INCLUSIVE DINNER, BEVERAGES & GRATUITY ARE INCLUSIVE

LIMITED SEATING
PLEASE RSVP FOR THE EVENT AND/OR DINNER
TO RSVP OR FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE GO TO: WWW.MICHAELBISHOP.COM

"MY LIFE IS MY MESSAGE"
MAHATMA GANDHI

Let me tell you why you are here...you're here because you know something...what you know you can't explain but you feel it...Do you know what I'm talking about?

The World Cup of Tea Friendship Program?

Do you want to know...what...it ...is?
Want to know about ISA's upcoming exciting events? Like Us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/groups/296006713790803/ or email ISA at intlstudentsbsu@gmail.com