

DVC International Student Admissions and Services
Newsletter
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SEVIS (Student Exchange Visitor Information System)

SEVIS— A reminder to all F-1 international students. SEVIS is now installed in all U.S. colleges and universities. The schools' Designated School Officials (DSOs, Gloria or Gena) must report students' enrollment, change of address, change of major, extensions, completion date, Curricular Practical Training (CPT) or Optional Practical Training (OPT) to the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (USICE) through this electronic tracking and reporting system. **This information is required by the Department of Homeland Security. Please remember to keep the ISAS office informed of changes.**

SEVIS will allow USICE/USCIS to immediately know and deal with F-1 international students who fall out of status. Students need to keep the ISAS office informed of any changes **before** they happen.

FULL-TIME STATUS – All F-1 students are required to maintain full-time status while studying at Diablo Valley College. A minimum of 12 units/credits must be taken each semester. The student GPA should not be below 2.0. Students **must talk** to a DSO **BEFORE** dropping below 12 units to make sure that they have an acceptable reason for being below the full-time equivalent.

Transferring Students—Students transferring from Diablo Valley College must complete an exit interview before leaving DVC. **Bring in the transfer school acceptance letter so we can transfer you through SEVIS to your new school. If you leave the U.S. for the summer break you need to re-enter with the new transfer school I-20.**

REMEMBER YOU WILL NOT GET A NEW I-20 FROM YOUR TRANSFER SCHOOL UNTIL WE TRANSFER YOU TO THE NEW SCHOOL.

PIZZA PARTY



Pizza Party—A reminder to transferring students and fellow F-1 DVC students the yearly pizza party is scheduled for May 3, starting at 2pm – 4pm at the Round Table Pizza at Diablo Valley Plaza. Come and help us celebrate the end of the semester and say good-bye to the transfer students. **WE PAY FOR THE FOOD! Transfer students going to four year colleges bring in your transfer letters and get a gift!**

ISAS REMINDERS

ADDRESS CHANGES OR CORRECTIONS: -

It is required by the USICE regulations that when an F-1 international student moves he or she needs to inform the DSO within 10 days of the change of address.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MEDICAL INSURANCE



Medical insurance ID cards (Express Script) have been mailed to all new students. All continuing students can continue to use the card that they received in the fall 2003 semester. If you have not received a medical ID card email Gena at ggruber@dvc.edu with the following information: Name, ID number, and address. She will request a new medical ID card be sent to your home. The 2004 spring/summer period of medical insurance coverage is 1/7/04 to 8/10/04.

The medical insurance rates for next fall 2004 semester are \$255.00 and spring/summer 2005 semester are \$354.00. The fall fee will be automatically deducted from your registration fees upon registration. The new fall 2004/spring/summer 2005 brochures can be picked up at the ISAS office next semester. It is important to make sure the claims forms are filed and mailed to the claims administrator within 90 days of the claim or the bills will NOT get paid. .

Remember to come to the ISAS with proof of insurance to get your waiver for the fall 2004 semester. After you receive the waiver form take it to the Cashier's office to receive a credit/refund for the fall 2004 semester.

The deadline for proof of insurance waivers is **September 20, 2004**. **All students who have proof of insurance must come into the ISAS office before the deadline for their waiver—no waivers will be given out after the deadline.**



CAMPUS EMPLOYMENT – **In status** F-1 students can work on campus for 20 hours a week during the semester. During vacation periods, i.e., summer or winter break, students can work more than 20 hours per week. The Educational Talent Search is looking for Math Tutors for the summer. If you are interested please come to the ISAS for information.

Off-Campus Work Eligibility— For information on off-campus work eligibility please see the student handbook available for pick-up by all F1 international students at the ISAS office and online at <http://www.dvc.edu/isas/handbook.htm>.



Travel—For students who will be traveling outside of the U.S. for the summer please remember to have all your required documents readily available and up-to-date to allow for re-entry in F-1 status.

1. A current SEVIS 1-20 signed on page 3 for travel by a DSO (Gloria Zarabozo or Gena Gruber).
2. A valid passport.
3. A valid F-1 visa
4. A recent financial statement
5. A DVC school transcript.

SOCIAL SECURITY CARD – A student who needs a Social Security card for on-campus employment purposes can come into the ISAS office to fill out a form signed by the DSO. The student can then take the signed form to the Social Security Office with the required documents, (passport, Visa, I-20, I-94, letter of employment) to apply for a card.

Note: Students will need to provide a letter of employment from their campus supervisor to the Social Security Officer to prove they are employed or have an employment offer from DVC.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CLUB

The international student club has been very busy this semester. They meet every other Thursday at the Student Club Room in the Associated Student Building at 3:30p.m. Some of the activities that the members did this semester included playing soccer, bowling, and participating in the march against the fee increase in Sacramento. Everyone is invited to join and participate in the club's activities.

The students from the International Student Club will host a “Globalization – Are we Losing our Jobs in the U.S.A.?” forum on, **Thursday, 5/6/04 starting at 1:00 in the BFL Community Conference Room.** Some of the guest speakers include: Ms. Maria Giuli a DVC Economics Instructor, Andy Barlow, a Social Science Instructor, the author of “Between Fear and Hope: Globalization and Race in the United States,” and Aneesh Aneesh from Stanford University.

We are very excited about hosting such an important event at Diablo Valley College and hope all international students can attend to show their support.

Wanted: Students interested in running for office for the International Student Club for the fall/spring semesters. We will be needing officers for the following positions—President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Inter-Club Council Representative, Activities Coordinator. The position requires the elected officers to continue the commitment of the club to maintain a strong presence on the campus. Reward: The satisfaction of helping to build a wonderful resource for international students, experience in student government, great recommendation letter from ISAS office, lots of new friends from different cultures, and a wonderful experience and field trips throughout the semester.

Further information on election dates and meeting dates will follow next semester!

The Islands of the Bahamas – “It just keeps getting better!”

Renell Clarke
International Student
2002-2004

Hello everyone! My name is Renell and I am an international student here at DVC, majoring in Business Management, with the hopes of opening a major hotel in my country. I am from the islands of the Bahamas and I am the only one here from my country. I just want to share with you a brief synopsis about the beautiful islands I grew up on.

The history of the Bahamas begins back when Columbus thought he had discovered the East Indies, but really landed on San Salvador (called Guanahani by the Lucayan Indians) in 1492. He was greeted by the “Lukku-Cairi” or the island people. They were originally from South America and migrated through the Caribbean and settled in the Bahamas around the Ninth Century AD. Over the years up until the time of our independence from the British, our islands have seen the likes of many peoples ranging from Royalty such as the Kings and Queens to infamous pirates such as Blackbeard, Henry Morgan and Anne Bonney. There were also settlers from the Americas who brought over their African slaves to start a new life on our beautiful and fertile land. After gaining our independence on July 10th, 1973, we were officially recognized as a nation within the Commonwealth of Nations.

The Bahamas is a 100,000 square mile archipelago (chain of islands) consisting of 700 islands, reefs and cays, which stretch over 500 miles of the clearest waters in the world. Visitors from all over the world come to our shores to experience our sun, sand, and sea. There are seventeen major islands which offer a wide variety of the “island experience”. Each island has something unique to offer its visitors. Islands such as Exuma, which is the sailing capital of the Bahamas, Abaco, which is the boat building capital of the Bahamas, may be interesting to those who enjoy sailing, scuba diving and fishing. If you are the more adventurous type you may want to explore the island of Inagua, which is also known as the “Great Outback” or “the Wild West” of the Bahamas. There you can find wild animal such as wild cows, boars, and donkeys, which the natives pursue for food and sport. Also on this island you can find iguanas, which the islands name is an anagram for.

For those who just want to relax, enjoy the beaches and maybe take scenic tours, you may want to check out islands such as, Long Island, which is famous for their scenic hideaways, San Salvador, the land of lakes, which is famous for their miles of secluded beaches and the clearest waters for diving. Other islands that are quiet and laid back are Acklins Island, Crooked Island, and Mayaguana, which has some of the friendliest people in all of the islands. Eleuthra, which is called "Freedom Island", is home to miles of pink and white sand beaches, serene colonial villages, and acres of pineapple plantations. For those that want the island but like the fast pace and night life Grand Bahama Island and Nassau, which is the capital island, are the islands of choice. These are the most popular destinations for spring breakers and most cruise liners.

Nassau is also home to the famous Atlantis Resort and Casino, where you can gamble in the exquisite casino, dance the night away in the clubs or dine at five star restaurants. You name it we've got it. So when you are planning your next summer, winter, spring break vacation, or even if you just need to get away for a while, remember it's better in the Bahamas.

35 Unique Facts About The Islands Of The Bahamas

1. The Bahamas comes from the Spanish words "baja mar" meaning shallow sea, and is an archipelago of over 700 islands stretching over 100,000 square miles in the Western Atlantic Ocean.
2. The first English settlers of Eleuthera shipped Braselitto wood to Boston as a thank you for the support given by the people of Massachusetts. The proceeds from the sale of this precious wood went to purchase the land for Harvard College, which eventually became Harvard University.
3. Charles Town on New Providence Island was burnt to the ground by the Spanish in 1684, but later rebuilt and renamed Nassau in 1695 to honor King William III (formerly Prince of Orange-Nassau).
4. The Bahamas House of Assembly first officially convened in 1729.
5. The Bahamas does not have an army.
6. The Bahamas has the world's third longest barrier reef.
7. 5% of the world's coral can be found in the waters of The Bahamas.
8. The Islands of the Bahamas are made entirely of calcium carbonate, which is mainly produced or precipitated by the organisms of coral reefs.
9. The Lucayan National Park on Grand Bahama Island is the site of the world's longest known underwater cave and cavern system.
10. The Bahamas has the clearest waters in the world with visibility of over 200 feet (61 meters). It has been scientifically proven that a specific alga, which requires light to live, is found deeper in The Bahamas than anywhere else on earth.
11. Andros (2,300 square miles) is the fifth largest island in the Caribbean, but only has a population of 8,000 people.
12. Mount Alvernia on Cat Island at 206 ft (63 meters) is the highest point in The Bahamas.
13. 109 species of birds breed in the Islands of the Bahamas.
14. The world's first land-and-sea park was established in the Exuma Cays in 1958.
15. There are 120 species of plants found only in The Bahamas.

16. Inagua is a birdwatcher's paradise with the world's largest breeding colony of West Indian flamingos (over 60,000).
17. Several species of whales and dolphins, including blue and humpback whales and spotted dolphin are found in the waters of The Bahamas.
18. Main exports are pharmaceuticals, cement, rum, crawfish (spiny lobster) and refined petroleum products.
19. Tourism generates 50% of the total GDP and directly/indirectly employs half of the total workforce.
20. Junkanoo (which has been compared to Carnival in Rio and Mardi Gras in New Orleans) is a colorful and uniquely Bahamian parade held on Boxing Day and New Year's Day.
21. A native of Nassau is called a Nassuvian.
22. The Bahamas has a population of 305,000. 70% of the people live on New Providence Island (home of the capital city Nassau), which is only the eleventh largest island in The Bahamas.
23. HE Sir Sidney Poitier (1963 Oscar winner for Best Actor in Lilies of the Field) is Ambassador for The Bahamas to Japan. Sir Sidney was born in Miami, but is of Bahamian parentage and grew up in The Bahamas.
24. Bahamian tennis player Mark Knowles along with Daniel Nestor (Canadian) won the Men's Doubles Championship at the 2002 Australian Open.
25. Feature films using Bahamian locations include The Outsider, Silence of the Lambs, Cocoon I & II, Flipper, Thunderball, Splash, Never Say Never Again, Zeus and Roxanne, Jaws the Revenge and Speed 2.
26. From 1940-1945, HRH The Duke of Windsor was Royal Governor of The Bahamas.
27. Eleuthera has been a romantic hideaway for the British Royal Family for many years. This 110 mile long island is where HRH Prince Charles and the late Princess Diana spent a holiday in 1982 and where Prince Edward proposed to Sophie in 1999.
28. Cascarilla bark grown in a few Out Islands is used to flavor Campari and Vermouth.
29. There is no income or corporate tax and no capital gains or inheritance tax in The Bahamas.
30. In The Bahamas we drive on the left, but most vehicles are left-hand drive.
31. The Graycliff Restaurant is a five star restaurant situated in a 250 year old mansion in Nassau. It has one of the largest wine cellars in the Western Hemisphere with over 200,000 bottles of the world's finest vintages and also has its own cigar factory.
32. The ratio of flamingos to people on Great Inagua is 61:1.
33. The Nassau Public Library (an octagonal building) was originally a jail.
34. Some unusual island names are Ragged Island, Crooked Island, Rum Cay, Conception Island, Exuma, Big Farmer's Cay and Great Sayle Cay.
35. Paradise Island was originally called Hogg Island.

For more information about the Bahamas visit us at <http://www.bahamas.com>