

International Student Newsletter



Play Ball!

The American Major League Baseball season opens this month on March 25th. Though baseball has long been considered "Americas National Pastime", it is a truly global game. Players from 16 different countries play for American teams. About 30% of all professional baseball players in the U.S. are from other countries. Most players come from Latin America, but baseball continues to gain popularity around the world. This year, the Los Angeles Dodgers and the San Diego Padres will play two exhibition games in China on March 15 & 16. The event will be hosted by the China Baseball Association, and will be played at the Wukesong Baseball Field in Beijing. In August, this park will host the 2008 Summer Olympic Games. On March 25th, the Boston Red Sox and the Oakland Athletics will open their season for a two game series at the Tokyo Dome in Japan. Enjoy the season!

Source: www.mlb.com;

Student Club News

The Asian Pacific Islanders Association meets every Wednesday, from 3-4pm in Room 1597, Emeritus Hall, Santa Rosa campus. For more information, contact Tran Phan at 227-5048.

March Calendar

March 3	Doyle Scholarship Deadline
March 7	Trussell Scholarship Deadline
March 17	Second 8-week classes begin
March 23-29	Spring Break – no classes
March 24	Midterms mailed to students



Practical Training Guidelines

Optional Practical Training (O.P.T.) is a benefit of the F-1 Student Visa status that allows students to work temporarily in the United States, usually after the completion of a degree. Students are able to gain practical work experience in their field of study. Students must have been enrolled full time for one full year before applying for OPT. There are two types of OPT work permission, and different rules apply to each category:

Pre-Completion OPT:

If you have not completed your degree or certificate, you are limited to **part time** work permission (20 hours per week). You must continue to maintain full time status (12 units) while working. Work must be directly related to your major.

Post-Completion OPT:

If you have completed your Associate degree, you are eligible for 12 months of **full time** work permission (40 hours per week). Work must be directly related to your major. You are not required to enroll in classes during this time.

You must apply to the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (US CIS) for OPT permission. If your request is approved, you will receive an Employment Authorization Document, or **EAD** card. You are not allowed to begin working until the start date listed on the card and must stop working by the end date on the card. You must apply for O.P.T. before the program end date on your I-20 form. US CIS advises students not to leave the country while a request for work permission is being processed. Travel is possible once you have received your receipt notice or EAD card. Current processing times for Practical Training applications are 3-5 months. **Any student wishing to begin working this Summer should apply now.**

Sujan Sarkar, SRJC Instructor

The newsletter has profiled many international students over the years. We thought it would be interesting to hear from one of our own SRJC instructors, who also experienced life in the U.S. as an international student. Sujan teaches in the Computer & Information Sciences Department.

Sujan was born in Calcutta, India. Calcutta (also known as Kolkata) is a very large city on the east coast of India. Dominique Lapierre in "City of Joy" provides a good perspective on life in this great city.

India has a great diversity of people, and in daily life you commonly hear many languages spoken and observe many different religious and cultural practices. Hindi is the national language, but English is commonly spoken as well. Sujan attended La Martiniere for Boys (a high school founded by the French) and had instruction in English, Hindi and Bengali. His mother was from Bombay, and also spoke Marathi at home, so Sujan was familiar with many languages from a young age. His mother was a school teacher and later a principal of Welland & Goldsmith School (an all girls school founded by two Reverend's from England). His father is still a practicing Christian minister in India. When Sujan's father was younger, his family was closely associated with American missionaries working in India. These missionaries made regular trips to India and other countries to minister to the people and do public service work.

Sujan attended St Xaviers College (run by Catholic fathers) in Calcutta, India and had completed the Bachelor of Commerce degree examination administered by Calcutta University. While a student, he accompanied his father on a visit to the United States. At that time, they were reunited with some American families that had visited Sujan's family in India a few years before during a mission outreach. The American family wanted to return the kindness that Sujan's family had shown their children, and offered to sponsor Sujan to come to the U.S. and attend college. He lived with this family and attended Azusa Pacific University in Southern California. After the first two years of help from his sponsors, he was able to earn his own way with scholarships, on campus work and graduated with a Bachelor's of Science degree. Sujan thoroughly enjoyed his time at Azusa Pacific

and considers it a "true college experience". He lived in the dormitory, joined the Track & Field team, the Men's Chorale group, and was very involved with the campus-wide international student programs. He had to quickly learn to survive in America. When he was growing up in India, his only information about America came from the visiting missionaries. When he actually arrived here, it was very different than he had pictured it. He remembers well his first trip to a McDonald's Restaurant with his new college friends. He didn't know what kind of food they served, how he should order, or even how to pay the proper amount in American money. It was all so new and different.

Eventually Sujan went on to earn an MBA degree and began work on a Doctorate of Business Administration at United States International University, San Diego. During an immigration amnesty in the 1980's, he was able to apply for and receive a "green card", giving him legal permanent residence in the U.S. He eventually began teaching, and met his wife while teaching at El Dorado College in Southern California.

Sujan and his wife live in a quiet "semi-rural" neighborhood and are home schooling their two sons. He feels very fortunate to have had so many wonderful experiences in his life thus far, and believes that it was his destiny to end up here. His parents taught him to live a "simple and honest" life and to help others. He believes that teaching is a profession that lets him do that. He encourages all his students to welcome opportunity in their lives. One door may close, but another may open, leading you on a path you might never have expected.



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