

International Student Newsletter



Congratulations!

Our congratulations to SRJC's Michelle Gachet of Ecuador for her recent accomplishment. Michelle is a Journalism major, and worked at SRJC's Oak Leaf newspaper last semester. During that time, she and another student wrote a series of articles about Sarah Baker, a young woman who was severely injured in an accident in October 2007. The Oakleaf editor submitted these stories for consideration in the 2008 Norcal Conference Journalism Association of Community Colleges, a competition of community college journalism students. Michelle's series of stories was selected as the winner in the Enterprise story/series category. Michelle is transferring to San Jose State College next semester, and plans a career in print journalism. Her latest article can be found in the November 17 issue of the Oak Leaf, or online at: www.theoakleafonline.com We wish Michelle a happy and successful future!



December / January Calendar

December 15-19	Finals Week
Dec 20-Jan 11	Winter Break
Dec 25-Jan 4	Campus closed
January 5	Fall grades available
January 12	Spring 2009 classes begin
January 19	MLK Holiday- no classes

Traveling Over the Break?

If you are planning to leave the U.S. over the semester break, you must get your SEVIS I-20 form signed before you leave. Without this signature, US CIS officials at the port of entry may prevent you from reentering the country, or may give you permission for only a 30-day stay. We encourage you to visit our office *before* finals begin on December 15th to obtain the required signature. SRJC will close for the Winter Break on December 25th and will not reopen until January 5, 2009. You need a valid passport, visa, and signed I-20 form to reenter the U.S. If your passport or visa has expired, or will expire by the time you travel, you will need to renew it before returning to the United States. Check with your consulate or embassy to find out processing times and procedures. Visit the Department of State's website link at: http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/wait/tempvisitors_wait.php for more information on visa wait times, or Immigration & Customs Enforcement website at: http://www.ice.gov/sevis/travel/faq_f.htm for travel tips. You should be prepared to show the consulate officers your I-20 form, official transcripts from SRJC, and current financial documentation. Please contact our office if you have questions.



Scholarship Update

Contact the Scholarship Office at 527-4740 to learn about scholarships that will be available to students for the Spring 2009 semester. You can visit their office in Plover Hall, Santa Rosa campus, or Richard Call Hall, Petaluma campus. You can also visit their website at: www.santarosa.edu/scholarship.



Holiday Events

Holiday Tree Lighting

December 5, 2008, 6pm

Santa Rosa's Ice Arena will be transformed into a winter wonderland, and Snoopy will be there too! Redwood Empire Ice Arena, West Steele Lane, Santa Rosa

www.snoopyshomeice.com/

Luther Burbank Home & Gardens

Annual Holiday Open House

December 6 & 7, 10am to 4pm

Visit the Historic home and gardens of Sonoma County's famous horticulturist. During his career, Burbank introduced more than 800 new varieties of plants -- including over 200 varieties of fruits, many vegetables, nuts and grains, and hundreds of ornamental flowers.

www.parks.sonoma.net/burbank.html

Holiday Ice Skating in San Francisco

Through January 4th

Celebrate the holiday season at the outdoor ice skating rinks at Embarcadero Center and Union Square in San Francisco.

www.embarcaderocenter.com/ec/attractions/

www.unionsquareicerink.com/

Reindeer Romp & Ice Skating

Every weekend through January 1, 2009

Come to the zoo and see Santa's reindeer. Everyone will delight in taking to the ice amid holiday music and twinkling lights.

San Francisco Zoo, San Francisco

www.sfzoo.org

*We wish you a joyous holiday season and best wishes for a Happy New Year!
The newsletter will return in February 2009.*

Expansion of the Visa Waiver Program

The Visa Waiver Program allows nationals of certain countries to travel to the United States for tourism or business for stays of 90 days or less without obtaining a visa. In order to be admitted to the program, countries must have a visa denial rate of less than 10% and meet enhanced security requirements such as the sharing of counterterrorism and law enforcement information, and the issuing of biometric passports. Currently, 27 countries participate in the program. The United States recently announced that seven new countries will be admitted to the program later this year: the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and South Korea. Students who have friends or family from these countries will be able to take advantage of the new regulations soon. For more information, visit the Department of State website at: http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without_1990.html

CSU System Enrollment Cap Announced

The California State University (CSU) System has announced an enrollment cap for the first time in their history. Because of drastic budget cuts imposed by the State of California, the CSU system will be forced to turn away some qualified applicants for Fall 2009. Most universities in the system closed application admissions on November 30 of this year. If you are planning to transfer in Fall 2009, contact the CSU campus directly for more information.

The newsletter is published monthly by:
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www.santarosa.edu/international/newsletter.html