

# International Bulletin, MJC

Nov./Dec. 1999, International Student Program

Modesto Junior College, Volume 3, Issue 3

## CONVERSATION PARTNERS PROGRAM

The International Student Program is pleased to announce that Theresa Galvan, an MJC student, has joined the staff. She will be coordinating special programs for the office. Her major responsibility will be coordinating the Conversation Partners Program. In this program, American students are paired with foreign students in an effort to familiarize these students with conversational English. In the process, many friendships are formed and the American partner learns of a culture outside of the U.S. In some cases, a second language is also practiced. If you would like more information about CPP, please contact Theresa at 575-6463 or stop by our office in the Morris Building, 104C in the Counseling Center.

### International Club

*The International Club will meet in Founders Hall, Room 225, each Thursday at 3:00pm for the rest of the semester. The club is busy planning activities. Watch your mail for flyers about upcoming events. Remember, the club needs your*

*support to be successful. Dues are \$5.00 per semester. This pays for parties, a newsletter and much more. Stop by a meeting to check the club out. Elections will be in November. If you would like to take a leadership role in the club, now is the time.*

**Thanksgiving  
Family  
Friends  
Food  
Fun  
Thanks**



**November  
16**

**5:30 pm**

**Come one  
Come all**

### Thanksgiving Dinner

Once again this year, the Citizens Committee will host a delicious traditional Thanksgiving dinner for all international students and friends. The dinner be hosted at the Emmanuel Lutheran Church Social Hall on Stoddard and College Avenues. Everyone is welcome to this traditional American feast.



# An American Holiday: Thanksgiving

In the United States, a day is set aside each year as Thanksgiving Day. On this day, people give thanks with feasting and prayer for the blessings they may have received during the year. Thanksgiving is celebrated by people of all religious backgrounds. The first Thanksgiving Days were harvest festivals, or days for thanking God for plentiful crops. For this reason the holiday still takes place in the Fall. It is always the fourth Thursday of November. In the United States, Thanksgiving is usually a family day, celebrated with big dinners and joyous reunions. The day before Thanksgiving is the busiest travel day of the entire year. Almost all businesses, except for retail stores, are closed on Thanksgiving.

The menu for Thanksgiving may vary from family to family, however, there are some foods that can be found on almost all Thanksgiving tables. The foods include: turkey, bread stuffing, pumpkin pie, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, gravy and sweet potatoes.

## Helping Foreign Students Adjust to the U.S.

If you were to ask a foreign student what you could do to help him/her adjust to his/her new life in the U.S. and in the American academic system, he/she might provide the following:

1. SMILE at me.
2. Names are important. Try to pronounce my name. Your efforts will be appreciated.
3. Tell it simply.
4. Write it down, step by step.
5. Ask me: How are you? Be personal, not mechanical.
6. Talk slower, not louder.
7. Recognize me. I do not know too many people. I need to belong.
8. Be interested. It's okay to ask about my country and my family. They are important to me.
9. If I omit something on a form, I pro-

bably do not know what I am supposed to write.

10. If I look confused or lost, it is probably because I am.

11. When you speak with me, remember that I am an intelligent person. My problem is language, not intelligence.

Remember, foreign students are not only adjusting to college life, they are adjusting to a way of life very different from their own.

### **EXTENSION OF PROGRAM:**

If the completion date on your I-20 is 12/31/99 and you will not be completing your program at that time, you must seek an extension of program 30 days prior to that date or you will be considered out of status. Stop by the International Student Program for more information.

**Health Insurance:** All non-immigrant full-time students must maintain a current health insurance policy as a requirement of their registration at the college. The college's policy costs \$324 for a six month period. All other policies must be up to the standards of the college's policy. **There will be a HOLD placed on all the students' registrations that do not have coverage through the Spring Semester.** Do not be disappointed. Take care of this TODAY.

A publication of  
the International  
Student Program,  
Student Services,  
Modesto J.C.



## Volunteers Needed

# "School," "College," and "University"

*Student volunteers are needed to help with International Student Orientation the week of January 3. A training session will be held on December 17. Stop by the International Student Program to sign up. It is really fun to help the new students.*



In the United States, the word "school" describes any place where people learn. You can call a college a "school." You can even call a university a "school." You can use the word "school" for any English language institute, graduate program, or high school.

College or university follows after high school. A college in the U.S. is not a high school. College and university programs begin in the thirteenth year of school, when a student is 17 or 18 years old. A two-year college offers an Associate's Degree. A four-year college or university offers a Bachelor's Degree. Programs that offer these degrees are called "undergraduate" schools.

A "university" is a group of schools for studies after high school. At least one of these schools is one that offers a Bachelor's Degree. The other schools in a university are "graduate" schools where

students receive advanced degrees. Therefore, a university offers both the Bachelor's Degree and graduate degrees such as the Master's and Doctorate.

Students in the U.S. generally use the word college when they talk about the four year undergraduate program and the Bachelor's Degree. They say "going to college" and "a college degree" when they talk about undergraduate programs at either a college or university.

Most "colleges" are separate schools. They are not located in a university. Some colleges are part of a university and are located on the university campus. (The campus is the school buildings and surrounding area.)

When students speak of graduate programs they generally use the word "university."

*(Taken from an article in "Study in the USA")*

## OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING after Graduation

Students who expect to graduate this semester and who are in status are eligible to apply for Optional Practical Training from the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Practical Training is a one year period of authorized employment in a student's field of study. If you would like to participate in OPT you should stop by the

ISP for details. The application period is between 120 days before graduation until 60 days after graduation. If you miss the deadline, you lose your opportunity for OPT. You should remember that there is a 60 to 90 day processing time for authorization from the INS and you may not begin work until you receive your EAD (employment authorization document). The application fee for OPT is \$100.



## Travel outside the U.S.

If you plan to travel outside of the United States during the winter break, make sure you have had your I-20 signed within 12 months of the date you plan to return. If this is not the case or this is your first semester at MJC you must stop by the ISP to have your I-20 signed and dated.

Please give the office two weeks for processing time. The office will be closed between December 20 and January 3 so don't wait until it is too late. You must also have a passport valid six months into the future and a valid visa. Without these documents, you could be denied reentry.



# Calendar of Events: Nov./Dec./Jan.

**November 4,11,18, December 2,9 - International Club Meetings, 3:00**

**November 16 - Thanksgiving Dinner, CCIS, 5:30-7:00**

**December 3 - Christmas Open House, CCIS, 3:30-7:00**

**December 3 - Turn in I-20's for signature at the ISP**

**December 17 - Last Day of School (Happy Vacation)**

**December 20-January 2 - International Student Program Closed  
(Call Barbara St. Urbain at home, 478-6584 in an emergency)**

**January 3-7 - International Student Orientation, volunteers needed**

**January 10 - First Day of Spring Semester**

**January 21 - Welcome/Welcome Back Party, International Club**

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Modesto Junior College  
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**MJC**

Return Service Requested