

This newsletter is sent to all active participants in the American Immigration Council J-1 Training Program. Please review the information below and remember to always contact the Council if you have questions or concerns about your training program or non-immigrant status. If you are no longer participating in our program, please notify us. If you have a question for the Council, please do not reply to this message, but instead send your question to exchange@immcouncil.org.

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Please Report a Change in Your Address

Please be aware that the American Immigration Council is required to report any changes in your U.S. home address in the U.S. government's Student & Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) database.

We ask that you report any residential address changes to us within 7 days of your move so that we can enter the information within the government imposed deadline.

Failure to update your address could result in termination of your J-1 visa status. We are responsible for sending you a slew of important documents, such as DS-2019 forms, insurance cards and other correspondence.

Please remember to contact the Council as soon as possible if you change your U.S. address. Thanks!



The American Immigration Council's International Exchange Center is on Facebook!

If you are already on Facebook, look up our group "**International Exchange Center**" and request to join. We promise we'll accept you.

While it's fun and informative to receive this newsletter, the Council's International Exchange Center group is a great way to interact one-on-one with other trainees and interns. You can post pictures, discuss your experiences and make new friends from all over the world!

Find us at www.facebook.com. It's free and easy to join. Plus you will never know who you might meet or the experiences you could share.

EXCHANGE VISITOR OF THE MONTH

Yves Thiers Takes On Texas



Yves takes in the scenery during a road trip in Texas.

The Exchange Visitor Program is proud to announce Yves Thiers as this month's Exchange Visitor of the Month. Each month, we select an exchange visitor who has made an effort to get involved in his/her community and explore American culture.

Yves came to the United States from Belgium soon after graduating with a Master of Industrial Science degree. He hoped to be able to gain hands on knowledge of the engineering projects he studied at university. His host company, Dal-Tile Corporation, was just the place for this. Dal-Tile Corporation is a tile manufacturer and distributor based out of

Dallas, TX.

Not only has Yves been able to train at their Dallas location, he has also visited their other locations in Texas, Oklahoma and Kentucky. He finds it very interesting to see the similarities and differences between the different plants. When training Yves feels like his "observations and opinions are always heard and valued by the people that I work with." This interaction has been one of his favorite parts of the training. Yves' supervisor has also enjoyed having him on their team. He has remarked that Yves is a quick study in the projects he is assigned to. He "has been able to gather the data and use it to

calculate potential energy savings for our company. Having people like Yves to teach about making tile gives us hope for the future of tile making."

When not at his training site, Yves has used his free time to explore the US. He has done everything from site-seeing in New York and Chicago to taking in a baseball game to horseback riding in Texas. Recently, Yves took part in a very unique activity. "I went noodling (bare hand catfishing) in Oklahoma with Carl, a Native American descendant." In the future Yves has some activities he would still like to try such as bull-riding and seeing what an American church service is like. Yves has enjoyed both learning about American culture and sharing his own culture with his new friends and colleagues by setting up some Belgian beer tastings.

Yves has enjoyed his time here so far by making the most of it both at his training site and in his free time. His advice to other J-1 trainees and interns is to "realize that your time is limited and there is a whole lot to do. So grasp at any opportunity to broaden your mind, and be sure to avoid doing the same things you would do at home."

Would you like to be featured as our next Exchange Visitor of the Month? Let us know what you are doing. Send an email with your story and a picture to J1Program@immcouncil.org.

Understanding Your Visa Documents



Quick – what document determines how long you can stay in the United States: the J-1 visa, the I-94 card or the DS-2019 form?

If you answered your J-1 visa, you would be wrong!

The visa in your passport only gives you permission to apply for entry at an international port between the dates listed on the document. It does not give you permission to stay in the country. So, if your visa is from March 15, 2010 to August 10, 2011 you can show up at Passport Control and

ask to enter the country between those dates. But, once you are admitted into the US, how long can you stay and what can you legally do?

Your I-94, Entry Control card, indicates how long you can stay in the United States and under what visa status. Look carefully at the scribbled pen marks on your I-94 card, the very important small white card stapled into your passport at Passport Control. You will see the notation, “J-1” and “D/S.” This means you can stay in the United States

for the duration of your J-1 status. So, how do you know the duration of your J-1 status?

The duration of your J-1 status is determined by the program dates in SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) the US government’s database for J-1 visa holders. This is the system used to produce your form DS-2019, Certificate of Eligibility. The J-1 program dates are found on the DS-2019 in box 3. As long as you are active in SEVIS, you can legally stay in the United States for 30 days fol-

lowing the end date of your J-1 program. So, if your J-1 program end date is Sept. 30, you can remain in the United States for the purpose of travel until Oct. 29.

How do you maintain active status in SEVIS? The best way is to keep close contact with the American Immigration Council staff. We use your Follow Up Information to do the initial Activation. As your program goes on, we need to enter all US address changes, approve any changes to your training plan, endorse any travel outside the US during your J-1 program, and receive periodic evaluations on your progress through the training in order to maintain your J status.

What you can do in the United States is outlined by your training plan, the form DS-7002, except for the 30-day travel period after the program end date.

Does all of this sound overly complicated? Don’t worry. We’re here to make sure you stay in status and have a great experience in the United States.

Meet Our New Staff Member: Samya Behary



The International Exchange Center is delighted to welcome Samya Behary to our staff as a Program Specialist. Samya is a graduate of American University where she received a B.A. in Public Communication with a minor in International Relations. During her time at AU she spent six months abroad in Nairobi, Kenya where she worked in a school in Kibera. While there, Samya attended the United States International University and traveled throughout the country. Samya is originally from the great state of New Jersey. During the summer time, Samya enjoys spending her weekends at the Jersey Shore with her family.

Prior to joining the IEC as part of the staff, Samya interned with the American Immigration Council’s Immigration Policy Center with a focus on Communications. She is glad to back at the Council and excited to work with the International Exchange Center and all of you! Please feel free to introduce yourself to Samya when you have a chance.

Former Program Specialist, Rosie Griffin, is no longer working for the International Exchange Center. She is now pursuing a law degree with a focus on human rights. We wish her all the best!

Please direct all future inquiries to Samya at sbehary@immcouncil.org.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The best way to contact us with address changes, questions or suggestions is via email. Please send your message to exchange@immcouncil.org. We welcome any and all newsletter suggestions or comments.

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