Greetings from the Editor’s Desk by Deepak Aralumallige

Greetings!!! While you get your clocks changed to Spring forward and adjust to the loss of an hour of rest, remember that the 2007-2008 ISU Executive Committee for has spent many sleepless hours bringing you quality programs this year.

YESSSS..we have done it...we have achieved our goal, to bring ISU out of dormancy.

And now, maybe someone else should show us what new ideas and enthusiasm they can bring. Elections for the 2008-2009 Executive Committee will be held in March-April to select a new set of highly motivated WSU students.

This Spring issue is longer because of people’s enthusiasm to write for the ISU newsletter.

In this issue, you will read about flu and flu vaccines in the article titled Are you inFLUenzed? by Marilyn Yourdon, the Director of Student Health Services.

Don’t also forget to read about how the current student health insurance policy fared in a survey conducted by ISU.

Do you want to be a crazy shocker fan...? Check out the article Shocker Mania by Jeffrey Graber on the 1st page.

Shan Jabara, the co-advisor of ISU is telling you more about the Office of International Education’s Townhall meetings in her article on page 4.

For ISU, all opinions count. We are already accepting articles and news items for our next issue in April. Please feel free to email us your articles at ISU@wichita.edu

Have an awesome Spring Break!!!

(Deepak is a Ph.D. student in the Math Dept. and can be reached at deepak@math.wichita.edu)

Shocker Mania? by Jeffrey Graber

In the recently concluded Missouri Valley Conference Basketball games, guess who won? The Shocker fans for being the “craziest fans” of the valley.

Won’t you want to be a part of this winning team? Just whip out your student ID at the Heskett Center or the Koch Arena and get your FREE student ticket.

But by now the basketball season is almost over. So what? The Baseball and Softball season is just beginning. And it only gets better as you can just use your student ID at the ticket office just outside the stadiums.

All baseball games are played at Eck Stadium, which is located north just north of Braeburn Golf Course, and softball is played at Wilkins Stadium, which is just to the east of the Heskett Center. Receiving a student ticket for baseball will allow you to sit either in the grandstands on the first base side, or on Coleman Hill in the outfield.

(Cont. on Page 3)
Are you inFluenzied? By Marilyn Yourdon

Influenza (flu) is a viral illness that is common across the world every year. It travels around the globe and is typically seen in Kansas in the early months of the year. Some years there is more illness reported. This may be due to fewer people getting the flu vaccine or it may be due to a more virulent strain of the virus. Since influenza is a virus, antibiotics do not help. If symptoms are caught early enough in the disease there are antiviral medications that can be given.

Each year we at Wichita State University, Student Health offer the flu vaccinations to all faculty, staff and students. There is a small cost for this. Many people come in annually for the flu vaccine and would not miss getting their flu shot. Some know what it is like to have the flu and miss classes; sometimes up to a week. They tell us once they started getting the flu shots they did not get the flu, and this is very important to them in their academic career.

The flu vaccine is usually administered during the fall semester. We at Student Health begin giving it typically around late October or early November and continue on until our supply is gone. We have it available usually until the end of the semester and sometimes through the beginning of the spring semester. It is always a good idea to receive the flu vaccine each year whether you believe you are very healthy or not. Being healthy does not necessarily keep you from getting the flu.

Flu symptoms usually begin suddenly with fever, body aches, sore throat, cough and fatigue. As mentioned earlier, if caught early there is antiviral medication that can help lessen the length of the illness. The best thing you can do for yourself is ALWAYS use good hand washing, cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, stay away from other ill persons and get the flu shot each year.

If you have any questions about the flu or the flu vaccine, please feel free to contact Student Health Services at 978-3620.

And before I forget, Meningitis remains as a real threat to on-campus students. The Student Health is ready with the vaccines for it as well.

(A federal advisory panel on February 27, 2008, recently issued a statement recommending flu vaccines to all children and not just those under 5. They also suggest universal flu vaccination for adults. Although flu vaccines may not prevent flu symptoms, yet, those who have been vaccinated have not developed dearly cases of flu.)

(M. Yourdon is the Director of Student Health Services and can be reached at marilyn.yourdon@wichita.edu)

International Student Health, A Survey By Visvakumar Aravinthan

As a part of Health Insurance Workshop for International Students ISU conducted a needs assessment survey among international students at WSU. The survey was administered online and at tables sets at the RSC for the purpose. Ninety international students (7.2% of total international student population at WSU) participated in the survey.

The respondents demographics reflected the overall international students at WSU: 70% males, 30% females, 57% undergraduate, 42% graduate. (Cont. on page 3)
International Student Health...

(Continued from page 2)

97% were single and without any dependents.

Student Health Service (SHS) had a positive assessment from the respondents: 82% of the students were satisfied with SHS; although 55% of them didn’t know what to do during an emergency when SHS is closed. A high percentage of 73% of international students had used services at the SHS.

When it comes to the Student Health Insurance (SHI) it was heartening to know that 91% of the students had an active insurance policy. Interestingly enough although 60% knew the benefits of having a health insurance, a high rate of 63% had not read the health insurance manual.

Another alarming piece of information was, among the students who have dependents accompanying them in US 67% didn’t buy health insurance for their dependents. These students feel that they cannot afford dependent health insurance.

While for the past semester only 6% of respondents experienced any medical emergencies, a high percentage of 28% of respondents have used the benefits of health insurance.

The respondents were divided into their opinion about the cost of insurance. An equal number of felt that the cost of insurance was justified.

ISU is currently gathering information about the health services in Wichita and you will be able to get information just by visiting ISU website.

On behalf of international students, ISU would like to thank Armin Gerhard and his staff at OIE, Ms. Marilyn Yourdon and her staff at SHS for organizing the health workshop. We would also want to thank Mr. Matt Brinson from the Insurance company for providing us the United Health Insurance point of view and providing the refreshments during the workshop.

(V. Aravinthan, ISU President, is a Ph.D. student in Electrical Engineering & can be reached at vxaravinthan@wichita.edu)

Shocker Mania...

(Continued from page one)

Anyone sitting on Coleman Hill can bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating; however you are also allowed to bring in food and drink any time you want.

Alcohol is also sold at Eck Stadium, and you can bring in your own alcohol if you are sitting on Coleman Hill.

Students are also encouraged to join Shocker Maniacs, the official student fan group for Shocker Athletics. For only $10, members receive a t-shirt, a free pizza coupon and a membership card. Students can then have their card scanned at baseball and softball games, and receive prizes for accumulating points. The more games you come to, the more points you will receive.

Who said mania was bad?

For more information about attending games, or to sign up for Shocker Maniacs, call 978-5551.

(Jeffrey Graber is a Marketing GA with WSU Athletics and can be reached at jngraber@wichita.edu)
Farewell Jacob Brumfield...

After 91/2 years working as an advisor and development officer for the Student Activities Council (SAC), Jacob Brumfield left WSU to take a new position of Associate Director and student Programs at Louisiana State University from February 2008. Jacob was very popular among students and provided valuable mentoring and training for several international students who worked under him.

The former ISU President, Ms. Twambi Kalinga has worked under Mr. Brumfield’s supervision.

Jacob also helped ISU in every possible ways in its operations.

ISU wishes Jacob the best and is happy for the international students at LSU.

Monthly Townhall Meetings at OIE  By Shan Jabara

In an effort to broaden International Student Orientation and to regularly address issues of concern to returning students, International Student Services (ISS) has begun holding frequent Townhall Meetings.

This is a meeting format in which the audience often sits around a main speaker(s) close enough to enable them to be a part of the gathering by asking questions and sharing experiences.

All of this provides insight to University staff working with international students in addition to disseminating information and advice to students.

This effort began in the Fall Semester with a chance for international students to ask questions about major topics of interest. Based on those concerns and a restructuring of International Orientation, five meetings will have taken place during this Spring ’08 Semester.

In the first and second week of the semester, two Townhall Meetings took place; the first one was an extension of Orientation that discussed cultural adjustment and how to cope with the stress that can accompany it. Crossing Cultures: Adjusting to Your New Community was conducted by counselor, Dr. Jessica Provines, from WSU’s Counseling and Testing Center. It was organized into the sections, Settling In, Customs, Benefits, Culture Shock and Reverse Culture Shock.

Dr. Provines defined and discussed terms such as the very important, “ethno-relativism: The acquired ability to see many values and behaviors as cultural rather than universal” and explained that “this approach attempts to understand values and behaviors from the point of view of that culture, rather than as right or wrong.”

The gathering also featured a student panel comprised of veteran international students who offered what they had learned in adapting to the mid-American culture of WSU/Wichita. In addition, the meeting was very interactive, using the audience’s own challenges as part of the discussion.

In late January ISS teamed up with the International Student Union (ISU) and WSU’s Student Health Services to host the second Townhall Meeting on Insurance and the American Medical System. This meeting was initially conceived by OIE to explain WSU’s new student insurance policy and provider, United Healthcare. However, it was suggested by ISU that many international students may not have understood even their previous policies very well.

Just one week later on February 6, WSU’s International Student Advisors provided an informational meeting on the types of employment available to international students.

Of course this was one of the most popular topics and covered on-campus employment, the issue of Social Security numbers, Curricular Practical Training in conjunction with WSU’s Cooperative Education Program, Optional Practical Training and a few special work authorization situations.

Advisors and students benefited greatly from being joined by Kyle Carr, Co-op Coordinator for Engineering Students, who explained the process and opportunities available to international students through his office. He also handed out Tips for Job Hunting Services.

(Cont. on page 5)
In Memoriam...

Dr. Bajaj, professor emeritus, past advisor of the Indian Student Association (ISA), and now a very strong advocate of international students on campus experienced the tragic incident of his son and daughter-in-law: Ashok and Trish Bajaj being killed in a plane crash near Wichita on 16th February of 2008.

Dr. Ashok besides being a renowned heart specialist, exemplified the rich contribution of the international community to the State and the nation. He along with his American wife were goodwill ambassadors for intercultural understanding and togetherness. “They lived a full life, full of energy and enthusiasm” as Dr. Prem Bajaj noted in his obituary.

ISU offers its heart-felt condolences to the families and friends affected.

Ukraine...

(Continued from page 6)

Culture and Language: Ukrainian customs are heavily influenced by Christianity, the dominant religion in the country. The Ukrainian diet includes chicken, pork, beef, fish, and mushrooms. Ukrainians eat a lot of potatoes, grains, fresh and pickled vegetables, and different kinds of bread. Popular traditional dishes include “Vareniki” and Borsh.”

The Ukrainian language is somewhat similar to Russian. In the 2001 census, 67.5% of the population had declared Ukrainian as their native language. Despite these statistics, many Ukrainians prefer to speak in Russian the native language of 29.6% of residents.

Ukrainian is taught although most schools have Russian as the medium of instruction. It is not unusual to hear only Russian being spoken on the streets. Many present day Ukrainians are reluctant towards learning the Ukrainian language.

Famous Ukrainians: The famous boxers and heavyweight world champions Vitaliy Klichko and Vladimir Klichko are Ukrainians!

(Taymur Hallal is a freshmen in Aeronautical Engineering and an honorary member of the ISU Executive Committee. He can be reached at Taymur taymur98@hotmail.com)

Monthly Townhall Meetings...

(Continued from page 4)

The Office of Career Services provided a calendar of their workshops and services.

Two remaining Townhall Meetings will take place on Wednesday, March 12 and Friday, April 11. Both meetings will be held from 3-5 p.m.

The March meeting will be a natural progression from February’s employment meeting as it will address, Timing Your Graduation (to better interface with H-1B cap restrictions). International students don’t have to be confused by listening to friends or other sources when it comes to organizing their programs of study to best meet their goals. All pertinent questions will be addressed, at this Townhall Meeting. It should benefit both graduate and undergraduate students.

Due to popular demand, the April 11 meeting will be conducted by Howard Eisberg and Judy Bordeau, immigration lawyers from the Kansas City firm of Eisberg & Bordeau.

They will discuss the H1B (Specialty Worker) visa and Permanent Residency, especially of interest to graduate students if they are majoring in fields of study that are currently experiencing a shortage of workers.

All of the meetings this semester take place in 107 Devlin Hall. The Office of International Education encourages all students to attend and take advantage of these great opportunities to meet with staff, learn from special speakers and the experiences of fellow students, ask questions and be heard!

(Shan Jabara works at the OIE and is the co-advisor for ISU. She can be reached at shan.jabara@wichita.edu)
Republic of Ukraine

By Taymur Halal

Location: Ukraine is a country in Eastern Europe. It borders Russia to the east, Belarus to the north, Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary to the west, Romania and Moldova to the southwest, and the Black Sea, and Sea of Azov to the south. Ukraine’s capital is Kiev. Ukraine is rich in history and church architecture.

Government and Politics: Ukraine is a republic under a mixed semi-parliamentary, semi-presidential system with separate legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The president is elected by popular vote for a five-year term and is the formal head of state. The current prime minister is Julia Tymoshenko.

Geography: Ukraine has an approximate area of 603700km² with a coastline of 2782km. The Ukrainian landscape consists mostly of fertile plains crossed by rivers such as Dnieper (the largest in Ukrains) and Seversky Donets. Ukraine has a mostly temperate climate, although a more Mediterranean climate is found in the southeastern part of the country, called the Crimea. Winters in the north are cold; however, summer is warm with an average temperature of 30 degrees Celsius.

Economy: In Soviet times, the economy of Ukraine was the second largest in the Soviet Union. With the collapse of the Soviet system, the country moved from a planned economy to a market economy. The country imports most energy supplies from Russia.

Nonetheless, Ukraine produces all types of transportation vehicles and spacecraft, notably the world’s largest An-225 Miya cargo transporter (for those of you curious to know, “An” stands for “Antonov,” the man behind the design, while “Miya” means “Dream”).

The country also has plenty of arable land and is a main producer of sunflower oil. The monetary unit in Ukraine is the “Hryvna,” and 5.05 Hryvnas is equivalent to 1 USD.

The Flag: In the Ukrainian flag (adopted in 1992), the golden yellow stripe symbolizes fields of wheat, and the blue stripe represents the sky, mountains, and streams of Ukraine.

(Continued on page 5).

ISU would like to thank Armin Gerhard for his continuous support and encouragement to ISU and its members.

Visit us at http://webs.wichita.edu/isu

Don’t Forget...


2. Townhall Meetings:
Timing Your Graduation: Wednesday, March 12
H1B Visa & Permanent Residency: Friday, April 11
Both meetings at 107 Devlin Hall, 3-5 p.m. Contact Office of International Education for more details.

3. Interfest & Diversity Day:
Thursday April 10th
Co-organized by Office of Multicultural Affairs & ISU

4. Driver Safety Course:
March 17th & 18th, 1-5 p.m., 210 Heskett Center
Contact Dr. Prem Bajaj at 316-683-3060 or at prem.bajaj@sbcglobal.net

5. WSUiR:
Wichita State’s student-run Internet radio station (WSUiR) is looking for students from diverse backgrounds for creatively organizing events, building software, hosting shows, or event ideas for radio talks and performances.
Contact WSUiR at 316-978-6817 or email at wsuir@wichita.edu for more information.

Want to submit an article, an event or comment on the articles?, send us an email:
isu@wichita.edu