



OACAC

Volume 1, Issue 1

September 1997

From the Editor:

Greetings to all OACAC Members. In our efforts to maintain better communications with the membership and to keep you informed about OACAC, we have made a commitment to publish the Newsletter three times a year. This issue is an abbreviated version with information about the summer conference and a membership survey which I would encourage you to return to me as soon as possible. The information will be used to update membership information and to improve the services our organization provides.

Once again I am asking for article submissions for upcoming issues. I know we are all incredibly busy, but we are also the best sources of knowledge and information for our colleagues. If you have an idea, please take some time and write a short article for the newsletter. Submissions for the December Issue will be accepted until November 15.

Please mail your membership survey to me at the following address:

Marie I. Vivas
ECA M-314 Jet Cargo Box 020010
Miami, Florida 330102

or fax it to me at: (58-2) 993-0219
Articles can be mailed or faxed or you can

e-mail me at my new and improved e-mail address: Marie_Vivas@eca.com.ve

Summer Conference '97

Forty-six counselors and admissions representatives from all over the world gathered for the annual conference hosted by the College of Notre Dame in Belmont California. We would like to take the opportunity to thank the folks at the College of Notre Dame for their excellent hospitality. We appreciate all your efforts which made our Summer Conference a smashing success. A special thank you to Yesha Naik and Greg Smith from the admissions office.

The Keynote Speaker, Ms. Barbara Schaetti, from Transition Dynamics in Seattle Washington, addressed the group on the topic of "Global Nomads". The information presented applies to our students both at the secondary and at the college level. It was also fascinating to see how many of us actually are global nomads who have dealt with these issues in our own lives.

Workshops related to the problems of students making the transition from international settings to US colleges and universities were led by Ms. Schaetti, Natalie Lundsteen from the College of Notre Dame, Kip Darcy from UCSF - Hastings Law School, Richard Dawson from Pepperdine University and Charles Beech from Webster University.

Ruth Granados from NACAC and Lorraine Shoaf from the College Board Western Office updated the membership on the latest developments in their offices. Larry Turns has written a brief summary of the points discussed at the Executive Board and General Membership meetings.

Boston University hosted a barbeque on Saturday night and a good time was had by all. We thank Paul and Ken and their staff for putting this together.

Summary of Executive Meetings

July 18, 19, 20, 1997

Ralston Hall/College of Notre Dame (Belmont, CA)

The Committee discussed the suggestion by an OACAC member to separate the OACAC Summer Conference from the ECIS tour. Benefits and disadvantages were discussed. The general consensus was that the counselors benefit from the relationship because it decreases travel costs and both the tour and conference benefit by increased attendance. It was suggested, however, to leave a day or half a day between the tour and the conference in order to help clearly define when one event ends and the other begins. It was also decided to continue to sponsor the joint reception between ECIS and OACAC.

The new additions to the By-Laws were discussed and the responsibilities listed in the text for the officers were reviewed. Assignments for Chairs of the various committees were made in order for them to be printed in the upcoming NACAC Membership Listing.

It was agreed by consensus to allow vendors to attend upcoming OACAC Conferences but not to allow them to become members. A discussion for a fee structure for advertising in the newsletter will follow in

future meetings.

It was agreed to send one newsletter to all those secondary schools listed in the ISS directory and those Overseas NACAC members that are not OACAC members in an attempt to gain new members.

Minutes of General Meetings July 19 & July 20

Peter Hauet passed out the revised Bylaws in order to approve the membership. The Bylaws were approved with one dissenting vote.

Peter stepped down as President of OACAC and thanked the membership for their support and introduced John Evans, the current President.

Nominations for officers and members for standing committees were encouraged for the next calendar year.

A concern was raised that addresses, E-Mail and FAX numbers of the current membership needs to be updated. An upcoming newsletter will ask for the most current information.

Doug Thompson gave a brief report on the status of the NACAC AD HOC Committee for International Student Issues. He shared a draft of the document that the group is preparing and asked for suggestions and comments.

Ruth Granados, OACAC's representative from NACAC, gave a brief report which included current NACAC literature and updates on current government actions which may affect our students.

Immigration Issues:

During the Summer Conference Charles Beech (Webster University) and Rich Dawson (Pepperdine University) spent some

time discussing the recent changes in immigration laws and their impact on international students and host institutions. While we are all concerned about these changes and how they will negatively affect our students, the presenters also gave us some concrete and practical advice to help our students overcome the visa and entry hurdles.

In the first portion of the presentation, they spoke about three items in the new law (IRAIRA) which students should be aware of:

Provision 310 bars aliens from entry into the US for their unlawful presence in the US while on a student visa. Unlawful presence includes some campus jobs and all other unauthorized employment, carrying less than twelve hours of class in any term, changing visa status, dropping out, changing schools without going through the proper channels, and other violations

Section 632 Penalizes students who stay beyond the 60 day grace period stipulated on their visa documents.

Section 641 Obliges colleges and universities to track foreign students for up to ten years to ensure that they are not violating their visa agreements. A fee of \$ 100 will be charged to each student to pay for student tracking.

In the second section they gave us the following tips on how our students should prepare for the visa interview at the consulate:

Complete all parts of the application in a timely fashion- this includes the certification of finances and any financial documents required.

Be organized and have a copy of everything you have submitted to the institution and take this with you the day of the interview.

Get an original, updated, Certification of Finances to take to the consulate.

Make a final college choice as early as possibly and apply for your visa as soon as you have made the choice. Remember that summer is a busy time for US consulates.

Don't show up unannounced. Make an appointment and know who you will be speaking to, when, where, and what to take. This usually includes your I-20, acceptance letter from the college, financial certification, original letters of support from your sponsor, the bank documents specified by your local consulate and, in some cases, your most recent transcripts.

Take notes of what is said in the interview and be prepared to answer questions about your plans after college.

Get a good night's sleep, have a good breakfast, and dress appropriately. First impressions are extremely important.

Be aware that your English language skills are very important, speak for yourself. You should go into the interview on your own and demonstrate that you can handle the demands of a college program in English.

Speak clearly, be concise, answer questions truthfully, honestly, factually. Stick to the point, don't volunteer extraneous information, don't contradict yourself. Maintain a positive attitude and don't argue with the person in charge.

If you must return for a second interview find out what additional information they would like you to provide at that next visit.

If you are denied, try to get the reason in writing. Let the college know when you are granted or denied your visa.

Have all documents ready and in order at the point of entry into the US. If you are denied go to a phone and call the admissions officer at your college.

Comply with all customs restrictions as listed in the US Customs Declaration Form.

If you are transferring make sure to file a legal transfer notification with the INS. See your foreign student advisor for more information.

If you have an F1 visa, do not come into the US on a B- tourist- visa.

Once you are at your destination; get a local driver's license, a social security card, and fill out the necessary tax forms even if you are not employed. Don't miss any part of your orientation and get to know the foreign student advisor. This is the person who knows what to do about immigration issues and is the key person to help you stay within the law.

For counselors two additional tips:

When at all possible, invite the visa officer from the consulate to speak to your students about visa requirements.

Impress upon them the importance of doing things legally and of being well prepared for their interview.

I would like to thank Rich and Charles for their presentation on behalf of the students and counselors who will benefit from their practical and extremely important advice.

Guidelines for the Recruitment, Admission and Support of International Students

The ad hoc committee charged by NACAC and the Admissions' Practices Committee met at the College of Notre Dame in conjunction with the OACAC summer conference. When these Guidelines are completed they will be presented to the NACAC board for approval and implementation. Since its founding OACAC has had as its main mission to represent our international students and to make the secondary school to college an easier transition. It is in this spirit that the committee was formed. As president, at the time, I was asked to serve as chair. Other members are Cy Boschert (College de Lemman International School), Gwen Bergman (St. John's International School), John Evans (American Embassy School), Marty Wilder (Mary Washington College), Doug Thompson (Ohio Wesleyan University) and Mark Milroy (NACAC National Office).

The committee should have its final draft ready after the NACAC San Francisco Conference. I would like to thank you all for your input in this endeavor. I want to thank the NACAC board and staff for their help and for seeing the need.

Peter Hauet (Chair, St. Mary's International School)