November 1, 2019

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1. Greetings!

This is the Weekly ISSS Newsletter that we send out every Friday. It includes very important immigration updates that you must be aware of, as well as information about events happening on campus and in the area.

Are you a part of a student organization and want to see your event advertised to your fellow students? Please send the details and/or flyer to ISSS@albany.edu.

2. Important Announcements

International Celebration, December 6th- RSVP is Open!
The International Celebration, where we celebrate our graduating students and departing exchange students and scholars, will be on Friday, December 6th at 2:30pm. Graduates/departing students must register for the event. If you are graduating this December and did not receive an invitation email from us, please email ISSS@albany.edu for the registration link.
Departing exchange students should email their Education Abroad advisor for the sign-up information.

ISSS Thanksgiving Dinner Registration Open

You are cordially invited to the annual ISSS Thanksgiving Dinner on Monday, November 25th from 5pm-7pm! Come join us to partake in an American holiday tradition! The event will feature dinner, games, prizes, and more! Cost to attend is only $8 per person and will be charged to your student account following your event registration. This event is possible due to the generous donation of UAS. Register here: https://tinyurl.com/ISSSThanksgiving2019
ISSS Orientation Assistant Application for Spring 2020 Due November 15th!

Looking for a fun on-campus job this winter? ISSS is seeking Orientation Assistants for New International Student Orientation, January 16th-January 21st, 2020! The overall objective of an Orientation Assistant is to provide a genuine welcome for new students and to assist them during the first days of their adjustment to the University and the Capital District. We consider the Orientation Assistants to be important members of the program and we expect the appropriate commitment of time and energy from each assistant. Students will receive a stipend of approximately $250 for approximately 22-24 hours of work.

Please click [https://forms.gle/kceGgbAsH79DAT7M8](https://forms.gle/kceGgbAsH79DAT7M8) to apply!

Applications are due by Friday, November 15th at 5pm. If you have any questions please contact isss@albany.edu.
Spring 2020 Buddy Program Sign-Up Open!

ISSS is seeking current students as volunteers to serve as a "buddy" to a new international student this Spring. The buddy program allows current students to connect with new students to help welcome them to Albany and answer their questions about adjusting to life at UAlbany and in the Albany area.

Students can sign-up here: https://tinyurl.com/UAlbanyBuddy2020
Reminders about Excused Absences and Registration

It's the holiday season around the world, and we understand many students plan to travel in celebration of many holidays. If you will be missing class as part of your holiday celebrations, please be sure to notify your professors in advance of your absence. Please also be sure to make note of when classes are in session according to the University academic calendar, both for Fall 2019 and Spring 2020: https://www.albany.edu/registrar/academic_calendar.php. Students are responsible for making up any missed work and coordinating with their professors to ensure that they are still completing all course requirements.

While many absences are handled case by case by an instructor, Undergraduate students may seek an absence accommodation request due to an illness, tragedy, or emergency; compelling time conflicts; athletic events or religious observances (https://www.albany.edu/undergraduateeducation/attendance.php). If possible, you must request this absence in advance and provide documentation of the reason for the excused absence. You may obtain the Student Absence Accommodation Request form here: https://form.jotform.com/92164107572152

Graduate students should work directly with their academic department for any absence accommodations. For general graduate policy guidance, students may consult the Graduate School office.

In addition, please note that students must be registered full-time (12 credits for undergraduate, and 9 credits for graduate students) within the appropriate registration window at the beginning of the semester, and students must maintain full-time registration throughout the semester. The only exception to full-time registration requirements are for students who have been granted and authorized reduced course load by ISSS.

Wishing you all a healthy, happy and joyous holiday!

Follow us on Instagram! @ualbanyisss

ISSS is on Instagram! Follow us today @ualbanyisss so that you can stay up to date with office and campus events and news.

3. Other ISSS Updates and Events

OPT Request is now an Eform

ISSS is going electronic! Students will be able to submit some requests online through AccessISSS, the UAlbany ISSS student portal.

The OPT Request Eform is now live! To access it, please go to:
https://www.albany.edu/issis/forms.php
Scroll to the Optional Practical Training (OPT) & STEM Extension section and select “Click here to access the OPT Request E-Form” to review all instructions and access the ISSS Portal.

Graduating in December? Attend an OPT Workshop!

ISSS has weekly employment workshops, either for CPT authorization or OPT authorization. Students must attend one of these workshops before applying for OPT. If you are graduating in December, you may now apply for post-completion OPT. Remember that USCIS estimates up to 3-5 months for processing of an OPT application.

To view a full schedule, please click here: [https://www.albany.edu/isss/assets/OPT_CPT_flyer_Fall_2019.pdf](https://www.albany.edu/isss/assets/OPT_CPT_flyer_Fall_2019.pdf)

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**CPT and OPT Workshops Fall 2019**

**CPT Workshops**
- Friday, 9/6, 3:30-5:00, TBD
- Thursday, 10/24, 3:30-5:00, SL G05
- Monday, 11/18, 3:30-5:00, SL G05

**OPT Workshops**
- Friday, 10/4, 4:00-5:30, SL G12
- Tuesday 10/8, 10:00-11:30, SL G-05
- Wednesday, 10/16, 3:30-5:00, SL G05
- Friday, 11/1, 3:30-5:00, SL G05
- Tuesday, 11/5, 3:30-5:00, SL G05
- Monday, 11/11, 3:30-5:00, SL G05
- Thursday, 11/21, 3:30-5:00, SL G05
- Tuesday, 12/3, 3:30-5:00, SL G05
- Monday, 12/9, 3:30-5:00, SL G05

**Other Important Dates**
- **September 18, 2019**: First day USCIS may receive OPT requests from December 2019 graduates
- **December 17, 2019**: Program end date for December graduates
- **February 14, 2020**: Latest OPT start date for December graduates to request. All OPT applications for December graduates must be received by USCIS before this date.

**Travel Signature Days**

Every F-1 and J-1 student must have a valid travel signature on their I-20 or DS-2019 in order to re-enter the United States after traveling outside. These travel signatures are usually valid for 1 year while you are a full-time student, though we recommend getting your I-20 or DS2019 signed every 6 months. Usually, travel signature requests take 5-7 business
days. On our special travel signature days, however, we will sign the I-20 or DS-2019 on the spot. You can view the schedule here: https://www.albany.edu/isss/assets/Fall_2019.pdf.

We recommend that every student attend one of these days, even if you don't have travel plans yet.

Diwali Night 2019 Tickets on Sale!
The Indian Student Organization works to promote and bring their rich Indian culture and traditions for everyone in the UAlbany community. Every year, they organize our grand scale signature event, 'Diwali Night' that consists of various performances by a variety of groups and individuals on and off campus, followed by a delicious Indian dinner.

The event will commence at 5:30 pm on Saturday, November 9th, 2019. It will be held in the Campus Center Auditorium.

Diwali, also known as the festival of lights, is one of the biggest festivals celebrated throughout the Indian subcontinent as well as in Singapore, Malaysia, and many other places. It symbolizes the victory of good over evil, light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance. ISO takes immense pride to organize one of SUNY's biggest diversity events - ISO Diwali Night 2019.
NYS DMV 5 Hour Courses Offered on Campus

If you know of anyone that currently has their learner’s permit and looking to get their NYS Driver’s License in the future, please note that Albany Driving School and Right Way Driving Center will be facilitating the required 5 Hour Class right here on campus on a weekly basis on Saturdays From NOON – 5PM and Sundays From 11AM – 4PM in the Campus Center’s Student Success Center, Room 165A! To get to the Campus Center’s Student Success Center:

Enter the Campus Center using the main lobby entrance nearby the small fountain
Go straight past the lobby until you see the pillars that say “Collaboration Zone”
The Student Success Center will be on the right

No sign up is required for the 5 Hour Class, however seats are limited and on a first come first served basis. Please be sure to bring your Learner’s Permit & $45.00 in the form of cash, or check. Please see attached flyer for details.

First opportunity will kick off this Saturday, September 21st.
4. University at Albany Events
Click [Here](#) for a full list of upcoming UAlbany events!

**Post Graduation Service Employment Opportunities Information Fair**
Wednesday, November 6, 2019 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Campus Center Student Success Center
Stop by and receive information on how you can apply for service employment options post graduation. Receive information on programs such as Peace Corp, Teach For America, and City Year.

**School of Education’s 175th Anniversary Celebration luncheon**
Saturday, November 2, 2019 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Masry Center for Business
Cost: $35 - purchase online from the Alumni Association website
Please join us as we celebrate the rich history and bright future of the School of Education during our 175th Anniversary Celebration.

**The Choral Hour: Mental Wellness**
Sunday, November 3, 2019 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM
Performing Arts Center (Main Theatre) Main Campus
Cost: $3-$10
The University Chamber Singers and University-Community Chorale perform a concert program investigating
mental wellness in our world and our community. Music will engage with composers and themes centered on issues of mental health as well as investigating how music can help develop mental wellness in our lives.

SUPERBUGS: THE RACE TO STOP AN EPIDEMIC Presentation/Q&A with Matt McCarthy
Monday, November 4, 2019 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM
Page Hall Downtown Campus
Cost: Free
Matt McCarthy, assistant professor of medicine at Weill Cornell and staff physician at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, is the author of new book, Superbugs: The Race to Stop an Epidemic (2019), an insider’s account of the current battle against antibiotic-resistant bacteria, and the race to develop new treatments for infections. Cosponsored by The RNA Institute, a cutting-edge life sciences research facility at UAlbany, to mark the launch of the NIH-sponsored RNA Fellows Program.

Beethoven Festival - Concert #3
Wednesday, November 6, 2019 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Performing Arts Center (Recital Hall) Main Campus
Cost: $3-$10

GSRC Thursday Art Therapy
Thursday, November 7, 2019 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM
Gender & Sexuality Resource Center Campus Center 0190
Join us in the GSRC! TAT is an ongoing art night EVERY (Or MOST!) Thursday nights in the GSRC. Every Week is a new adventure! join us! ** no prior art experience necessary** All are welcome

5. Capital District Events

Pumpkin Smash! Don't Trash It! Smash It!
Saturday, Nov 2, 2019 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Veterans Memorial Field, Locust Avenue Amsterdam, NY 12010
Cost: FREE ADMISSION
For more info, click [here](#)
Grow Amsterdam NY is hosting its 1st Pumpkin Smash! “Don’t Trash it, Smash it” Help divert pumpkins from the Landfill! Smash your own pumpkins or drop them off. Clobber your pumpkin with a wooden maul, see if you can hit the spiked target or go to town chopping them to pieces. Pumpkins will be composted by the Compost Works Initiative @ Grow Amsterdam NY - by composting your pumpkins you are keeping organic waste out of the landfills, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating compost, a natural fertilizer, for the 78 Wall St community garden. We take hay bales too! Please remove all decorations and candles.

### Round-Trip Comedy: Albany

Saturday, Nov 2, 2019 8:00 PM to 9:30 PM  
Savoy Taproom, 301 Lark Street Albany, NY 12210  
Cost: $10 online (search "Round-Trip Comedy: Albany" on Eventbrite, $15 at the door)

For more info, click [here](#)

Some of New York’s best comedians are going to be in Albany for one night only! Come out and see:
- Host: Ralph Anthony (Comic Strip Live!)
- Brian Grossi (TMZ, New York Comedy Festival)
- Phill Hunt (Sway in the Morning, Caroline's on Broadway)

**Full dinner menu is available during the show!**

Doors open at 7:30PM and show starts right at 8PM. Tix are $15 at the door but only $10 online. You're not gonna wanna miss this one!

### NYS History Month - Tuesday Talk with Ben Kemp

Tuesday, Nov 5, 2019 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM  
Schoharie Crossing State Historic Site, 129 Schoharie Street Fort Hunter, NY 12069  
Cost: FREE ADMISSION

For more info, click [here](#)
Join Ulysses S. Grant Cottage State Historic Site Operations Manager Ben Kemp as he shares the compelling story of how famed Civil War General and two-term U.S. President Ulysses S. Grant ended up spending his final days in the foothills of the Adirondacks. The story of Grant's last year is an inspirational tale of family devotion and a true character study of a man known for his triumph over adversity. Learn how the amazingly preserved Cottage atop Mt. McGregor, with sweeping views of the Hudson Valley and Green Mountains, became a historic site that has welcomed visitors for the last 135 years. Ben Kemp was born and raised in the Saratoga region of New York State and has been a staff member with the Friends of U.S. Grant Cottage since 2014. He is a Civil War reenactor, educator, speaker, and researcher. He is a current Board Member with the Hadley-Lake Luzerne Historical Society. His other pursuits include nature photography and outdoor sports including membership in the Adirondack 46'ers and Catskill 3500 hiking clubs.

Smaller Cities and the Climate Crisis, A Talk by Keith Bergman
Thursday, Nov 7, 2019 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Russell Sage College Bush Memorial, 50 1st Street Troy, NY 12180
Cost: FREE ADMISSION
For more info, click here
The climate crisis is forcing cities around the world to make plans and adapt for the future. Hear what small cities can do to combat the climate crisis from a career municipal manager who is immediate past president of the regional planning agency for Metro Boston. A graduate of Vanderbilt and Harvard Universities, Keith Bergman recently retired after serving as a municipal chief administrative officer in Massachusetts in various cities including Provincetown and Littleton, MA. From 2016 to 2019, Bergman was president of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the regional planning agency for the 101 cities and towns of Metropolitan Boston. In 2006, he was one of the first 50 trained by former Vice President Al Gore and his non-profit, The Climate Reality Project. He continues to mentor at Climate Reality trainings, most recently in Atlanta, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, and Denver.

2019 Pride Center Gala
Friday, Nov 8, 2019 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Franklin Plaza, 4 4th Street Troy, NY 12180
For more info, click here
This special night benefits the Pride Center of the Capital Region and celebrates the important contributions of this year's honorees who work hard to empower the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) community. Every year, the Gala raises funds for the Pride Center's fundamental programs and services, including the youth and senior programs. GALA co-chairs Michael Cocca, Jr. and John Daniels want you to know that this year’s GALA promises to be a PARTY! An evening filled with dancing and laughter and fun. No more stuffy, tedious award ceremonies that drag on forever. Enjoy the VIP cocktail hour with one-hour of open bar, hors d'oeuvres, and champagne stations. Multiple food stations on all 3 floors. No assigned seating. Sit, stand, jump around. It’s a party, after all!