Greetings from New Vice President

Greetings and Happy New Year at Madonna University! My name is Dr. Connie Tingson-Gatuz (often called “Dr. Connie” by students), Vice President for Student Affairs.

Over the last sixteen years, I worked in various Academic and Student Affairs areas including academic support services, leadership development efforts, mentoring programs, multicultural affairs, new student programs, student activities, and residence life. I have a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science, a Master of Arts degree in College and University Administration, and a Doctorate of Philosophy in Higher Education Administration at Michigan State University. These precious experiences have given me wonderful opportunities to support and learn from a diverse body of college students.

Because of my passion for diversity and multicultural awareness, I have developed a heightened awareness to the interests and needs of international students. Over the years, I have traveled with students to Mexico and Puerto Rico on Alternative Spring Break trips as well as engaged in cross-cultural programs on different campuses. At another institution, I served as a co-advisor to the International Student Organization and coordinated the Shockwaves program which promoted dialogue on international perspectives about global issues. External to my formal positions, I advised over a dozen student organizations at Madonna as well as at other institutions. Also, my family and I travel every few years to the Philippines to visit our close family and friends. These opportunities have shaped my perspective and commitment to supporting international students.

As Vice President for Student Affairs, I have an opportunity to oversee a number of units that make up Madonna’s Student Affairs Portfolio. These areas include Athletics, Campus Ministry, Career Services, Disability Resources, Residence Life, Student Life, and the Center for Personalized Instruction. Within each area, there are a number of valuable resources available to you. Being an active member in student organizations and activities, tutoring, intramural activities, leadership seminars, and volunteering are just a few ways to get connected on campus! I strongly encourage you to take advantage of these wonderful opportunities and share your cultural heritage and identity with other members of our campus community!

Retention and ultimately graduation are my goals for every student. Our primary focus is your success while you are here. Please give us a chance to respond to any concerns you may have and always feel free to contact me directly. We want you to be an active member of our university community. With a commitment to advancing diversity and multiculturalism in higher education, I am here to support you.

Announcements

- The deadline for the removal of an “Incomplete” Grade from Fall Semester 2009 is January 29th, 2010.
- Applications for Spring/Summer Graduation must be submitted by January 29th, 2010.
- There will be no classes during Spring Break from March 8th-13th, 2010.
- Open Registration for Spring/Summer Semester begins March 8th, 2010.

International Students Office (ISO)
- Location: Academic Building Room 1207, 1209
- Website: http://cms.madonna.edu/pages/admissions/international-students
- Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/ISO.mu
- Hours: Monday ~ Friday [9:00 a.m. ~ 5:00 p.m.]
- E-mail: internationalstudent@madonna.edu
- Director: Grace Philson (734 - 432 - 5791)
gphilson@madonna.edu
- Advisor: Joy Cho (734 - 432 - 5763)
scho@madonna.edu
**International Student of the Month**

This month’s student is Seong-Chan Hwang. A native of South Korea and a senior international student graduating this upcoming May! His older sister inspired him to study abroad with her constant worldwide travel. While watching his sister jet off to the United States, England, Canada and the Philippines, Seong-Chan decided that he would like to explore as well. After a brief year in Canada studying English, he arrived at Madonna University in September 2004 at the age of seventeen. “The biggest difference about Madonna University was the quiet,” he recalled. Growing up in the city of Yong-In in South Korea, he was accustomed to a busy day and nighttime. The quiet life of Livonia was an adjustment, but Seong-Chan thinks the campus was a good setting to concentrate on his studies and now enjoys walking and exploring as entertainment as well.

Seong-Chan came to the United States without a major in mind. “I wanted to experience the country and gain a broader perspective,” he states. But after hearing about Madonna’s fantastic nursing program he decided to enroll. The Nursing department provided him with an avenue for making friends, and he credits the huge amount of group work in the program for the improvement of his English. Seong-Chan likes the “uniqueness of being a male nurse”. He acknowledges that it can be difficult to get work experience here being an international student, but takes every opportunity presented.

After graduation, Seong-Chan is considering graduate school, though getting his license is his first objective. He would like to obtain a nursing position and remain in the United States long term. When asked “what piece of advice would you give new and prospective students at the University?” Seong-Chan replied “This school is a very good bridge to studying in the United States and will provide you with many opportunities. Respect the opportunities you are provided with and remember your primary goals from before you came here.” Great advice from a student driven to reach his own goals and destined to become a great success.

**How to maintain F-1 Status**

* Maintain a valid passport, I-20, and I-94.
* Attend the school you are authorized to attend.
* Pursue a full course of study and make normal progress towards the completion of the course of study. (Undergraduate student: at least 12 credit hours per semester and graduate student: 9 credit hours per semester. Only 3 credits of one-line courses can be counted toward a full course of study each semester.)
* Report a change of address to USCIS within 10 days of the change.

**Winter Outing**

Join us for our first winter field trip of 2010! Friday, January 22nd, the International Student Office has planned a day of fantastic activities for your enjoyment. Enjoy complimentary transportation to three different outings. The first stop will be January’s choice for the international restaurant tour. Delicious Chinese food is at Golden Chopsticks in Westland, Michigan. After a filling lunch students will be transported to a rare treat. The Ice Sculpture Spectacular is in Downtown Plymouth. Explore the streets of Downtown and enjoy over 100 dazzling statues created by champion carvers.

The Plymouth Ice Festival is in its 28th year and is sure to be a fantastic experience. Finish the day with a shopping trip in Westland. Any dorm, apartment, or grocery needs can be taken care of here. To join in the fun sign up in the International Student Office, Room 1209, and be ready for departure from the dorm at 11:00 a.m. sharp. This winter outing is sure to be a trip to remember!

**ISO Events**

* Field Trip: 2/12 (Fri.), 3/9 (Tue.)
* Shopping Day: 2/26, 3/26 (Fri.)
* Highland Park Community Service: 2/27, 3/27 (Sat.)
* Tax Workshop: 3/19(Fri.)

**American Holidays & Events**

* President’s Day-Monday, February 15, 2010.
* Daylight Saving Time starts on Sunday, March 14, 2010.
* St. Patrick’s Day-Wednesday, March 17, 2010.