

# Quarterly Report

## Welcome to the International Exchange Center

The International Exchange Center fosters the exchange of culture, ideas, and knowledge through the sponsorship of the J-1 visa in the trainee and intern categories and the organization of periodic study tours to various cities around the world.



# Meet our participants...



## **Magdalini Fliska, J-1 Intern**

Magdalini Fliska came from Greece to study chocolate making at Barry Callebaut USA in New Jersey. Here's how she described her internship...

*"Everyone there is really nice and really helpful. In the morning we have a meeting going over what happened the day before and then I go out to the plant to work on measuring how the plant works and if there are any ways to improve the processes. Then I'll have lunch with colleagues and in the afternoon I speak with my supervisor and the plant manager also, about what data I collected that morning."*

## **Ricardo Ishida, J-1 Trainee**

Ricardo Ishida was a J-1 Trainee from Peru. He was excited to come to the U.S. for training at his company's headquarters...

*"As a Komatsu-Mitsui Maquinarias Peru executive (...) I was very excited to come to Komatsu America Mining Division Headquarter in Peoria, Illinois. From the beginning I expected to learn the Komatsu mining application tools and improve my field and sales experience."*



# Host Company Spotlight: Rhea Engineers



Rhea Engineers,  
Gibsonia, PA

Rhea is a woman owned business performing civil engineering projects in the areas of environmental, geotechnical, water resources, and field management. We were founded in December 2001, so we will be celebrating our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this coming December. Our clients include the federal government, state governments, airports, industrial and commercial firms, architects, and other consulting and construction firms.

Rhea Engineers hosted J-1 participant Pablo Zabalaga Kukulijan for a two month training program. Pablo came to the United States from Chile to learn new engineering skills and techniques. Both Rhea and Pablo had a very rewarding J-1 experience.

▣ What has been the most rewarding thing about having a J-1 Trainee at your company?

Learning about the cultures of the countries where Pablo was born and where he has lived and gone to school – Bolivia and Chile. Pablo gave a PowerPoint presentation at Rhea to get some practice in giving a presentation – a necessary skill in our business.



■ **How did you integrate Pablo into your work culture (buddy system, formal orientation, etc)?**

Every week had a different skill set to learn. And I connected Pablo with a different manager or assistant manager who was responsible for him for that week. I met with Pablo at least weekly, and sometimes more often, to go through the past week's activities and what he learned and the proposed activities for the following week. This system seemed to work really well.



■ **What advice would you give to another host company about J-1 exchange?**

Get lots of individuals involved to help. Keep lines of communication open at all times to make sure your trainee is learning and having fun. Find out what his/her skill sets are, and let him/her show them off. With Pablo, it was his cooking – amazing skills in that area – and we certainly enjoyed eating the food he made. Besides cooking for my family, he also made a delicious lemon bar pie that he brought to the office when he did his first Power Point presentation. It was gobbled up!

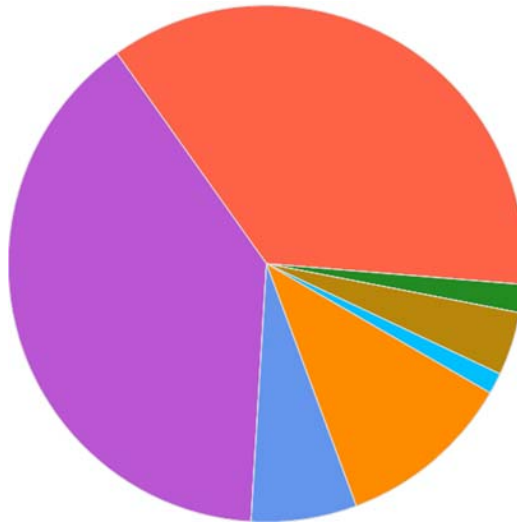


■ **Would you host another J-1 in the future?**

Yes, would be interested in doing that. We had to be very organized to pull it off and to make Pablo's visit meaningful. But I am grateful that everyone at Rhea, and in my family, pitched in to make Pablo's time here worthwhile.

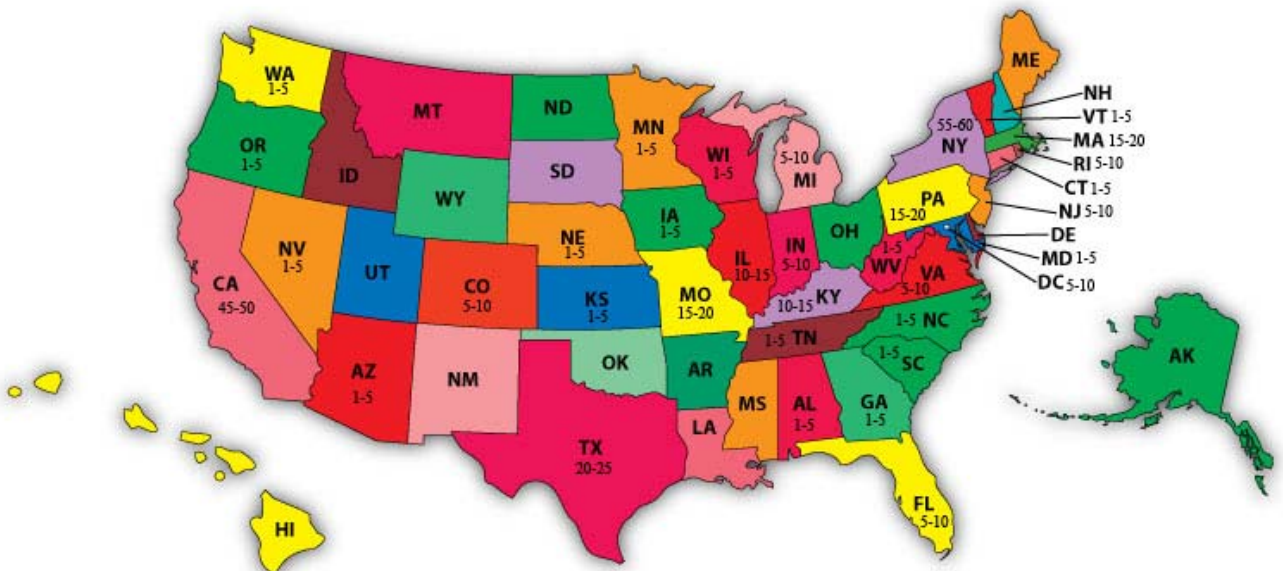
# IEC by the Numbers

In the past two quarters the International Exchange Center has brought in a diverse group of J-1 trainees and interns. Our program participants have a wide range of skill sets, professions, and cultural backgrounds.



- Sciences, Engineering, Mathematics, Architecture & Industrial Occupations
- Management, Business, Commerce, & Finance
- Public Administration & Law
- Arts and Culture
- Information Media and Communications
- Tourism
- Social Sciences, Social Services & Library Science

## Where are our participants?





The IEC understands the importance of keeping J-1 participants engaged. On our social media pages, we connect with participants through videos, polls, contests, updates, and more.



The Monthly Minute



*\*Click photos above for links.*

## Social Media



Facebook page geared towards enhancing the participant experience.



Over 180 fans.



Interactive and informative video postings.

# Publications

This year the IEC launched a new series called “Quick Tip Sheets” to help navigate the J-1 application process quickly and efficiently.

Each month, the IEC sends out a participant newsletter which features a trainee or intern of the month, explores a piece of American culture, and offers helpful information about living in the United States.

Additionally, our Host Site Handbook and other company resources are available online. These resources help to ensure that both the J-1 exchange visitor and the host company gain the maximum benefits from the exchange.

Participant Newsletter  
May 2011

This newsletter is sent to all doctor professionals in the American Immigration Council's 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 [j1program@immexouncil.org](mailto:j1program@immexouncil.org)



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facebook

The International Exchange Center is on Facebook!  
If you are already on Facebook, look up our page "International Exchange Center" and Like it.  
The IEC page is updated frequently with interesting information including a city spotlight every other week and video tips and information. You can also use this space to connect with other trainees and interns in your area!  
The IEC is launching a new video series called the "Monthly Minute" where we'll explore cultural oddities of each month in just about one minute! It's a strange piece of American culture you'd like us to explore?? Let us know and we'll feature it next month!

Important Reminders!

For all new trainees and interns, please wait at least 48 hours between sending your follow up documents and applying for your social security number (SSN). Make sure you have been in the United States for at least 10 days.

Two Weeks prior to international travel, you must send in your DS-2019 form for endorsement. The endorsement is valid for one year.

EXCHANGE VISITOR OF THE MONTH

A Conversation with Johnathan Ben Dor



Congratulations to Johnathan Ben Dor, our Exchange Visitor of the Month! Johnathan came to California from Israel to train in the area of game design. We caught up with Johnathan a few days ago to learn more about his experience in the United States.

Q: Were you excited to come to California from Israel?  
A: Oh yeah definitely!  
Q: How have your expectations been met?  
A: It has passed any expectation that I had.  
Q: What's the biggest difference? Any similarities?  
A: The way everything

is so spread out and big it's just huge! Whether it's the coca-cola bottle or the street you're walking on. The climate is similar, weather is sunny and warm and nice. The beach culture is similar too.  
Q: Tell me a little about your training?  
A: The company creates game cinematics for games which are the animations between the actual games. Also commercials openings for TV shows and visual effects for films, I got to learn a little bit of everything but mostly specialize in the broadcast department doing graphics for TV shows.  
Q: What's your favorite thing about the training?  
A: The people that I work with!  
Q: What's your favorite thing to do outside of your training?  
A: I love taking photos and there are so many things to snap around LA! I'm fascinated with people and culture. And I like to snap things that represent America like the lifeguard towers on the beach.  
Q: Favorite place?  
A: I love Venice beach because of the type of people that are here. The majority of people are artists.  
Q: Favorite food?  
A: Mexican! It's funny because the amount of Mexican places around California is ridiculous. I love I'm hooked!

*Would you like to be featured as our next Exchange Visitor of the Month? Let us know what you are doing - send us an email with your story and a picture to:*  
[j1program@immexouncil.org](mailto:j1program@immexouncil.org)

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Summer Travel in America



Summer is almost here and as it approaches many of you will start thinking about making some travel plans. There are many places of interest across the United States whether you are looking for a beach vacation or a week in the mountains. The U.S. also has a strong tradition of road trips. If you're looking for adventure, grab a friend or two, hop in the car and head out on the open road. For ideas of what routes to take in your area check out [www.roadtripusa.com](http://www.roadtripusa.com).

If you are looking for some suggestions of great vacation spots, check out our Facebook page! We will be doing destination weeks all summer long. We've already had a great National Parks Week exploring some of the protected natural beauty throughout the U.S. Be sure to check back frequently for the upcoming New Jersey Week!

We would love to hear your stories! If you have a great trip or stumble upon something interesting please share it with us and your fellow trainees and interns on our Facebook page. This is a great way to swap stories with other exchange visitors and get to know parts of the country that you might not be able to see otherwise.

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What to do if you Lose your Documents

Keeping your vital documents in a secure place is important, but even the most careful people discover that stuff happens. A DS-2019 form slips out of carry-on luggage. A passport is stolen. The I-94 card falls out of the passport. Or, a spilled cup of coffee or soda turns your documents to a mass of illegible pulp. What do you do if you need to replace your documents?

DS-2019 – the American Immigration Council is able to replace the DS-2019 form for active participants. To do so, we need a note telling us where you last remember having your DS-2019, how you believe it was lost or damaged, and payment of \$50.

I-94 card - If you have lost your I-94 card, you will need to contact the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS). You will need to complete an Application for Replacement/Initial Nonimmigrant Arrival/Departure Document. The application, form I-102, and procedure can be found at: <http://www.uscis.gov/jportal/site/uscis/4c9c3c01d-e5d9-5d4e668081070gvvCM100000b0cd19uakCRD&gpxctchsmc1-d8c29c7755c80101vgvCM10000457d3d617RCRD>

It is extremely important that this document be replaced as it is used to record your legal entry and exit to the United States. Failure to turn in an I-94 card upon departure can affect future visas

to the United States.

Passport – There are a number of steps you'll need to do to replace your passport.

- 1.) File a report of the lost passport with the nearest police station to where you believe it was lost. Get a copy of the police report. Make several copies of the report and be sure to keep one for your records.
- 2.) Report the lost passport to your embassy or consulate. Most embassies have web sites with contact information in the United States. Each has a different procedure for replacing the passport.
- 3.) Report your visa lost or stolen, via fax, to the Consular Section or Consul General at the US Embassy abroad which issued your visa. Go to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate website to locate the fax number and contact information. Be sure to include your full name, date of birth, place of birth, address in the U.S., and an e-mail address (if available). Specifically state whether the visa was lost or stolen. Fax a copy of the visa to the Embassy or consular section. If you need a copy of the visa, contact the American Immigration Council.

Please note that once the visa has been reported lost or stolen, should you find the passport, you can no longer use the original visa should you leave and wish to reenter the United States.

J Visa - You do not need to replace the J-1 visa so long as you are in the United States. However, if you leave the US with the intent to return to continue your J program, you will need to apply for a new visa before you reenter the U.S. To do so, in addition to the DS-160, DS-2019, and DS-7002 forms, you will need to provide a written account documenting the loss of your passport and visa. Include a copy of the police report.

We hope you will not need to replace your documents during your J program, so make sure they are in a safe place. Just don't make it so safe that you can't remember where it is!

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Contact Information

The best way to contact us with address changes, questions or suggestions is via email. Please send your message to [j1program@immexouncil.org](mailto:j1program@immexouncil.org). We welcome any and all newsletter suggestions or comments.

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# J-1 Program Issues for Host Companies

**Hosting a J-1 exchange visitor is a valuable experience for employers and the exchange visitor both. However, J-1 interns and trainees are not ordinary employees. Here are a few issues that host company supervisors need to keep in mind:**

- J-1 interns and trainees are not employees at will. The host company has entered into an agreement with the J Program Sponsor to provide structured training for a set period of time. Any changes to that training program, any changes in supervision, any changes in employment, must be agreed to by the J Program Sponsor before they occur. Unlike other visa categories, the employer is not the visa sponsor.
- The J-1 exchange visitor must activate their SEVIS status through their J Program Sponsor before they can apply for a US Social Security number. J-1 trainees and interns, who fail to activate their status in the US government's Student and Exchange Visitor Information System, cannot participate in their training program. This activation needs to occur as soon as possible after arrival.
- J-1 interns and trainees may earn on-the-job training income in the United States only from activities that are described in their official training plan (DS-7002). All other employment is prohibited. Unauthorized employment can result in the termination of J-1 status.
- The mid-point and end-of-stay evaluations are required by government regulation to maintain J-1 status. "My supervisor is out of town" is not an excuse to fail to submit the required evaluations to the J program Sponsor.
- The principle purpose of the J-1 visa is cultural exchange. Host companies need to actively provide opportunities for US staff and the exchange visitor to share their unique views of the world with one another.

# Contact Us



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