



YMCA Trainee Program News

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Winter 2007

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Holidays & Observances

**Martin L. King, Jr.
Day of Service**
January 15

Presidents' Day
February 19

**International
Women's Day**
March 8th

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917-841-4498

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Olga Lacayo
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Happy New Year!

The New Year in the U.S. is a wonderful time to experience our cultural and spiritual celebrations. It is a time when we reflect on the past and plan to make a difference in the future. It is also a time when many international visitors return home to be with family and friends. Below are some tips to help trainees have a safe and prosperous New Year, and for host sites to provide the support for them to do so. We look forward to working with you in the New Year.

Celena Green

Celena Green, Responsible Officer & Assistant Director, YMCA Trainee Programs

eCornell Courses: Expand Your Training Program

The YMCA is pleased to offer online training courses through the eCornell. eCornell courses are offered by Cornell University, one of the top Universities in the United States. **Short courses** and **certificate programs** are available in **Leadership, Financial Management, Human Resources Management, Restaurant/Food Services Management, Hospitality Management, and much more!** The courses can be accessed at any time of the day or night, and be completed in two weeks with 6-8 hours of course work within that period. All registration and payments must come through YMCA of the USA to receive YMCA pricing (only \$119 per course!). Payments can be made by check or credit card. Registration is not complete until payment is received. Learn more by visiting the YMCA-eCornell website www.ecornell.com/ymca and contact **Celena Green**, cgreen@ymcanyc.org.

Community Service

The New Year is a great time to be involved in community service and to learn about different cultural traditions celebrated across the U.S. It is also the time for giving, and there are ample opportunities to get involved in the community during this time. You may hear of collections of canned foods, winter coats, toys for children, and other supplies for outreach to those in nursing homes and shelters. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service is a special time for reconciliation, cross-cultural awareness, and service. Being involved in these efforts is a great way to give back to the community that has hosted you for the past year. Contact your local YMCA, United Way, or other community organizations for opportunities to serve.

Travel Validation

The *YMCA must be notified prior to any trainee leaving the U.S. for vacation or business travel*. Notification should include a letter from the training supervisor as to the exact dates of travel and the purpose of travel. *Training cannot be interrupted for more than 30 days.* **Travel Validation:** All J-1 trainees must travel with their original DS-2019 forms when leaving the country. Additionally, the DS-2019 form must be validated for travel. Validation lasts for one year. For travel validation, please send to the YMCA: 1) your original DS-2019 form, 2) a letter from your supervisor indicating that you are a trainee in good standing and the exact dates of travel, and 3) a self-addressed return envelope *with postage*. **If your DS-2019 is not validated, you will not be allowed to re-enter the U.S.**

Visit our website for updates for 2007: www.InternationalYMCA.org

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The King Day of Service, January 15th

Be a part of a national effort to serve local communities and honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

www.mlkday.gov

Evaluations

are required, and help us to provide a quality training programs. Please complete and return evaluations, either by mail or email to

Olga Lacayo,
olacayo@ymcanyc.org

YMCA Strong Kids Campaign Kick-off January 31st

Help the YMCA to raise funds for international exchange, YMCA Global Teens, and New Americans outreach programs.

If you would like to volunteer and gain valuable skills, contact Celena Green,
cgreen@ymcanyc.org

Contact Information/Change of Address

The YMCA must be notified within five business days of any change of address, be it the host company address or the trainee's living address. Failure to maintain an accurate address is grounds for visa termination.

In addition, **trainees should also maintain an active e-mail address while in the United States.** The YMCA, as visa sponsor, will share critical information with trainees and host sites via e-mail and post, and it is critical that you be able to receive these updates. Free e-mail accounts such as Hotmail and Yahoo require you to login at least once every 30 days to keep your account active. Also remember to adjust your e-mail settings so that YMCA notices are not filtered out as "spam" or junk mail.

Taxes

By mid-February, all trainees should receive a W-2 Form, detailing the total amount of earnings for the year 2006, as well as the total taxes paid. With this document trainees can file a tax return with the government and apply for refunds of their taxes. The deadline to file is April 15th, 2007, for refunds of taxes paid in 2006. Not all taxes are refundable. Please visit our website for more information on taxes and tax refunds.

Program Extensions

If a trainee or host company would like to extend a training program, submit a request in writing to the YMCA ICAP, including:

- Letter from host site requesting the extension
- Detailed amendment to the training plan demonstrating the new skills, knowledge and expertise that will be gained during the extended training period
- Fee of \$300 (non-refundable)
- Baseline and Mid-stay evaluations

An 18-month training program **cannot** be extended, as 18 months is the maximum for a J-1 visa. Also, **an extension cannot be used to repeat what has already been covered in the original training plan, nor can it be used for "implementation" or "practice" of what was learned in the original training period.** The training program should, from the start, encompass opportunities for practice and implementation through on-the-job-training. An extension should not be necessary to do this.

If you have been given a program extension, you should not travel outside the U.S. until your training has ended. Your visa was issued with the original DS-2019 dates, and may have already expired. Your new DS-2019 with the extended dates allows you to remain in the U.S. and continue training. However, if you leave the U.S. with an expired visa, you could be denied re-entry as you cannot enter the U.S. with an expired visa. Officers may require you to go to the U.S. Embassy in your home country and apply for a new visa for the extension. There is no guarantee that a new visa will be granted, and you may get stuck outside the U.S.

YMCA offices will be closed on January 15, and February 19, 2007.