

**BA-PIER Meeting Agenda and Minutes**  
Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014, 1:00pm-3:00pm

John F. Kennedy University  
Room S104  
100 Ellinwood Way  
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

**ATTENDEES**

Susan Sermeno, JFK University	Maria E. Fraser, CALCC
Tracey Ward, Mission College	Sharon Chien, CALCC
Jody O'Connor, CIIS	Seung-Jun Yoon (Tim), St. Mary's College of California
Hanna Martin, Intercultural Institute of California	Kristi Radke, Ohlone College
John Babin, Notre Dame de Namur University	Sean Day, Las Positas College
Thomas Li, Covered California (Guest Speaker)	Mei Cooley, UC Hastings
Virginia Spinelli, Menlo College	Nicoleta Giorgi
Gaozong Thao, Mission College	Cindy Balero, Las Positas College
Supinda Sirihekaphon, Canada College	Julie Leon, CSU East Bay
Shirley Wilson, Peralta CCD	Mario Mihelcic, College of San Mateo
Diane Johansen, UCSC Extension	Laurel Druke, ELS Language – San Rafael
Stephanie Matsuda, CSU East Bay	Akito Kong, ELS Language – San Rafael
Monica E. Wilson, Mills College	
Ming Chu	

**AGENDA**

- I. Welcome
  - a) Welcome from Susan Sermeno
  - b) Welcome from Student Affairs Coordinator—JFK here for 50 years since 1964, offered brief history of JFK campus and satellite locations. JFK has traditionally been a university serving adult, working students, and serves the adult learner that seeks quality education: “Transforming lives, changing the world.” Lots of services for nontraditional students, but traditional student population is growing. Small boutique university of 1500 students between the 3 campuses.
- II. Guest Speaker Thomas Li, Information Office for Covered California
  - a) Media and Outreach Relations for Covered California. To date, state of CA has enrolled more people in ACA than any other state in the United State. 1.7 million Californians so far.
  - b) Formed by ACA, rolls out in 2014. Covered California is a marketplace for both public and private plans. Doesn't provide service directly, but connects applicants to health providers.
  - c) Based on a show of hands of BA-PIER members, about 1/3 or so of schools represented at today's BA-PIER do NOT have a health insurance program for their students.

- d) Covered California offers the following: guaranteed coverage, no annual limits, no denial for pre-existing conditions, rates not based on health status, requires large employers to offer coverage, affordable. March 31<sup>st</sup> is the open enrollment deadline.
- e) Guarantees “essential benefits,” such as ambulatory patient services, hospitalization, prescription drugs, pediatric services, etc., prescription drug coverage. Covered California offers premiums based on income, Co-pays that are not a deterrent to care, zero deductible for many plans, free preventative care, lower out of pocket maximums.
- f) **ELIGIBILITY:** Legal California residents, lawfully present immigrants.  
**NOT:** undocumented immigrants, currently incarcerated individuals.  
 1.6 million Californians eligible for subsidized care pay a percentage of their income, federal government pays the balance
- g) **Discussion: Immigration Information, Thomas Li and BA-PIER Members:** Are they required? US Citizens, US Nationals, lawfully present immigrants must have coverage by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014. If they do not have health coverage by deadline, will receive tax penalty.
- o **Question from BA-PIER member:** International students MUST have health insurance coverage, but international students are not eligible for subsidies?
  - o **Comment from BA-PIER member:** Students are lawfully present but they are NON-immigrant. Huge distinction for immigrants and non-immigrants!
  - o **Thomas Li:** F-1 visa residents ARE qualified for benefits, but did not know if they will be penalized on their taxes.
  - o **Tracey Ward:** Who can we contact? All students file *something* with the IRS...will they be penalized? Many students are not even eligible to work.
  - o **Question from BA-PIER member:** Should we contact IRS directly?
  - o **Thomas Li** did not have a direct answer regarding federal taxes/penalties for students not enrolled.
  - o **Mei Cooley:** A lot of F-1 students do not have SSN. How do you identify when signing up for Covered California?
  - o **Tracey Ward:** International students are NOT ELIGIBLE for SSN, unless there is work authorization.
  - o **Question from BA-PIER Member:** Can iTIN number be used?
  - o **Virginia Spinelli:** Menlo: Over 5 years—exemption because of IRS seeing them like Legal Permanent Resident? How does this impact the process? They would be filing for taxes as a resident at this point.
  - o **Thomas Li:** It will not affect immigration status or chances of becoming LPR.
  - o Mixed immigration statuses are encouraged to apply for their family members who have satisfactory immigration status.
- h) Examples of participating health insurance organization in SF County:  
 Anthem, Blue Shield, Chines Comm. Health plan, Health Net, KP  
 MediCal for lower income (lower than Covered California minimum bracket) Free or very low cost
- i) **Further Discussion: Thomas LI and BA-PIER Members:**
- o **Tracey Ward:** 90% of F-1 students are not eligible yet to work. Can only work in internships, etc, very specific authorizations, and they often can't have jobs except part-time on campus. Most are below income bracket for Covered California, and MediCal denies them. What can these students do?

- **Thomas Li** did not have a specific answer for this question and remarked that he'd have to consult with her supervisors.
- **John Babin:** What about students that miss the tax deadline because of when they come into the country?
- **Thomas Li:** Provide tax information once available: can sign up now and provide projected income
- **Mei Cooley:** What constitutes a legal Californian resident?
- **Question from BA-PIER member:** How long do you have to be in California to be considered a CA resident?
- **Thomas Li:** You can be temporary—there is no specific minimum deadline. If you are outside of the income brackets, you will not qualify for CC—you'd have to purchase outside plan.
- **Supinda Sirihekaphong:** If application sent to MediCal is rejected, can they then apply for covered California?
- **Tracey Ward:** Big difference between subsidized and unsubsidized. (\$450 approx versus \$45, citing example)
- **Thomas Li:** There are different tiers of coverage (bronze, silver, gold, platinum) varies based on premiums, deductibles, co-pays, etc.
- **Tracey Ward:** My understanding that deductibles do not apply to preventative care (preventative care is free.)
- **Thomas Li:** Described more specific details for the example of a silver plan for a single person using PowerPoint presentation.
- **Tracey Ward:** Would students coming in in May or June for example have to wait for open enrollment?
- **Thomas Li:** Yes, they would have to wait or access local/county services in the meantime
- **Question from BA-PIER member:** How do you find authorized agents/local help?
- **Thomas Li:** Through website, you can find lists of certified enrollment counselors, or certified insurance agents, county health services (same that process medical apps)
- **Supinda Sirihekaphong:** If they use services with an agent, it is still free to sign up?
- **Thomas Li:** YES—there should be NO charge. It should be reported if someone charges a fee.
- **Tracey Ward:** shows location, telephone numbers, agents, breaks down agents and services by language as well, etc.
- **Question from BA-PIER member:** When does the IRS start doing the penalties? This year?
- **Thomas Li:** Tax penalties: \$95 per person or 1% of your income
- Kids: \$47.50, Cap \$285 (per month?)
- **Tracey Ward:** penalize you through next tax—based on months without insurance
- **Question from BA-PIER Member:** How is proof of insurance submitted?
- **Tracey Ward:** CC website works well. Based income estimate on projections for remainder of the year
- **Thomas Li** IRS gets information from health companies to determine who is covered for tax purposes
- **Tracey Ward:** Biggest concern: will students be penalized? After all, they aren't immigrants: they are on temporary visas and are considered non-immigrants.
- **Comment from BA-PIER Member:** Even tougher for language schools who lack understanding of what these things mean.
- **Thomas Li:** Luckily, these programs offer language/translation services
- **Question from BA-PIER member:** Still some international students (for school who doesn't offer a plan) there are student plans that are not ACA compliant—do they have to have an ACA compliant plan?
- **Question from BA-PIER member** What about travelers insurance? That probably won't exempt them as it doesn't meet ACA standards.
- **Mei Cooley:** Some J-1 scholars who are employed, get SSNs, and J-1 has specific requirements for healthcare, certain coverage. Repatriation and evacuation? Can't be buying if they are J-1.

- **Virginia Spinelli:** Letter from company. Individuals plans, that have repatriation for students/scholars. Not compliant yet, but it doesn't have to be for a year (requirement has been delayed).
- **Tracey Ward:** J-1s usually have plans through their sponsors that is comprehensive, but not necessarily ACA compliant.
- **Supinda Sirihekaphong:** ACA is requirement for every citizens, LPR, legal temporary residents.
- **Comment from BA-PIER Member:** Google search for NAFSA ACA requirements has an 8 page sheet that addresses J-1 scholars. F-1 students ARE eligible, but not clear yet if they will be penalized under the tax code. Non-residents will likely not be penalized.
- **Tracey Ward:** Mission College *requires* health insurance covered through school. \$100 a month, pay this in six- month increments. Blue Cross Anthem.
- **Comment from BA-PIER Member** GGH Students: Underwriters [www.gghstudents.com](http://www.gghstudents.com). Usually at NAFSA conference at expo hall.
- **Tracey will be in contact to gather answers to some of the unanswered questions from the presentation. In addition, Thomas Li will send the Covered California PowerPoint presentation to Tracey Ward for distribution to BA-PIER members.**

### III. Update of 2014 Northern District Conference by Conference Committee

- a) **Kimberly Bryant:** Update on Northern District: Skyline College in San Bruno  
Registration is now open! Register before early bird March 17<sup>th</sup>, doesn't matter if member or nonmember for this conference \$30 for students/seniors. Goes up to \$85 after early bird deadline.
- b) If we have information or people who want to present, send to:  
[kimbryant@cca.edu](mailto:kimbryant@cca.edu). People can place an ad if they can't make it to the conference.
- c) Sessions/descriptions online can be found on Northern District Website now.  
There are four sessions per time slot, a great variety of sessions, and a greater presence for Education Abroad.
- d) CBP Session! Please email your questions for CBP in advance of this session (CBP prefers to have questions in advance). Please submit questions by emailing Susan Sermeno at [ssermen@jfk.edu](mailto:ssermen@jfk.edu).
- e) Check in starting at 8am: Newcomers session to welcome them, which will include a large group from Monterey Institute of International Studies.

### IV. Update on BA-PIER business by BA-PIER Officers

- a) Is everyone on Linked In? Everyone on rosters before July was pre-approved by Marisa Thigpen to be on linked in account. Search for BA-PIER and you should be able to join (pre-approved).
- b) Only 121 are on the LinkedIn group out of 300 original members.  
All members should sign up for linked in account and join BA-PIER group.
- c) **Question from BA-PIER Member:** When was original message sent out? **Answer:** Invitations to Linked in group were sent in October.  
**Question from BA-PIER Member:** Do people have to be BA-PIER member to join the group?  
**Answer:** Yes, you have to fill out online membership form before joining (we prefer .edu addresses, but anyone in the field can join even without .edu suffix as long as they are a BA-PIER member).

- d) Can we resend out a new invitation? Many people haven't join the linked in account yet. Can an email be sent out from the BAPIER gmail account to remind people to register for the linked in group?
- e) Tracey Ward wants to create a document archive for BA-PIER website—wants to house a place on our website so that we can post interesting documents from seminars and presentations. She wants to make the website more functional and useful, and has already started on this process.
- f) Tracey Ward: Diane and Michael caught this: in our bylaws, on first page of website, who should be able to join/not join? Underneath that: according to the bylaws, we should be charging annual membership fees. We adapted this from San Diego BA-PIER group.
- g) In next meeting in June, we should determine whether we should keep this policy and implement a plan for collecting annual dues, or changing our bylaws so that this is officially no longer required. Some thoughts on why we should or should not keep the fee/follow-up on this issue:
  - Other than meeting refreshments, we don't have any other refreshments. \$1105 held currently. So we could use this to offer scholarships to people sometimes?
  - San Diego group provides travel grants and such with this money. May do a survey monkey so that those not present at the meeting can still vote on this.
  - Supinda Sirihekaphong: Something to consider. This means that if you are an active member for a year. If you don't renew, you'd be off the list? This would increase workload for management/officers.
  - Tracey Ward: Please email Tracey with pros and cons so that we can make a decision regarding this at our next meeting in June.

V. NAFSA Advocacy Day and Grant Deadline: due by February 26<sup>th</sup>.

- a) One grant is issued to one individual in each of the NAFSA districts to participate in this year's NAFSA Advocacy day in Washington, D.C. on March 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Grant applications are due by February 26<sup>th</sup>.
- b) Another member asked to mention: there IS a study abroad conference on March 1<sup>st</sup>: Ming, conference chair for Lessons from Abroad Conference. Mostly for outgoing students but international students are welcome as well for those interested in these areas, international careers, etc, teach abroad. April 12 conference "Lessons from Abroad" in San Francisco.

VI. Open Discussion (student and advising issues, other Q & A)

- a) Group Discussion, OPT Issues:
  - **Comment from BA-PIER Member:** OPT/Self Employment: girl at Laney College: Graphic arts, wants to start own business.
  - **Comment from BA-PIER Member on Policy Guidance for this issue:** Multiple employers, short-term employee/arts, self-employment, start a business, must be able to prove that they have proper business licenses and is actively involved in business. Also name was reversed on EAD, but not unclear if student needs to pay new fee or just request a correction.

- **Comment from BA-PIER Member:** Email CSCstudentead@uscis.dhs.gov email address? Tracey will post this online.
  - **Comment from BA-PIER Member** Self-employment: Want to be self-employed, want to run workshops, etc. classes. This should be tracked through taxes. Also does it depend on the cities they live in? San Jose and Livermore are particularly strict on business licenses.
  - **Susan Sermeno:** They should keep a record of the hours worked per week.
  - **Kimberly Bryant:** Start a ETSY/art shop. IRS will come after them for taxes. Need an internet business license.
  - **Mario Mihelcic:** First semester at community college: College of San Mateo: Uncle from Brazil will make him a shareholder, recruit fellow students to sell products.
  - **Tracey Ward:** Has students running an AMWAY business.
  - **Question from BA-PIER Member:** How many schools allow pre-completion OPT?
  - **Comments from BA-PIER Members:** These applications generally take longer. Many schools do not allow this or heavily discourage it.
- b) Group Discussion, Best Practices and Issues relating to Change of Status Requests:
- **Tracey Ward:** Big uptick in COS inquiries 2-3 a year to 2-3 per week! Changes of status from B to F has been taking anywhere from 3 to 8 months!
  - **Comment from BA-PIER Member:** One student used an attorney and ELIS, took 5 months.
  - Susan Sermeno: Some students (application through ELIS) came back in 3 ½ months.
  - **Comment from BA-PIER Member:** If you get an RFE through ELIS, it can be processed electronically very quickly.
  - **Tracey Ward:** We've been getting ridiculous RFEs requesting information that was already submitted.
  - **Supinda Sirihekaphong:** Change of Status: J to F, B to F, put a reminder 2 ½ months out to send a reminder to csc.schools@uscis.dhs.gov and get an RFE or approval within a few weeks.
- c) Group Discussion, SEVP Outreach and ICE Site Visits:
- **John Babin:** When will SEVP outreach launch?
  - **Response from BA-PIER Members:** No one has been contacted yet regarding new SEVP outreach program.
  - **Comment from BA-PIER Member:** ICE agent came in for an unexpected, unannounced site visit, and asked for evidence for a certain person. The ICE agent was investigating the school from which the student had transferred. Some schools are CHARGING for I-20s and for I-20 transfers! The ICE agent questioned DSO and the student herself.
  - **Tracey Ward:** The agent was probably part of ICE Sentinel.
  - **Comment from BA-PIER Member** They are doing random campus visits! One person from ICE, one person from DHS. They sat down with checklist and asked questions. What are your procedures for this scenario, this scenario? Etc. WHEN do you terminate students?
- d) Introduction of Nicoleta Giorgi to the BA-PIER Group, Group Discussion of Jobs/Job Listings:
- **Virginia Spinelli:** Introduction of Nicoleta Giorgi, who recently relocated from Italy, looking for work within the international education field.
  - **Nicoleta Giorgi:** Worked for public universities, masters and doctoral programs. Recently relocated for husband's job for a few months, and is looking for work.
  - **Tracey Ward:** Job listings are posted on website.
  - **Roberta Santos:** International Division at International Education Center at Diablo Valley College. International Marketing and Communications Manager position open.

- **Mei Cooley:** Student was sent to secondary CBP inspections after authorized early withdrawal, This can trigger a flag/secondary inspection even though the withdrawal was authorized.
  - **Supinda Sirihekaphong:** You can call to have a flag removed.
- e) Group Discussion, Job Classifications, Descriptions, and Responsibilities:
- **Question from BA-PIER Member:** How are people classified? International Student Advisor for DSO, etc. Some listed as “program services manager”
  - **Comment from BA-PIER Member:** If you go to the HR page at community colleges, you may be able to find job descriptions, classifications, working titles, etc. In public school systems, this information is PUBLICLY accessible.
  - **Comment from BA-PIER Member** At UCR: had a difference between working title and classification. Classification changed when working title did not.
  - **Mei Cooley:** Has 50% of job with international students/advising, 50% other responsibilities, so there is often confusion among colleagues as to what exactly her role is.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Tracey Ward adjourned this meeting at 3:04pm.**