

BRAYCE

Brazilian & American Youth Cultural Exchange

Newsletter
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Mission

To provide educational enrichment opportunities, life and leadership training and cultural exchanges to empower young Brazilians and Americans to realize their full potential

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Welcome to the Tenth BRAYCE Newsletter

2010 has been another great year for the BRAYCE Program. Brazilian recruits Pauline Batista and Edvilson Guerra performed stellar work with young campers at Camp Hazen, Pauline returning for her third year, this time as a full camp counselor. Edvilson, with his winning personality, soon established himself as an impressive young leader and has been invited back to Camp Hazen for 2011. Congratulations, Edvilson.

Susan Beaty (Brown University, RI) and Mary Liz VansNes (Occidental College, CA), rose to the challenging environment of the Braz de Pina favela in Rio. Both girls interned under the supervision of Zinha, project manager for IBISS, working with children and young adults. Lucia Presa-Pothier spent eight weeks in Paraty where she taught English at Dança e Arte and worked with teenagers in FlipZona at the Literary Festival.

In the US, thanks to the extraordinary generosity of Quelia and Andrew McHugh, professors at Mitchell College, New London, Pauline Batista will be joining the freshman class there in January 2011, majoring in Communications and Journalism. The McHughs are providing full board and lodging and Mitchell is providing a generous, partial scholarship. This is an amazing achievement and the result of years of intense hard work, determination and drive on Pauline's part. We are all very proud of you, Pauline!

BRAYCE board member Mary Devins has volunteered to coordinate all intern activity, starting in 2011. As Associate Director of International Studies at Connecticut College, Mary coordinates world-wide student internships every day and we are privileged to have her take on this additional responsibility for BRAYCE.

As we look ahead to 2011, and beyond, we plan to further develop our existing partnerships to strengthen the cultural exchange program in order to provide the very best internship experiences for our students. We have built strong working relationships with four established and esteemed Brazilian youth social welfare, leadership and cultural organizations (one in Rio and three in Paraty); the US Consulate in Rio de Janeiro; the Brazilian Consulate in Hartford, CT, as well as two Brazilian Community organizations also in Hartford.

Planning for Samba Rio 2011 is underway. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, February 19th, 2011. We promise another fabulous evening of Brazilian music and festivity in the true spirit of Carnival.

Finally, we thank all friends and supporters who continue to believe in our mission and in the work that we do.



Susan Beaty was the first intern to work in Braz de Pina, a flatland favela in Rio. The project was sponsored by BRAYCE partner, IBISS, with Zinha, a Brazilian and IBISS employee, as project director. Teaching components included a visual arts class for children 6-12 years and a drumming school for adolescent boys. In addition, Susan facilitated an intensive beginner English class for 5-10 core members of the percussion troupe. The second BRAYCE intern, Mary Liz VanNes "shadowed" Susan for her last two weeks. Susan reported that this greatly helped her in managing the younger children. She returned to the States to teach geography at an elementary school in Providence. Susan is confident that her internship and teaching experience will enhance opportunities for post-grad studies/work.



Marlies van Exter recently joined the BRAYCE team as program coordinator in Brasil. As former assistant to Dr. Nanko van Buuren, at IBISS for seven years, Marlies has extensive experience working with favela children, organizing interns and interacting with organization managers. Originally from Holland, Marlies speaks fluent Portuguese and English. Having a BRAYCE presence in Brasil will greatly facilitate program activities and keep tighter control on day-to-day operations.



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

Pauline Batista returned to Camp Hazen as a full camp counselor this summer. She has greatly matured over the past three years and demonstrated this in her skilled management of teenage female campers. She is now teaching English at her High School as well as at Companhia Dança e Arte.



Edvilson Neto participated in Leadership Training, Level I at Camp Hazen for one month this summer. During this time Edvilson demonstrated that he was a perfect candidate for the exchange program. He was able to apply both his experience as a mentor for literacy programs with children in Paraty and his skills as a volunteer fireman, to his work with young campers at Camp Hazen. With his winning personality, Edvilson soon won the hearts of the youngsters in his care as well as the respect of the staff. He has been invited to return to Camp Hazen in 2011 as an associate counselor. He returned home to complete his last year of high school, is working for Casa Azul and teaching English to young children.



Thank you Batista family

New Board Member Lauren Gister grew up in Southern California. After college she joined the U.S. Marine Corps, then earned degrees in Spanish and Law. Lauren moved to Connecticut with her eight year old daughter to be near her family. She started a general small town law practice in Chester, with the majority of her practice focused on family mediation and real estate transactions. Lauren has four daughters ranging in age from 9 to 26 and is married to Richard Gold, a commercial real estate broker.



Lucia Presa-Pothier worked in Paraty for two months following a semester studying at university in Fortealeza in the north of Brazil. With the assistance and encouragement of Eduardo Fares, director of Companhia Dança e Arte, a non-profit dance company for disadvantaged youth, Lucia taught English to the young dancers as well as working with FlipZona (the teenage component of the Literary Festival). We recognize that she had a challenging start in Paraty, but her persistence and adaptability resulted in a very worthwhile and inspirational experience and she did a great job. The Batista family home stay proved to be a happy experience all round and we are grateful for their kindness to Lucia as well as their hospitality in hosting other BRAYCE interns and friends. Lucia is completing her senior year at Wesleyan University.



The BRAYCE family takes care of its own. Honorary Board Member, Nelleke Beith in Rio, in the absence of our program coordinator, stepped up to the plate to provide friendship and guidance for Susan and Mary Liz when they arrived in Brasil. We would like to express our appreciation to Nelleke and to other friends who also extended hospitality.



Mary Liz Van Nes interned in the challenging environment of Braz de Pina, a favela in Rio de Janeiro, for six weeks. She “shadowed” Susan Beaty for her first two weeks which provided her with a smoother transition into the internship. Mary Liz assumed all Susan’s responsibilities and particularly enjoyed teaching English to the older boys. We have hired BRAYCE graduate Rafael Guerra to continue teaching English in order to establish sustainability. Both girls stayed in the same apartment which enabled them to shop, cook and socialize together as well as facilitating the development of work plans for the favela children. Mary Liz reports that her internship experience is better positioning her for graduate school to study social work and counseling.

SAVE THE DATE for THE FIFTH ANNUAL SAMBA RIO Carnival Ball. Once again kicking off the Chester Winter Carnival festivities, the event will be held on Saturday, February 19, 2011. Same time, same place. See you then!