

BRAYCE

Brazilian & American Youth Cultural Exchange



Newsletter Fall 2005

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Directors

President: Caitlin Calder

Margot Calder
Richard Calder
New Directors being invited

Mission

To build bridges of opportunity to enable young people to develop the skills necessary to become effective leaders and inspired members of their communities.

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Welcome to our first Newsletter.

BRAYCE has started to move apace and as an interested friend, we want to bring you up to date with what we have achieved so far.

Our application for tax-exempt status is moving at a snail's pace as the time required for all applications has recently extended from four to seven months which means December is probably the earliest we can expect an answer.

Therefore, to bridge the gap until we can approach corporations and foundations with confirmed tax-exempt status, we are planning a small fundraiser in late November at Camp Hazen. We will explain the concept, status and show slides of Rio life. Invitees will be friends, acquaintances and the Camp Hazen board mem-

Activities in Chester:

- BRAYCE registered as a Connecticut non-profit entity
- 501c3 Tax-exempt status application pending with the IRS
- Fundraising event November 22, 6:30-8 PM, at Camp Hazen
- 2 places reserved for Camp Hazen Leadership Training in 2006
- Camp Hazen will recruit Brazilian Counselors in 2006
- Several Foundations identified that support international youth development
- A letter to the Council of Foundations in Washington D.C. is copied on reverse side. This letter will be published in an edited form in their bi-monthly magazine, Foundation News & Commentary, November/December issue.

Activities in Rio de Janeiro:

- Office established with Toby Calder and fiancée Ana Baptista
- IBISS informed funds will be available for 2 participants in 2006
- Volunteers being recruited in Rio.

BRAYCE is building a strong foundation and operating process for this pilot exchange program that can later be expanded to reach a broader and perhaps, geographically diverse audience. The elapsed time for any one participant is envisaged to be about nine months. Between the three of us, IBISS, BRAYCE and Camp Hazen, we will:

- ✓ **Select** motivated young people with belief in themselves, ambition and personality
- ✓ **Inspire** them to want to achieve and to agree to clear goals and specific targets
- ✓ **Support** them and their family through the process from selection to community work
- ✓ **Teach** them practical life and leadership skills to apply in community projects
- ✓ **Engage** them in peer relationships, practical and worthwhile community activities
- ✓ **Monitor** and Measure what they achieve against the agreed targets.



Save this date!
November 22, 2005

Robert Gay

Robert is Director of the Toor-Cummings Center for International Studies at Connecticut College in New London, Connecticut. He has been visiting and researching in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro for twenty years and has written and lectured extensively on the effects of poverty and violence in this city.

"Our nation will succeed or fail to the degree that all of us -- citizens and businesses alike -- are active participants in building strong, sustainable and enriching communities"
Arnold Hiatt
ex CEO, StrideRite Corp.

The following is the text of a letter written to The Council of Foundation's magazine, called Foundation News and Commentary

Having strong associations with Brazil since 1964 our family is currently launching BRAYCE (Brazilian and American Youth Cultural Exchange Inc.). Our goal is to provide the funding and organizational bridge between established youth training organizations in Brazil and the United States. Our first program is designed to bring selected underprivileged youngsters who are already in training programs in Rio de Janeiro to the United States to enhance life and leadership skills necessary for them to lead vital house building, sanitation and healthcare projects in their communities.

In Rio de Janeiro, more than 40% of the population lives below the poverty level. The majority resides in favelas (slums), most with poor or no water supply, sanitation or public transport. The houses are built of flimsy materials on hillsides where frequent landslides injure and kill people. This marginalized group is often denied the most basic human rights and is victim to police violence and the terror of drug gangs. Child labor and sexual exploitation prevail, alongside diseases such as leprosy, tuberculosis and Aids. Hunger is widespread, healthcare minimal, and survival activities supersede schooling.

BRAYCE is working with Dr. Nanko van Buuren and his non-profit organization IBISS (Brazilian Institute for Development and Innovation in Social Healthcare) to identify young leaders graduating from his training programs to enroll in the US program and to earmark them for specific projects on their return to Rio. Founded in 1990, IBISS provides funding and materials for projects in over 40 favelas. Housing, water supply, sanitation, healthcare, education and other community initiatives are key projects along with the Jovem Liderancas (Young Leadership Program). Drug lords in the slums of Rio often use young children to defend their territory. The IBISS program is aimed at rescuing "soldiers" of the drug armies, or youngsters at risk of becoming one. Through sports, cultural activities and social education these youngsters learn to collaborate with each other and restart their school careers. Individuals showing motivation and aptitude are selected for leadership training to participate in and manage the community projects. Many have earned places in high schools and local universities. One has gained a scholarship to Harvard. See www.IBISS.com.br

In January this year my wife and I visited the favela Terra Encantada (Enchanted Place) on the outskirts of Rio. We not only saw the misery firsthand, but also happily witnessed the uplifting sight of construction projects in progress that will dramatically improve the quality of life for the families in that favela. One building project was the construction of a kitchen to prepare breakfasts for young school children. Sandro, a young man "rescued" three years ago through the IBISS training program, led this project. He is back in school, is paid a reasonable salary for his project work and has a burning ambition to become a computer engineer one day.

Central to any program that selects and brings youngsters from one country to another is a comprehensive orientation and acculturation period for potential participants, their parents, relatives and local community leaders. Family and friends must understand the objectives of the program, the credibility and track record of the hosting organizations, the specific responsibilities of each person, the travel logistics, details of the entire curriculum and the expected outcomes. Finally, they need to understand the need for ongoing support. All this will be provided and explained by BRAYCE, along with English language tutoring from local language schools.

I have been deeply involved as a Board member and Vice President at Camp Hazen YMCA for several years. Located in Chester, Connecticut, the camp is one of the premier residential camps in the United States. It welcomes over 1200 campers each year and recruits 50% of the counselors from abroad, including Brazil. The Brazilian participants will enter the camp's Leadership Programs and will work alongside other potential Counselors to learn "hands-on" key project management skills such as Planning and Scheduling, Counseling, Habitat for Humanity House Building, Repair and Maintenance, Safety Standards and Teambuilding. They are taught First Aid, CPR (and can be certified), swimming, life guarding and environmental studies in addition to fun activities such as sailing, fishing, rock-climbing and mountain biking. Camp Hazen will ensure Brazilian counselors are recruited to provide cultural and language support.

BRAYCE is also talking with two other organizations in Rio for future collaboration. YMCA RIO, founded in 1893, works in under-privileged communities developing programs in educational, recreational, medical and professional assistance. Their Youth Center Project involves teenagers in activities designed to foster a sense of community, develop character, discipline and human potential to improve the quality of life, prevent children from living on the streets and advance the level of oral and written expression. HEDGE SOCIAL, founded in 2002, works closely with suburban neighborhood businesses to develop community youth leadership, health care and development projects leading to better employment opportunities locally. BRAYCE has an infrastructure in place with these three partners. A family member and a qualified counselor will staff the Rio office. Ancillary support is available from other established volunteers. Together with IBISS and Camp Hazen, they all share a common philosophy: respect for human rights, building a healthier society and investing in youth.

The successful outcome of this program will provide a steadily increasing flow of trained young people leading community projects and aspiring to meaningful life work and community service. Later, we will propose a plan for American youngsters to have the opportunity of a Brazilian experience with participation in community, sports, social and environmental studies programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our program. As a non-profit organization BRAYCE needs sponsorship and funding to create opportunities for these young people. The goal is ongoing investment in youth for the future of both Brazil and the United States. The ultimate vision for BRAYCE is to expand the youth cultural exchange model to facilitate similar programs elsewhere-in Brazil and other countries. If any reader of this letter has any suggestions regarding potential sponsorship/funding opportunities, please contact BRAYCE at the above email address.

Richard H. Calder