

Brazilian and American Youth Cultural Exchange

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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 Thirteenth BRAYCE Newsletter

We look back on 2011 with pride. BRAYCE has continued to build program capacity by strengthening partner relationships both in the USA and Brazil, developing best practices for internal operations and sustaining contact with graduates and their families. In addition, we are streamlining the recruitment process. Special thanks to Susan Wright, BRAYCE Student Coordinators Mary Devins, USA, and Marlies van Exter in Brazil, for playing a crucial part in the growing momentum of the BRAYCE effort. In 2011, **Annie Denton** interned in three of Rio's toughest favelas. Great job Annie! Participants in the **Leadership program at Camp Hazen** were also remarkable. We hope they will all be invited back this summer to continue on the Counselor Leadership track. During our recent visit to Brazil we were investigating exciting potential program expansion opportunities which we hope to report on in the next newsletter. **The Website Committee** will shortly be sending out RFP's for the enhancement of the BRAYCE site. **New Board Members** We are delighted to welcome two new members; Jim Scala from Deep River and Susan Cummiskey, from Old Lyme. (*see profiles on page 2*).

BRAYCE Partner, Dr. Nanko van Buuren, Awarded Desmond Tutu Reconciliation Fellowship



Citation from the office of Desmond Tutu

"Nanko van Buuren has strived courageously for over twenty years to build and support reconciliation processes in the deeply divided context of Rio de Janeiro. With his organization, IBISS (Brazilian Institute for Innovations in Social Health) Nanko has worked in some of the city's most violent favelas (shantytowns) to develop long-term, community-engaged responses to

social conflict, organized crime, poverty and the loss of hope. Remarkably, through his tireless commitment he has managed to establish working relationships with both the government and dozens of favela communities and to work simultaneously in territories controlled by cartels at war with one another. His ongoing struggle to establish relationships between the favela communities and the broader society and communities divided by conflict has profoundly improved the lives of many Brazilians."

In November 2011 we visited partners in Brazil, BRAYCE graduates, and their families

Cia. Dança e Arte de Paraty Established as an initiative for street children in 2005, Eduardo Fares' **Cia. Dança e Arte de Paraty** now trains nearly 400 local youngsters in ballet, classical, jazz, folkloric, modern and contemporary ballroom dance. The troupe has received many prestigious awards. BRAYCE presented the company with a Christmas tree and also pledged support for the purchase of fabrics and materials for upcoming dance festival costumes. The BRAYCE interns in Paraty teach English to students here as well as assisting with lessons and other duties. Interns also work in The Literary Festival (FLIP) and in after school programs in partner, ITAE's facility.



Tharcylla Batista's budding ballerinas



Richard riding pillion with Edvilson

Edvilson Neto (BRAYCE 2010, 2011)

Attends university classes in Angra dos Reis for Tourism. In addition, he is proving to be an exemplary community leader in Paraty. Having lost two friends to drug-related incidents he is committed to providing a set of programs to keep kids off the streets and out of trouble by offering a curriculum to include English lessons, sports, home economics and carpentry. Edvilson is confident that the leadership skills acquired at Camp Hazen will enable him to organize these workshops as well as continuing to develop and manage a small youth hostel attached to his parents home.

The BRAYCE Cultural Exchange Program 2012



Thuane Sendreti (BRAYCE 2011) recently graduated from CIEP public high school in Paraty. Here she is demonstrating her sailing skills in a day-sailor at the Paraty Nautical Institute, a sailing school for young people where she is an instructor. She has won numerous trophies, including some in a small, locally designed and built solar powered boat.



New BRAYCE Board Member
Former Real Estate Litigator, Jim Scala, has seen for himself how the BRAYCE opportunity is changing lives of favela youth. As former mentor in the VISTA program for poor children in DC, he believes strongly in diversity and the value of providing educational opportunities. Welcome, Jim!



In Rio, we visited another of **Nanko's** 60 projects. **Vila Nova** is a favela community that has been supported by IBISS for 16 years. Originally settled on a landfill by a handful of squatters, it now has a population of 12,000. Thanks to IBISS, the community has a solid infrastructure with roads, bridges, canals, sewage system and electricity. Recently, IBISS installed an Astroturf pitch for the soccer school Nanko founded. This facility is overwhelmingly popular with all the boys and youths and keeps them off the streets and out of trouble. The public school was obliged to close down because of drug violence, but the IBISS funded elementary school (frontage above) is operational already serving 500 youngsters with plans for expansion underway.

Jared Newman entertained guests during the cocktail hour at this very successful BRAYCE fundraising event in September. **Mark your calendars for the....Big Green Pizza Truck fundraiser, 2012**, to be held on Friday, June 29, from 6–11 p.m., once again at Jim Scala's spectacular riverside home in Deep River.



Gilvan Aragão (BRAYCE 2009—the tall one at the back) continues to prepare for admittance to Flight Attendant School. Meantime he is holding down a good job teaching Portuguese, Math and History at Padre Gilmar de Castro High School, and Spanish at Instituto Edu Cacional Martins de Olivera where brother Gilmar (BRAYCE 2006, 2007) also teaches. Gilmar is also Resident Staff Planner and Classroom Scheduler.



BRAYCE Welcomes New Board Member

A graduate of Arts in History from Wheaton College and Old Lyme resident, Susan believes that it is important for everyone to spend time “giving back” to the community. Among her many passions, her dedication to leadership development and to improving educational opportunities for children make her a great fit for the organization's mission and a valuable asset to the BRAYCE Board.



BRAYCE Intern 2012. Sofia Unanue, Brown University 2011. Sofia will be assigned in Rio to Nanko's *Meninas Mães* project in the favelas of City of God, Vila Cruzeiro and Terra Encantada. A native of Puerto Rico, Sofia studied at PUC University in Rio in 2008, where she co-produced a documentary on the role of media arts in low-income communities, and translated a documentary for Cinema Nosso, an NGO based in Rio. *Good Luck, Sofia!*

SAVE THE DATE for two great BRAYCE events in 2012. **The Big Green Pizza Truck** on Friday, June 29th, 2012 from 6-11 p.m., at Jim Scala's riverside home in Deep River, and a **Dance Party at The Kate Theater** in Old Saybrook, to be held on Saturday, September 8th, from 6-11 p.m.