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Social Equality and Environmental Education in Brazil

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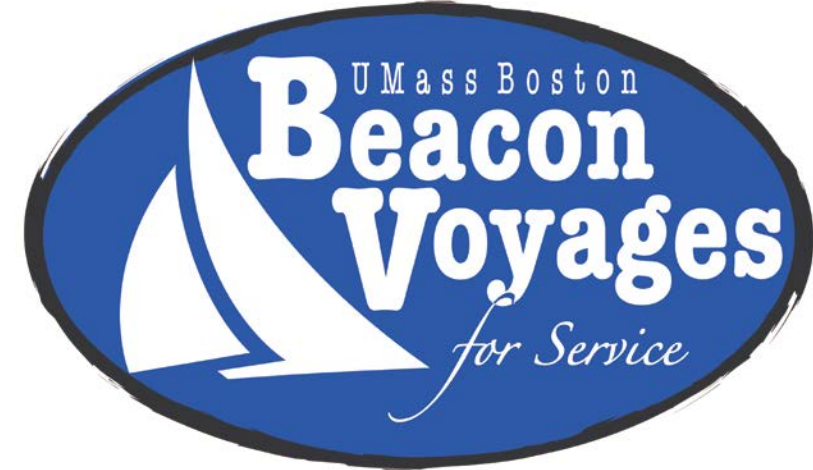
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Social Equality and Environmental Education in Brazil

Beacon Voyages for Service
Brazilian Association of Cultural Exchange
Center for Environmental Education

Summary/Abstract



Beacon Voyages for Service (BVS) is a program within the Office of Student Leadership and Community Engagement that coordinates Alternative Break programs. BVS Brazil traveled to Porto Alegre. This group of students partnered with "The Brazilian Association of Cultural Exchange (ABIC)" and the Center for Environmental Education to learn about the social problems that affect the citizens of Brazil and tackle issues of waste management. The students work alongside community members in a recycling unit and spend many hours working with local youth.

Student Impact

Student Testimonial: *"It was an amazing opportunity to experience and be part of such a progressive movement towards sustainable living. Not only in the sense of recycling and reducing society's carbon footprint but Cejak's efforts in using this method to help women become empowered by giving them an opportunity to sustain their families. Cejak is inspiring, innovating and progressive in the work that they do. It would be beneficial to have them present this progressive movement at UMass Boston where we can learn and strategically plan how we can introduce these concepts in Massachusetts and possibly move towards introducing it at the national level."* – Zaida Ismatul



Conclusion/Next Steps

The group is working to establish a partnership with the Centre for Environmental Education (CEE) and the Beacon Voyages for Service program. The proposed partnership would solidify a relationship with the community of Porto Alegre and Marli Medeiros (the founder of CEE), opening opportunities for her to come to Boston and share her experiences with environmental education and waste in Brazil.

References and Resources

Break Away – Alternative Breaks Active Citizen Curriculum - www.alternativebreaks2013.org

Brazilian Association of Cultural Exchange (ABIC) <http://www.trabalhoestudonoexterior.com.br/>

Goals and Objectives

The group goals consisted of:

- Educating students about social inequality in Brazil
- Learning about the impact of social justice organizations in improving the lives of victims of social exclusion.
- Using cultural immersion to educate students about the local outlook on poverty and inequality faced by members of a community with whom they otherwise may have had little or no direct contact.
- Providing a valuable learning experience of service and solution building through voluntary services to these disadvantaged groups.



Approaches and Methods

Students engaged in a variety of experiences to learn about the environmental issues and social inequality of Porto Alegre:

- Students met with the former governor of the state, Mr. Raul Pont, the Minister of Public Health, the Rectors and department heads of two public health universities in the state. The students were able to learn more about the Brazilian model of participatory democracy and how the implementation of these models allows for community organizations to flourish
- Student volunteered with the Center for Environmental Education, sorting and separating garbage to promote recycling efforts in Brazil
- Student participants volunteered with Cejak, a local school, working with youth and painting a mural for the school

Partnerships and Contacts

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BVS Program Director: Sherrod Williams, Director, Student Leadership and Community engagement - sherrod.williams@umb.edu

Brazilian Association of Cultural Exchange (ABIC) – Danilla Baravalle, the International Coordinator for ABIC receptivo@abic.org.br

Center for Environmental Education (CEW) – Marli Medeiros, President and Founder