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BRAZIL VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Introduction

This Handbook was written to provide you with useful information regarding your participation in an Amizade sponsored program. It answers many of the frequently asked questions by previous participants. We encourage your feedback on how it can be improved for future participants. Please read this entire handbook carefully and contact our office if you have any questions.

Amizade's Mission & Vision

Amizade encourages intercultural exploration and understanding through community-driven service-learning courses and volunteer programs. Amizade imagines a world in which all people have the opportunity to explore and grow, realize their ability to make change, and embrace their responsibility to build a better world.

Amizade's Commitment

At the heart of Amizade is the sincere belief that intercultural understanding & the development of global citizens is essential to our increasingly connected global world. We are committed to providing you with an intercultural experience that allows you to make concrete contributions to a community resulting in a deeper understanding of your role in the global community.

Approach to Service

Ethic of Service

Amizade strives to promote an "ethic of service" on all our programs. This means that we envision the entire experience as one of service to our fellow human beings. There will be scheduled time for completing service projects on each program but we also encourage you to carry your ethic of service with you throughout the program. You can do this by volunteering to help with food preparation, cleaning, or various other daily tasks.

As guests in the host community, Amizade volunteers are encouraged to act respectfully in all community interactions. The global service experience provides a unique opportunity to learn from the traditions, beliefs, and customs of a new community. Since most Amizade volunteers come from outside of the community, they are often seen as "ambassadors" representing their countries and are able to use this opportunity to share positively about their culture. At the same time, volunteers have the unique opportunity of experiencing another culture while taking the time to absorb and respect new world views.

Volunteer Opportunities

While in Brazil, volunteers service will vary depending on their placement. Volunteers may help to work with at risk youth at the non profit organization Pastoral de Menor. Individuals that are volunteering as part of a group will help with construction. The needs of the community will determine our service project which may include building new facilities such as classrooms or workshops at Pastoral satellite sites as part of their goal to expand programming all over the region. Please refer to your specific program sheet for more detailed information about your volunteer program.

The On-Site Experience

Amizade Staff

Amizade programs are staffed by a variety of motivated, trained people. We encourage you to get to know the staff members that will be coordinating your volunteer program. Any concerns or questions during the in-country experience should be directed to the appropriate Amizade staff.

Site Director, Geli Olivera

The site director is the primary program contact responsible for coordinating volunteers. The site director is responsible for coordination of logistics such as greeting volunteers, arranging housing and meals, setting up cultural experiences with local community members, and leading reflection discussions. Coordination also involves setting up the service project, arranging transportation to and from various locations, partnering with local masons and builders, procuring building supplies, and any other related planning. Geli will work closely with volunteer placements when they first arrive to help arrange everything. For customized group programs, she will be with the group for the majority of the time.

On-Site Orientation

Upon arrival in Brazil, Amizade will hold a program orientation for all volunteers. Many issues such as health, safety, and security will be addressed as well as site logistics, standard procedures, and other important information that will benefit each volunteer to know.

Group Living

Amizade programs generally have a strong core element built around group living. For many people, living, volunteering, studying, completing projects, and spending leisure time in a group may be new. Therefore we ask all Amizade volunteers to approach group interaction with flexibility, openness, and constructive communication. We strive to respect each other's space and needs while also supporting each other to achieve personal goals on the program.

Flexibility

Flexibility on behalf of the participants is the most important element on an Amizade program. Itineraries may change at the last minute in order to meet current community needs or participate in unexpected opportunities for recreational, educational, or cultural exploration. Many aspects of traveling are unpredictable and time-consuming, so be prepared to enjoy the unexpected surprises and embrace the opportunities they provide!

Housing

All volunteers, whether participating in a individual placement or a group program will be housed at the Fundação Esperança compound. Esperança is a non-profit organization, which provides health care along the Amazon. Doctors who volunteer for Esperança normally occupy the dormitory. There are ten rooms; a bathroom is shared between two rooms. Your room will be locked, and there are security guards on the grounds. Bedding, soap and towels are provided. Please check with our office prior to the program start date for changes in your accommodations.

Meals

Eating abroad is an adventure of new tastes, smells, and meals! Since you are living as part of the community, you will have the opportunity to try genuine local dishes. You may be eating the same or similar food regularly if that is the local custom. Amizade will provide three meals a day. Fish is the main dish both in the Esperança kitchen and in restaurants. However, chicken and meat are served regularly. There is an open kitchen which volunteers are welcome to help themselves to. Three meals are prepared every day, Monday through Saturday. The approximate times are: Breakfast: 7:00 - 8:00; Lunch: 11:30 - 1:00, Dinner: 5:30 - 7:00. After each meal, we ask that volunteers put their dishes in or next to the sink. If you are the last person to eat dinner, please put any perishable food away. If you wish to try some of the local restaurants, or if you know that you will not be eating a meal at the dining hall, please inform the cooks in advance.

Note to Vegetarians

Vegetarianism is not very common in Brazil. While tropical fruit is common, vegetables are not. Amizade will make every effort to provide vegetarian options, but sometimes they will need to be supplemented with further protein and vitamins. We encourage vegetarians to bring healthy snacks and vitamins with

them. Please indicate your dietary needs and restrictions on your Amizade Medical Form so we can best prepare for you.



Transportation on Site

For Individual placements, volunteers will have the choice of walking, taking the bus or a taxi. Paying the fees for transportation is the responsibility of volunteers. For group programs, transportation will be arranged for the duration of the program.

Laundry

You will put your dirty laundry in the basket or in a small pile in your room. Laundry is collected every other day. Since there are no dryers, clothes will be dried by the sun. For this reason we ask that volunteers avoid bringing clothes that require special care. You usually will get your clothes back 2-4 days after it is collected. The laundry service is not perfect, and they will often mix up a couple items with the other volunteers. You may want to label your clothes - especially underwear and socks.

Climate and Weather

The climate in Santarém is quite comfortable. Although it is hot and humid, with 100% cotton clothes and a breeze, the weather is acceptable. There are two distinct seasons; rainy (January to June) and dry (July to December). Average temperature is 90 F degrees all year round.

Cultural and Recreational Activities

There are plenty of things to do in Santarém. There is at least one scheduled hike through the jungle. However, if you would like to go again in your free time, it can be arranged. You can take a ride on an Amazonian style boat down the Tapajós and Amazon Rivers where gray and pink dolphins play off of Santarém's shores. You can fish for piranha or another of the 1000 different species of fish that live in the Amazon, or just enjoy the beautiful scenery.

Everyday, the merchants of Santarém display a wide assortment of fish, meats, fruits, and vegetables in an open air market. The best time to go, however, is early (6:30-7:00) on Saturday morning. The Tropical Hotel has a nice swimming pool, and they have given permission to Amizade/Fundação Esperança to allow the volunteers to use the pool for free.

Brazilians love to dance. Many of the local nightclubs have dances, which range from Samba to Lambada to Disco. They often have live music, which start around 11:00 P.M.

Each volunteer on an Amizade program has different interests and objectives. If there is something that you would like to do that is not scheduled or planned, let us know, and we will try to arrange it for you.

Please note that payments for recreational activities, unless indicated on the itinerary, are the responsibility of the individual volunteers. Amizade staff will be happy to provide volunteers with information about possible recreational activities as well as transportation if it is necessary.

Culture and History

Even though Brazil is a tropical paradise, most of the population lives in abject poverty. The demand for service is great. The Brazil program is based in Santarém, 500 miles up from the mouth of the mighty Amazon River. Santarém is a city of approximately 250,000 people. By far the largest and most populous country in South America, Brazil has overcome more than half a century of military intervention in the governance of the country to pursue industrial and agricultural growth and development. Highly unequal income distribution remains a pressing problem. Deforestation in the Amazon Basin is destroying the habitat and endangering a multitude of plant and animal species indigenous to the area. There is also a lucrative illegal wildlife trade in Brazil. Air and water pollution in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, and many other large cities is a continuing problem. Land degradation and water pollution caused by improper mining activities, wetland degradation, and severe oil spills have all contributed to Brazil's poor environmental record.

With its estimated 177 million inhabitants, Brazil has the largest population in Latin America and ranks fifth in the world. The majority of people live in the south-central area, which includes the industrial cities of Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Belo Horizonte. Urban growth has been rapid; by 2000, 78% of the total population were living in urban areas. This growth has aided economic development but also has created serious social, security, environmental, and political problems for major cities.

Six major groups make up the Brazilian population: the Portuguese, who colonized Brazil in the 16th century; Africans brought to Brazil as slaves; various other European, Middle Eastern, and Asian immigrant groups who have settled in Brazil since the mid-19th century; and indigenous peoples of Tupi and Guarani language stock. Intermarriage between the Portuguese and indigenous people or slaves was common. Although the major European ethnic stock of Brazil was originally Portuguese, subsequent waves of immigration have contributed to a diverse ethnic and cultural heritage.



From 1875 until 1960, about 5 million Europeans immigrated to Brazil, settling mainly in the four southern states of Sao Paulo, Parana, Santa Catarina, and Rio Grande do Sul. Immigrants have come mainly from Italy, Germany, Spain, Japan, Poland, and the Middle East. The largest Japanese community outside Japan is in Sao Paulo. Despite class distinctions, national identity is strong, and racial friction is a relatively new phenomenon. Indigenous full-blooded Indians, located mainly in the northern and western border regions and in the upper Amazon Basin, constitute less than 1% of the population. Their numbers are declining as contact with the outside world and commercial expansion into the interior increase. Brazilian Government programs to establish reservations and to provide other forms of assistance have existed for years but are controversial and often ineffective.

Brazil is the only Portuguese-speaking nation in the Americas. About 80% of all Brazilians belong to the Roman Catholic Church; most others are Protestant or follow practices derived from African religions.

Community Background

Santarém, Brazil is located on the confluence of the Tapajós and Amazon Rivers. This tropical paradise is in need of help. Due to the exploitation of resources, which has included cutting thousands of acres of forest, over-fishing, and mining, the waters of the two rivers are becoming increasingly more polluted, and employment opportunities are dwindling. Poverty and the problems associated with poverty such as inadequate housing, poor health and nutrition, and a failing educational system are prevalent throughout Santarém and its surrounding regions. The average monthly income is equivalent to US\$100. Due to a lack of adequate infrastructure in rural areas, the migration of people to Santarém has been very large. The city has a population of over 250,000 people. Consequently, the city, with its already limited resources, has not been able provide services for the ever-growing population and has been unable to address the expanding rate of poverty, especially for those who live in the periphery of Santarém. Source: Amazon Africa Association Website.

Preparing for Your Program

Transportation to Site

You will be flying in and out of the Santarém, Brazil airport. An Amizade staff person will meet you at the airport to transport you to the program site. All volunteers are required to arrive on or before the scheduled program start date and depart on or after the scheduled finish date. If volunteers arrive early or stay late, the individual volunteer will need to make his/her own arrangements for food, lodging, and airport transfer.

Travel Documents

The following information is for US citizens going abroad. If you are a non-US citizen, you must check with the consulate in your country regarding travel documents including passport and visa requirements.

A passport and **Tourist** visa are required for U.S. citizens traveling to Brazil for any purpose. Brazilian visas must be obtained in advance from the Brazilian Embassy or consulate nearest to the traveler's place of residence. There are no "airport visas," and immigration authorities will refuse entry to Brazil to anyone not possessing a valid visa. All Brazilian visas, regardless of the length of validity, must initially be used within 90 days of the issuance date or will no longer be valid. Immigration authorities will not allow entry into Brazil without a valid visa. If you are a non-US citizen, you must check with the consulate in your country regarding travel documents including passport and visa requirements.

Please visit the following website for information on the entry requirements for US Citizens traveling abroad: <http://travel.state.gov/foreignentryreqs.html>

Please be prepared in case of losing your wallet, passport, or other travel documents. Bring copies of all your important travel documents and monetary documents, especially your passport, and store one set of copies in your luggage while leaving another set of copies with your emergency contact at home.

VISA INSTRUCTIONS – Please contact your appropriate consulate for visa application:
<http://www.brasilemb.org/consulado/consular1.shtml>

The Brazil Consulate can be very meticulous about the visa application and it is very important you follow all the instructions. If you make a mistake you will need to re-do the form completely. Please contact the Amizade office for the necessary information that you will need to complete the visa application.

Health & Safety

General Notes

- Traveling often affects one's health so it is imperative that all volunteers are in good physical condition.
- Typical travel ailments include stomach upsets and diarrhea, bug bites, jet lag, minor cuts, scrapes, bruises, and sunburn. Please feel free to bring travel-sized portions of over the counter medicines such as headache medicine, stomach medicines, sun block, bug spray, band-aids, etc.
- An on-site Amizade staff member will have a first aid kit.
- Check with your medical physician regarding further information about healthy travel abroad.

Immunizations

Participants in Amizade programs are solely responsible for receiving immunizations. Amizade defers all recommendations to the current recommendations and requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). All participants are expected to consult the CDC for required and recommended immunizations for the country or countries they will be visiting for their Amizade program. See your doctor at least 4–6 weeks before your trip to allow time for immunizations to take effect.

**The following information was taken from the CDC website, www.cdc.gov, on July 26, 2006.
Please check the website for up to date information.**

Recommended Vaccinations:

- [Hepatitis A](#) or immune globulin (IG).
- [Hepatitis B](#), if you might be exposed to blood (for example, health-care workers), have sexual contact with the local population, stay >6 months in the region, or be exposed through medical treatment.
- [Rabies](#), if you might be exposed to wild or domestic animals through your work or recreation.
- [Typhoid](#), particularly if you are visiting developing countries in this region.
- As needed, booster doses for [tetanus-diphtheria](#) and [measles](#). [Hepatitis B](#) vaccine is now recommended for all infants and for children ages 11–12 years who did not complete the series as infants.
- Travelers to Brazil should take one of the following antimalarial drugs: (listed alphabetically): atovaquone/proguanil, doxycycline, mefloquine, or primaquine (in special circumstances).

Required Vaccinations:

- [Yellow Fever](#) vaccination

For more information:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30333
U.S.A
(404) 639-3311
(404) 639-3312 (TTY)

Public Inquiries (404) 639-3534 and (800) 311-3435
National Immunization Hotline (English) 1-800-232-2522
National Immunization Hotline (Spanish) 1-800-232-0233
Traveler's Health 1-877-394-8747

Traveler's Health Website: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm>
Email form: <http://www.cdc.gov/netinfo.htm>

Prescription Medicines

If you have prescription medicines, bring them in the original prescription bottles with your name on them and bring an ample supply for the duration of your program. In some countries, certain medicines are not as readily available.

The Best Medicine is "Preventative Medicine"

Throughout the program, please rest, drink plenty of water, and take care to avoid overexposure to the sun. While on the program, let the Amizade staff know if you have any concerns about your health and contact them immediately if you experience a health emergency.

Amizade Medical and Insurance Form

All volunteers are required to complete and submit the Amizade Medical and Insurance Form prior to participation. It is imperative that you complete this form as comprehensively as possible so Amizade staff can best address medical situations on site. On this form you will also list your immunization record. Please consult with your physician regarding your healthy participation in the service work and activities for your program and recommended immunizations.

It is the responsibility of every Amizade participant to make sure that they have adequate medical coverage for the duration of any Amizade program.

Safety

As a volunteer in the community you will have local companions and friends. Volunteers should observe and imitate local customs regarding safety. Regardless of where you are it is best to travel in pairs, especially at night. We highly recommend taking a taxi after dark. Be cautious with your money and make sure you store it in a safe place or money belt.

Trust your instincts. If you do not feel safe in a situation or someone's behavior is making you uncomfortable, get out of the situation immediately. Firmly say "no" to any invitation you do not want and turn away. Ignore persistent overtures.

Money Matters

Currency Converter

For the latest conversion rate for your country, please visit www.xe.com.

Spending Money

Please bring some spending money to use for costs beyond those covered by the Amizade fee. Credit cards are accepted all over Brazil and ATM's are available in Santarem. It is very important to inform your bank that you will be using your card to withdrawal money while in Brazil. This will help to avoid them from issuing a "hold" on your card which prevents one from withdrawing money.

Packing List

PLEASE PACK LIGHTLY!

You should bring a maximum of two bags. Ideally, this includes one medium-sized suitcase/duffel bag and a smaller daypack for daily activities. You should be able to carry your luggage comfortably by yourself. Rolling luggage does not always work effectively in developing countries. Please use your best judgment regarding valuables. Amizade does not recommend that volunteers bring expensive jewelry, electronics, laptops, etc. Amizade is not reliable for lost or stolen articles.

Recommended Packing List: (Please keep in mind that if you are on an individual placement, you will not need to bring work clothes for the construction site)

- Documents: passport, airline tickets, personal health insurance information, and ATM/credit cards (and copies of each in a separate place)
- Cash or traveler's checks and money belt or wallet
- Family photos to share with the community
- Postcards of your hometown to share with the community
- Water bottle
- Notebook or journal and pens
- Travel alarm clock
- Watch
- Camera and film
- Knapsack or book bag
- Towel and Wash cloth
- Toiletries – just the basics such as toothbrush, toothpaste, travel-sized shampoo, and soap
- Prescriptions in original bottles
- Over-the-counter medications (headache, stomach, band-aids, anti-itch cream)
- Clothing
 - T-shirts
 - Two pair of pants (one pair for working)
 - One nice outfit
 - Socks and underwear
 - Pajamas
 - One long sleeve shirt, sweatshirt, or jacket
- Shower shoes or flip-flops
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Work boots if applicable (a sturdy hiking boot will work well)
- Work gloves if applicable
- Flashlight & batteries
- Bathing suit
- Sun protection: bandanas, hat, sunglasses and sun block
- Bug spray
- Shorts and comfortable clothes for warm weather

Gifts

You may choose to bring small gifts or thank you cards for community members. Photographs are generally appreciated around the world so feel free to collect addresses and mail pictures back if possible.

While Your Away

Culture Shock

Culture shock is a term used to describe the emotional upset that may occur when a person travels to a new culture. When experiencing culture shock, people sometimes feel unsure about what is appropriate in the new culture, confused about how to manage daily tasks (such as banking or telephoning), frustrated with managing language and cultural barriers and generally vulnerable. This experience is normal and affects people at different times throughout a cultural immersion program. Remember to rest, eat and take care of your physical and emotional needs in order to function at your best!

Drug Use

Amizade in no way encourages the use of, or purchase of drugs while visiting any of our sites. As an organization, our primary concern is that of safety for our volunteers. For this reason, we adhere to a drug-free policy for all of our programs. We ask that all volunteers please respect this as a rule of Amizade. Failure to comply with this rule is grounds for removal from the program.

Contacting Home

The phone system in Brazil is pulse, not tone, so dial slowly. We are one hour ahead of U.S. Eastern Standard Time. In country telephone cards are available, but normally are very expensive. Internet café are becoming more popular. There is a telephone store in Santarém where calls can be placed at specified hours.

AMIZADE CONTACT INFORMATION

If someone from home needs to contact a volunteer with an emergency message, they can phone the Amizade US office to relay a message.

- **Amizade US Office Phone:** 304-293-6049. This phone line is staffed 8 am – 4:30 pm EST from Monday - Friday.
 - Have the person leave:
 - Their name
 - Your name
 - Their phone number
 - The message to be relayed
- **Amizade Emergency Phone #:** 412-225-3699. This phone line is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week during volunteer programs.

To call the United States from Brazil, dial 00-1-area code-local number. For instance, if you were to call Amizade from Brazil, you would dial 00-1-304-293-6049.

Returning Home

Reverse Culture Shock

Many participants find that they encounter difficulties when transitioning home. Volunteers will be happy to return home and visit with family and friends but after the initial reunions take place, they often find that they experience problems when trying to communicate the experience they had abroad. Many people feel alienated, knowing that they have grown while many of those around them remain the same. It may help to connect with others who have had similar travel experiences, as they understand the need to talk about the experience in greater detail.

COMMON PORTUGUESE WORDS

Airport	aeroporto	Sick	doente
Bad	mau, ruim	Sister	irmã
Bathroom	banheiro	Small	pequeno
Book	livro	Son	filho, menino, rapaz,
Brick	tijolo	Street	rua
Brother	irmão	Study	estudar, estudo
Cement	cimento	Teacher	professor, mestre, mestra
Child	menino, menina, criança	Understand	compreenda
Children	jovem, moço	Want	anseio, queira
Cold	constipação, resfriado, frio	Water	água
Culture	cultura, civilização	Wife	esposa, mulher
Daughter	filha	Work	trabalhar, funcionar, trabalho
Day	dia	Yes	sim
Drink	beber, bebida		
Explore	escavar, explorar, investigar	One	um, uma
Family	família	Two	dois, duas
Father	pai	Three	três
Feel	sensação	Four	quatro
Food	alimento, comida	Five	cinco
Fork	família	Six	seis
Friendship	amizade	Seven	sete
Good	bom	Eight	oito
Goodbye	adeus	Nine	nove
Goodnight	boa noite	Ten	dez
Greeting	cumprimento		
Hello	bom dia, olá	Monday	Segunda-feira
Help	ajuda, auxílio, ajudar	Tuesday	Terça-feira
Hot	cálido, quente	Wednesday	Quarta-feira
How Much	quanto	Thursday	Quinta-feira
Husband	cônjuge, esposo, marido	Friday	Sexta-feira
Kitchen	cozinha	Saturday	Sábado
Knife	faca	Sunday	Domingo
Large	grande		
Learn	aprenda, aprender	January	Janeiro
Left	esquerda, canhoto, esquerdo	February	Fevereiro
Mother	mãe	March	Março
Night	noite	April	Abril
No	não	May	Maio
Paper	papel	June	Junho
Pencil	lápiz	July	Julho
People	gente, povo, nação	August	Agosto
Please	por favor	September	Setembro
Right	destro, direito	October	Outubro
River	rio	November	Novembro
School	escola	December	Dezembr
Serve	saque, server		
Shirt	camisa		