Brazilian Teachers Experience U.S. Education and Culture


Now in its second year, the program focused on knowledge of and exposure to contexts in which English is taught to speakers of other languages, along with a more general understanding of U.S. education and culture. In addition to attending lectures on teaching methodology and the American educational system, participants visited local schools and other ESL programs and shared an evening dinner with a local Austin host.

“I personally enjoyed the moments I interacted with people around here—at the bus, at the supermarket, and with my American dinner host, as well,” said Fernanda Silva de Oliveira, from Brasilia. “People were very friendly.”

The visiting Brazilians also had the unique opportunity to practice their English conversation skills in overlapping activities with a separate TIEC training program for English teachers from Korea, including a professional networking luncheon facilitated by TIEP instructors.

Korean Fulbright Teachers Complete Rigorous Seven-Week Program in Texas

Twenty-two Korean elementary, middle, and high school teachers participated in a seven week program, January 4 – February 19, 2016, that focused on teaching English as a second language, American culture, the U.S. educational system, and public speaking skills.

This was the fifteenth such group to be trained at TIEC since 2002 under the auspices of the Korean-American Educational (Fulbright) Commission.

A highlight of the program for many participants was a two-week site residency in public schools and home stays in communities across Texas, facilitated by local volunteers and participating Texas universities.

Eunsuk Shin, from Daegu, Korea, spent her residency at Calhoun Middle School in Denton. “After my classroom presentation about Korean culture,” she said, “the students would greet me in Korean whenever they saw me. It was very cute, and very touching. That’s something I’ll remember.”
Chien Dong, recipient of the inaugural TIEP at Lamar annual scholarship last year, continued his record of academic excellence by being named to Lamar University’s President’s List in December of 2015 for the fall semester.

Students at Lamar University must earn a 4.0 grade point average to receive this honor. Dong was one of 612 students who qualified for the President’s List out of an overall population of almost 15,000 students.

Dong explained that his TIEP at Lamar instructors helped give him the tools to succeed in his university courses.

“The TIEP at Lamar grammar class taught by Melanie Almufti gave me a lot of skills for writing, and the vocabulary helped me with reading,” Dong said. “In the writing class with Alex Monceaux, I had opportunities to present research at conferences and gain confidence in my presentation skills.”

Dong added that he used the scholarship to buy textbooks and a computer. The tuition waiver he received through the scholarship saved him around $10,000 this year.

Dong traveled from his home in Vietnam to the U.S. in the fall of 2014 to study English at TIEP at Lamar and later enrolled in Lamar University, starting in the fall of 2015. He is now considering options for a master’s degree in chemical engineering after completing his bachelor’s, with Lamar University as his probable first choice.

**Japanese Undergraduates Combine English Study and Cultural Immersion**

Twenty-four Japanese students from Nihon University’s College of International Relations in Mishima are devoting their spring vacation to studying English at TIEC, February 8 – March 5, 2016. This is the tenth Nihon University group to participate in this customized academic and cultural enrichment program.

The four-week program features intensive English-language training by TIEP instructors in addition to field trips to the Texas State Capitol, the city of San Antonio, a university campus, and other extracurricular activities. Students spend all four weeks in a home stay with a local Austin family.

Nihon University professor Hirokazu Toma, who studied at TIEP before attending Austin Community College and, later, earning a master’s degree at St. Edwards University, accompanied the students during the first few days of the program.

“I came to Austin as a student and really liked it,” Toma recalled. “That experience is something I’m glad to share with young people. The fun part, actually, is seeing the change in students after their stay here.”