Last month, the ELI welcomed 50 public high school teachers from Brazil as part of a Professional Development Program. They participated in the Intensive English Communication classes at the ELI and also had 180 hours of classes and labs at the College of Education. In order to participate in this program, they had to go through a competitive process and in doing so many have left their families, friends and loved ones behind. The teachers were placed in 4 groups: low intermediate, high intermediate and advanced. Heather, Michele, Bill and Laura were the instructors who had the pleasure of teaching them for the past 4 weeks. The experience of teaching the Brazilians was formidable.

“It was such a pleasure to come to class and be greeted with such enthusiasm and cheerfulness. They wanted to know everything about the American lifestyle, and they were eager to share the many aspects of the Brazilian culture. These few weeks have been simply amazing and I will miss them dearly.”

Laura Lamour

“During the summer break at the ELI, I had the distinct pleasure of teaching a group of teachers and Fulbright scholars from Brazil.
These students are very friendly and highly professional, and I enjoyed my time with them immensely. I only wish they could stay longer! I intend to stay in touch with them via Facebook and sincerely hope that they are able to come back to Miami (not go back to Miami...come back vs. go back...haha) in the very near future! You will all be missed.”

Bill Hennesey

“In any given semester, a teacher is able to rave about one or two great students, but it is rare to feel that way about an entire class. This June, I was blessed to teach the Brazilian cohort. These students were true academics with a zest for learning. Every morning, I got to open the classroom door to their eager smiling faces, and then it became time for them to teach me! I usually struggle to get my students to speak up during their presentations, but this group was right at home in front of the class (well, I guess it isn’t as much of a surprise as they are teachers after all). Their work proved outstanding. My fondest memories of these days will be their beautiful words and heartfelt appreciation for their time here. Every student in this group was gracious and lovely to work with. They taught me a lot about their country and their way of life. It was a truly an enriching experience for me.”

Heather Reardon

“The Brazilians experience has been a refreshing reminder of how rewarding this profession is. They are terrific! I greatly admire their dedication, commitment, and strong work ethic.”

Michele Hosang
My experience in the United States has been so stimulating and rewarding that I may say that I feel as though I am American. In fact, I am not talking about the American dream and goals, but when we study languages, we become citizens of the world. I say that because it is impossible to consider a language without a culture and vice-versa.

However, the hilarious aspect of the whole story lies in the fact that when I first got off the yellow bus full of people I had never seen in my life (along with their suitcases), my feeling was totally the opposite. “I want to go back to my country; I won’t stay,” I thought. I believed I wouldn’t stand the homesickness, and I would miss my privacy, among other thoughts.

“I want to go back!” Ironically and also surprisingly, the first thing I learned on the very first day of Professor William Hennessey’s class was the difference between the verbs to come back and to go back. What a shame! So, I decided to abide by the grammar rules and didn’t go back to my hometown but to my dormitory at Panther Hall. My thought was “grammatically wrong”, but my attitude was the most “accurate” one. Lucky me!

I remained at FIU and since then I have had the opportunity to experience all the multicultural and interpersonal relations I have ever had. These days have been filled with interesting lessons about diverse disciplines and the best part is that all the lessons are followed by differences in the backgrounds of each professor. The following are the disciplines and their respective professors: Contrastive Phonology (Simone); Integrated Language Skills (William Hennessey); Online Tools (Aixa); Grammar (Kyle); Critical Thinking and Culture (Teresa Lucas); Lesson Plans (Rita); Teaching, Listening and Speaking (Sean).

Another relevant point to be mentioned has been the possibility of overlapping work, studies and hobbies. The Brazilian PDPI group has already visited many beautiful places such as the Everglades, the Art District in Miami, South Beach, Little Havana and many other interesting sites in Miami.

Whether I go back or come back (I’m at home anyway), and I am sure both attitudes will be towards a unique purpose: to empower the English learning process in Brazil and share all that was learned among my peers. In addition, I hope to facilitate closer ties between The United States and Brazil because educated citizens can make a better world, and it doesn’t matter where we are, or where we come from. We belong to the same global village, and everything should promote unity among people and their countries.

Student Spotlight: Daniella Oliva
Summer Term Activities at the ELI

We have a semester filled with fun and exciting activities for the students here at the ELI.

Week 1 Welcome Breakfast

Week 1 Dinner at Ra Sushi
5829 SW 73rd St, Miami
(305) 341-0092

Week 2 Bowling at Strike in Sunset Place
There is a cover charge of $10
11401 NW 12th St, Miami
(305) 594-0200

Week 3 Pool Party on Campus
Bring your bathing suit and suntan lotion for some fun in the sun!

Week 4 Roller skating at Super Wheels
12265 SW 112th St, Miami
(305) 270-9386

Week 6 Water Park at Rapids
There is a cover of $40

Week 7 Dance Party on campus in GC 245

If you are interested in practicing your English after classes, you have the opportunity to do so! Monday through Friday communication classes will be held with Katrina from 4-5pm. This can serve as laboratory hours. Mondays will be reserved for Levels 1 and 2, Tuesdays 3 and 4, and Wednesdays 4-6. On Thursdays, all levels will meet together, and on Fridays, you will have the opportunity to have private tutoring lessons with Katrina.