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## Brazilians Without Borders Active at TTU

There is a fairly large cohort of foreign students at Tennessee Tech University (as of the Fall 2013, 979 international students are on our campus), and students from Brazil are the third largest nationality among the international student population. That isn't by accident or coincidence; in 2011, Brazil's Ministry of Education and Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation established a partnership with the Obama administration and others to support study and research abroad in fields such as sustainable agriculture, biotechnology, materials, earth sciences, nanotechnology and other science/technology/engineering/mathematics areas.



The Brazilian government made a commitment to send 100,000 of their best and brightest abroad to some of the world's best universities. TTU was able to apply to be one of the schools to host these students. The application process was quite lengthy and the host universities had to commit to offer on-campus housing and offer international support to the students during their stay.

"After September 11, the United States government really tightened restrictions on immigration," said Charlie Wilkerson, TTU's director of International Education. "The U.S., the United Kingdom and Australia are all pretty heavy handed on the visa process and this program is a way around that for Brazilian students. TTU is actually in the top ten universities (hosting students in the Science Without Borders program) for Brazilian students in the U.S."

Brazil has roughly 2400 universities, ranging from lower-government funded state institutions to very expensive private universities (many of which are religious affiliated); many of the private universities are beyond the financial reach of many of the Brazilian students, making the Science Without Borders program a good prospect.

The program does come with a few caveats, one of which is the students who complete the program are required to return to Brazil for a minimum two-year residency after graduation (which is a condition of the J-1 visa). It's also mandatory that students live on campus, and an internship (paid or unpaid) is not mandatory but highly encouraged in their field of study. In the past 3 years TTU has welcomed 3 cycles of these wonderful students, we hope to continue to support this special group of students. TTU hopes these students will create interest for our American students to study abroad.

*Last edited 2014.10.15 by Davis, Cynthia.*