

Barb and Gus de Souza
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November 29, 2018 update

Dear Partners in Mission,

I write you from snowy and cold Wisconsin! Oh, how we really miss that Rio de Janeiro warmth!!! It was such a thrill when Melanie and Norman Bliss (dear friends of ours from the early 80s when we were living in River Falls, WI while I was in seminary, and long-time supporters of our mission in Brasil) said they were going to be in Brasil and would like to visit the new Clinic and our continued mission work of our NGO, Educadoras Comunitarias de Saude (AECS). I was excited and shed a tear or two for I might never see the never see the clinic named after me, but dear friends from River Falls would. I believe the pictures Melanie and Norman chose to include below show what our mission has become today. The focus of the mission to empower women through Health Education, is now also empowering children and adolescents in the community; to give them a chance to do the extra things that public schools do not supply; to give them fun, joy and comradeship, the feeling of belonging to a safe group instead of getting involved in the wrong groups which could lead to drug use and crime; to give them a chance for ownership of a place, a sort of sanctuary, where they could become part of a learning experience of cooperation and participation with others in doing special programs and learning to bond with others, which in the public school system is difficult for students from shanty towns. But in order to do this, since there is no government funding for these types of programs, Bel, dedicated and following her loyalty to me and the NGO, took over and found programs that would bring money to keep the NGO going. Thus the rentees in our NGO (original) building: dentists, school coaches, Pilates, dance and music instructors, etc. She is still looking for more persons with programs to rent space to become a self-sufficient community center. And, oh, how this is needed in the shanty towns of the big cities! There have been other examples written of young people from the other shanty towns of major cities in Brasil, in which these types of extra teaching opportunities have saved lives and created leaders for the future. Certainly this continues our mission of education and health, mental and physical, a road to empowerment.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year filled with peace and love for all!

We are grateful for your continued support as you are God's hands in Mission,

Barb and Gus

A note and pictures from Norman and Melanie Bliss, long-time supporters of the mission work founded by Barbara de Souza: "In August 2018, we traveled to Rio de Janeiro to attend a scientific conference on soils. One of the highlights of our visit was a chance to see the continuing activities of this mission. About a year ago, the city opened a beautiful new health clinic in the neighborhood of Canal do Anil, and named it the "Clínica da Família Barbara Mosley de Souza" (the Barbara Mosley de Souza Family Clinic). We are so proud to see Barbara's name on this busy facility, and know how well the people are being served.



Melanie, Bel, and Niceia in front of the new clinic.



Interior garden, with doors to individual service areas.

With the new clinic in operation, Bel and the others continuing the work of the mission, have been redefining their role. Central to the new role is an after-school program for young people (mostly ages 6 to 16) to develop an understanding of their culture through music, dance, art, language training, computer skills, and related activities. The children are excited to be there, and they are in a safe place (off the streets) where they can learn and grow. After a wonderful meal hosted by the board of directors and staff, we toured the new clinic, and then came back for an after-school “show” by the children performing their music and dance. To see both boys and girls finding a sense of purpose was heartwarming for us.

Some of the space in the building is being rented to Dentists, and they are seeking additional tenants. Some of the programs, such as Pilates and Physical Therapy are continuing, as they are not covered by the city in the new clinic. Overall, we are very impressed by the dedication of the staff, the importance of maintaining the building, and the success in developing a vibrant and vital after-school program.

It is wonderful to see the loving and caring place for the children to develop. We strongly encourage continued support for this program and its fulfilling new mission. Let us know if you would like a more complete presentation to your group or church.

Norman and Melanie Bliss, (605) 335-1148, bliss@sio.midco.net “



Singer, guitar instructor, and guitar students



The boys danced to a traditional instrument



Group photo with staff, youth, and us.



Bel (Director) and Daniel (English teacher)



Computer lab where Daniel teaches English



An after-school snack



It's good to be together



Older youth singing and dancing



Younger girls ballet dancing



Maria Léa (Physical Therapy and Pilates Coordinator) & Melanie



The physical therapy room



The NGO building exterior, with signs for activities.

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November 27, 2018 update

Information regarding Rev. Barbara and Agostinho (Gus) de Souza's health ministry in Brazil.

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3. **Website:** <https://eacsongrj.wixsite.com/site> The text is in Portuguese, but the pictures are great.
4. You can order Barb's book on Amazon: "**WHEN SLEEPING WOMEN AWAKE, MOUNTAINS WILL MOVE**" by **Barbara Mosley de Souza**
5. **Video tape:** A 12 minute video tape of Barb's ministry is available by sending a \$6.00 check to the Brazilian Fund at the address at the bottom of this page.
6. **Donations:**

A. Brazilian Fund:

Donations to the Brazilian Fund will be used for the following:

- providing for the Physical Therapy program costs not covered by the city, such as maintenance of equipment and salary for the PT coordinator
- providing support for the children's project and salary for the coordinator* and part time assistants to enrich the children's program
- providing material used for the activities of the children's program including a meal
- providing financial aid for the new programs to be initiated this year for the benefit of the community (These programs are not considered a part of the City's Family Health Program, so no Government financial support is given.)

Please make checks out to "Brazilian Fund" and send it to the address at the bottom of this page.

NOTE: For individuals needing an official tax deductible receipt, please make the check out to "First Congregational Church of River Falls" and note "Brazilian Fund" in the corner of the check. Send it to the address at the bottom of this page.

B. Endowment Fund:

Barb and Gus set up an endowment fund to ensure the continuation of their health ministry and health courses now that they are no longer able to oversee it in person. This fund will help fund all items listed above. Barb and Gus will continue to oversee the endowment fund at the United Church Foundation. However, checks can be made out to the "Brazilian Fund" noted for the "Endowment Fund".

NOTE: For individuals needing an official tax deductible receipt, please make the check out to "First Congregational Church of River Falls" and note "Brazil Endowment Fund" in the corner of the check. Send it to the address at the bottom of this page.

*The NGO had to use part of the Endowment Fund after the Clinic was moved to the new building (see pictures in newsletter), and we lost the rent the city paid for the use of our building. We don't want to take out any more right now to keep the investments growing for future use. The priority now is support for this new and vital program that you have just seen in our new building, and as the NGO becomes more independent, we will continue to grow the Endowment Fund. We also need to increase Bel's salary as she is **Coordinator, Director and Teacher, and Advertiser, even appearing on local TV.** If we cannot pay her more, she will have to take a part time job, but the mission needs her full time, for she has truly taken Barb's place in the mission. She is a college graduate with honors and could earn so much more working elsewhere.

THANK YOU for all your support of Barb and Gus's health ministry in Brazil which will continue with your help in Christ's name! Barb continues to serve on the Board of Directors of the clinic as Assistant Secretary, keeping in close contact via email and phone, and continuing to give you updates with her newsletter, translating reports from Brazil. God bless you!

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