



Journal of the International  
Coalition of YMCA Universities

## Presentation

The International Coalition of the YMCA Universities is a partnership of universities, colleges and professional training institutes that belong to or are related to several national YMCA movements. They are university-level educational institutions that promote training to prepare professionals in the several areas of relevant services offered by the YMCA movement. The idea of the partnership was initiated in the year 2000. The present coordinator is Maurício Massari, of FEFISO, SP/BRAZIL.

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### **Editorial**

Education and leadership: two strengths of YMCA!

This edition of the Coalition Journal is about strengths of YMCA since 1844.

Because of this, the seventh edition is special for us, for the Coalition and for the YMCA movement.

In this edition, we have one article, one essay and four experiences to be shared.

The article is from Germany (YMCA-University of Applied Sciences – Kassel) and focuses on the concept of YMCA-Treehouses in Europe and shows the historical, educational and psychological backgrounds of this concept. An interesting and exciting hands-on approach of outdoor education.

“Education and leadership: successfully dealing with change” is the title of the essay written by Robert J. Willey, Jr., Ph.D., Springfield College Retired Dean, and the last coordinator of the International Coalition of YMCA Universities. Interesting essay about education and change. Robert J. Willey, Jr. (our dear “Bob”) presents us with these reflections.

We have four sharing experiences: one from Germany and three from Brazil (FEFISO – Physical Education College – Sorocaba).

Professor Dr. jur. Jan-Friedrich Bruckermann offered in 2015 the students of Social Work of the fourth term the opportunity to take part in a simulated hearing of a social court trial. Stimulating experiences with the students of the YMCA-University Kassel.

From Brazil the other three experiences: one of them is about RIO 2016 Olympic Games, Volunteering and Leadership (three students of YMCA College in Sorocaba and one professor

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worked as volunteers in the Olympic games). Kleber Trevisam and Laís Gabriel de Camargo interviewed these people and show us important questions about leadership and volunteer work.

Another experience is about a project at FEFISO. This project is a program of training of its students by means of the availability of an experience of living, studying and working abroad for periods that can vary from one to three months. The students can go to Peru, Uruguay, México, Colombia and Argentina. Jorge Arcanjo da Silva (professor at FEFISO and author of the paper) shows us some of experiences of the students who took part in the program.

And to finish this edition but not less important, the experiences from Milena Sthepanie do Amaral about “Actions and inspiration: education and leadership walking together”. Milena shows us that it is important to work the difference.

I thank all of the YMCAs Colleges that contributed with this edition and I can't forget to thank Gisele de Oliveira (FEFISO, Brazil) for the helping in all 2016. Thank you, Gisele.

Once again the YMCA movement can show its strength and its projects in the Coalition Journal.

Thank you.

Maurício Massari, Ph.D.

Coordinator International Coalition of YMCA Universities

Principal – Physical Education College – Sorocaba – São Paulo - Brazil

Physical Education College

FEFISO – YMCA – Brazil

**Articles**

**Tree Houses and Outdoor Education.****The Realization of a Childhood Dream in a Successful Outdoor Educational  
Concept****Sam Brüngger, Stefan Westhauser, Germo Zimmermann**

Prof. Dr. rer. soc. Germo Zimmermann

YMCA-University of Applied Sciences

Institute for Outdoor Education

Hugo-Preuß-Str. 40

34131 Kassel (Germany)

zimmermann@cvjm-hochschule.de

## TREE HOUSES AND OUTDOOR EDUCATION

### Abstract

The hands-on approach of outdoor education has boomed in the past decades. Outdoor educational activities such as climbing, canoeing, archery, outdoor-cooking, hiking, cooperative adventure games, high and low ropes courses, orienteerings and wilderness treks as well as winter activities (snowshoe hiking, igloo-building) are being employed in different fields of youth work and work with children. “Outdoor education plays an important role in leisure and learning opportunities proffered by associations, clubs, church-run institutions or sponsors of youth welfare services. This is also the case in public child and youth work, youth centers, play castles, adventure playgrounds or one-time projects such as the ‘holiday adventure city’” (Pfaffrath, 2013, p. 167).<sup>1</sup> This trend has long since also arrived in denominational youth work. Within the YMCA there are different local associations that currently built treehouses with their participants and use this building process as a method for Outdoor Education and Christian Youth Work. This current article focuses on the concept of YMCA-Treehouses in Europe and shows the historical, educational and psychological backgrounds of this concept.

**Keywords:** Outdoor Education – Youth Work – Treehouse – Spirituality – Experiential Learning

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<sup>1</sup> All quotes are translated from the German original. Many thanks to Christy Kreikebaum.



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### 1. An old dream comes true

Humankind has been building tree houses for centuries. The Korowai Indians in Indonesia used them as a safeguard against wild animals or enemy tribes. The Roman ruler Caligula (12-41 A.D.), on the other hand, hosted lavish feasts in his tree house, and the Persian poet Anvari (1126–1189) retreated to his tree house to meditate between heaven and earth (cf. Henderson & Mornement 2005, pp12ff). The first popular children's book that dealt with the building of a tree house was published 1812: *The Swiss Family Robinson, or the Shipwrecked Swiss Preacher and his Family*.

Building a tree house is a dream that many children have, but which comes true for only very few. This article explains how this dream can be successfully and comprehensively realized in outdoor education. The association Outdoortech has been building tree houses with diverse target groups for more than 15 years. In this article we summarize our tree house building experience and explain how we proceed in such projects.

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Picture 1 - Tree House Project with Bridges and Stairs

### **2. The Concept that has been Successfully Tested all over Europe**

The group Outdoortech implemented its first tree house projects in the Swiss YMCA fifteen years ago as communal youth work. In collaboration with the promoter Buiten-door, the YMCA in Holland adopted our concept in 2009. On the occasion of a European youth festival in the Czech Republic in 2013, a tree house was built that housed more than one hundred and twenty people from five different countries. Since then, the tree house building method has spread all over Europe. By now, many different outdoor educational tree house

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campus are also taking place in Germany, primarily sponsored and implemented by the YMCA. The first international training camp for tree house trainers was held in Michelstadt in 2015. With thirty-nine participants from eleven different countries it was a full success (cf. Kölbel, 2015; Zimmermann et al., 2016). The Department of Outdoor Education at the YMCA University in Kassel in cooperation with Outdoortech is responsible for coordinating and cross-linking the various German tree house camps. The YMCA University is also in the planning stages of developing an advanced course for tree house trainers (Widmann, 2016).

Outdoor educational tree houses are fully habitable houses in the trees. They are designed for sleeping, cooking and living together; they are constructed with and for the participants of building camps that last ten days to two weeks. The appropriate framework and setting for tree houses and tree house camps – as well as for huts made from foliage, shanties and ranger beds – is outdoor education in the natural environment of the woods. Their attraction is their ability to open the door to intense experiences that smack of adventure. These experiences materialize while collectively building plateaus, seating areas, ramps, stairs, swings and restrooms at lofty heights and also while living together in the self-built tree house. In all it is imperative to help the participants process their experiences in a way that subserves the maturation of their personalities. The relevant pedagogical areas that these experiences fall into include height, personal boundaries, safety and technology, teamwork, manual and planning tasks, and environmental sustainability education (cf. Zimmermann et al., 2016).

The Outdoortech tree house camps generally last two weeks. The first week is the construction phase, and the second is reserved for inhabiting the tree house. On the first day, the participants are introduced to the building technique and the applicable safety rules. This instruction is given no later than at the first platform to be built. Concurrently, a simple

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temporary camp is set up in the woods; the camp is abandoned as soon as the tree house is ready to be occupied. Plans and exact conceptions of what the tree house will look like when it is done do not exist. The plan evolves during the building process. This approach triggers comprehensive learning processes and promotes good personality development in the participants (cf. Pfaffrath 2013, p. 140).

Building platforms is the main focus during the first few days. Bridges, stairs and ladders are built in the second phase. In the third and final building phase, the participants concentrate their creative efforts on the interior design of their future dwelling. The participants' resources shape the building process. Everyone is needed. Be it to cut the logs to size, to be a climber or to fixate the mighty beams with ropes and knots. The import of resource orientation is that every participant has his part to play in the project; everyone contributes to the overall outcome. Some might have their own special area of expertise, and others simply do whatever they are especially good at (cf. Zuffelato & Kreszmeier, 2007, p. 135). Moreover, because language isn't necessary to convey the know-how for the many manual tasks, people from foreign cultures – refugees, for example – can easily be integrated in the building process, as the YMCA in Berlin, for example, has proven with its project (Trautwein, 2016). Individuals with learning disabilities can perform various tasks as well.

The conclusion of the building phase is duly celebrated with a topping-out ceremony, to which parents, friends and interested acquaintances may be invited. The participants can proudly show their guests the tree house they built. Thus they can reap commendation and esteem not only from the other participants, but also from their relatives. One tremendous benefit, then, of building a tree house, is that the builders get to realize their self-efficacy in various ways.

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The second week is reserved for living in the tree house. The learning the participants have gleaned from their building experiences is solidified in new tasks and responsibilities. The second week resembles a camp in the woods. It facilitates, above all, learning in nature that is long-term. A fundamentally positive attitude towards nature can develop, as well as the confidence in one's ability to handle adverse weather conditions successfully and safely (cf. Bach & Bach, 2011, p. 32).

The dismantling of the tree house is part of the project's conception, as well: The tree houses we build are not intended for continued use. Our central concern here is that as few traces as possible remain in nature when our activities have been concluded. The dismantling takes place within the context of ecological ethics (cf. Heckmair & Michl, 2004 pp. 252ff) and in accordance with our systematic understanding of outdoor education. Our slogan is expressed in the song *Nothing But* by John Kay (1977): "Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints. "In the context of outdoor education, however, these pictures should be primarily memories, as Zuffelato und Kreszmeier have rightly noted (cf. Zuffelato & Kreszmeier, 2007, p. 108).

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Picture 2 - Living in one's own tree house

### 3. The Comprehensive Educational Approach

The tree house building process complies with various established structural features of outdoor educational learning scenarios (cf. Pfaffrath, 2013, pp. 83ff): It presents the builders with situations that are real and seriously challenging, but adventuresome. These situations facilitate learning beyond one's comfort zone, in all kinds of weather and at lofty heights. As communal youth work, most of the tree house projects up to date targeted young people between 14 and 22 years of age. The participants' gender distribution was approximately 40% female and 60% male.

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The active building process and the learning by doing manner of tackling the tasks in the tree house camps open up spheres of experience that can facilitate action-oriented and experiential learning. The holistic nature of building in a team, in nature and with all five senses promotes the participants' cognitive, emotional, motoric and action learning. The various tasks fulfill the principles of resource orientation and person-centeredness, both foundational in youth work as well as outdoor education (cf. Zimmermann, 2016). The basic approach is also growth-oriented instead of deficit-oriented; this empowers the participants to discover their developmental potential and to realize their self-efficacy, both on the basis of their personal strengths. The interaction with the social group, which in our context is the team and the other participants, facilitates this process. The group constitutes a sphere in which simultaneously experiences can be gathered and learning can take place: "It offers ample opportunities for dialogic learning, binding experiences, conflict resolution" (Pfaffrath, 2013, p. 88). The participants can grow by assuming responsibility for themselves and others through observing the safety rules. The tree house can only be built collectively; a solo effort is futile. The teamwork demands cooperation and good communication, and the ability to accept compromises. A non-directive educational approach promotes these skills best. It encourages participation and responsible as well as self-directing behavior (trial and error) in every individual in the group. Because the building is strenuous and physically challenging, the participants quickly reach the limits of their physical endurance. Experiences that bring the learner to his or her personal limits are a central structural feature of outdoor educational activities.

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### Safety Considerations

Anyone who works with ropes in outdoor education must be experienced and know his stuff (cf. Pfaffrath 2013, p. 115). Being familiar with the different kinds of rope is especially important in the tree house building sector, because relevant standards currently don't exist. Tree house trainers receive their training in special camps. Guided by experienced instructors, they receive excellent on-the-job training. Qualified experiential learning educators, climbing experts and people from mechanical professions make up the leadership teams. The interdisciplinary nature of these teams enables them to ensure a comprehensive safety environment in the camps, namely one that takes into account both expert technical and systemic aspects. Every project is also planned and reviewed with Outdoortech's security scheme (cf. Brüngger&Lüthi, 2015, pp. 12ff).

Great emphasis is placed on creating and sustaining a comprehensive safety environment in the camps, by the participants as well as the team. The objective is to coach self-efficacy, confidence and independence in the participants. The tasks and responsibilities are allocated in such a way as to ensure that every participant is challenged to a certain degree and can thus experience empowering successes (cf. Zuffelato&Kreszmeier, 2007, p. 250).



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Picture 3 - Safety is highly emphasized

### 4. The Psychological Impact of Tree Houses

As described in the introduction, the obvious impact that tree houses have on those who dwell in or visit them has long been made use of. Nelson comments:

“Their language is ancient, the message universal: Climb up and step [sic] into harmony with nature: abandon all earthly strains and be free [...]. A transforming power is inherent to tree houses: The moment [sic] one crosses their threshold, one becomes a different person. In the heights [...] the soul grows young again and the spirit light” (cf. Nelson, 2009, p. 8).

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In the classic work of outdoor educational literature, *The Conscious Use of Metaphor in Outward Bound*, Stephen Bacon explains that humans are subconsciously primed to recognize archetypal patterns, wherever in the world they encounter them (cf. Bacon 2003, p. 91). The archetypal significance of “climbing aloft ‘or of’ building one’s own house” can effectively be made use of when building a tree house.

Many further interesting metaphors can be found in a tree house project besides. As observed by Rainer Dietrich, information is learned and retained better if it is conveyed metaphorically (cf. Dietrich, 2004, p. 29).

### 5. Great Potential

The tree house building method has proven itself especially advantageous in:

- Promoting participation
- Building self-efficacy
- Inspiring creativity
- Strengthening the participants’ sense of responsibility
- Encouraging initiative and the assumption of responsibility
- Helping the participants to discover hidden resources
- Training cooperative behavior
- Experiencing joy
- Experiencing motivation and conferring it to others
- Supporting cognitive development.

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This list is not complete. One great benefit of this experiential learning approach is that the participants' very divergent resources can be integrated in the building process. While our technologically progressive society marginalizes their abilities, this method lets manually skilled participants shine. Günther Lücking (2015, p. 26) points out that the tree house building concept as a holistic approach is very appropriate to Christian youth work because principles important for living successfully such as responsibility, solidarity, esteem for oneself and others, environmental sustainability and self-restraint can be addressed in a very practical and interactive way instead of being merely discussed (see also Ossenberg-Engels, 2016).

Although many tree house hotels exist worldwide, outdoor educational projects that make use of tree houses as an educational instrument are rather rare and unheard-of. Nonetheless, great potential is inherent to this experiential learning method. But several different factors will determine if it can become widely accepted and employed. For example, depending on the project location, the necessary legal clarifications are currently extremely laborious. All the legal issues involved often can't be conclusively settled. The development of norms and standards for tree house projects is a current imperative. And an in-depth expert dialogue will be necessary before these standards can be developed. Thus, the clarification of legal and technical conditions is as desirable as it is necessary in order to employ the tree house building method as an outdoor educational instrument on a larger scale (cf. Gatt, Libicky & Stockert, 2006).

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**Essay**

**EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP:  
SUCCESSFULLY DEALING WITH CHANGE**

**AN ESSAY**

**Robert J. Willey, Jr., Ph.D.**

**Dean, Retired**

**Springfield College, Springfield, Massachusetts, USA**

## **EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP...**

Throughout my forty-two years in higher education as both a faculty member and as an administrator, the one constant that I experienced was the fact that change is an integral part of education. In fact, it must be. Change is a necessary function of all human institutions. Whether to optimize effectiveness or to cope with altered resources, change is imperative. Even institutions that prefer “the way things are” must face the fact that needs and situations do not remain constant and “change is necessary simply to maintain the status quo” (Strommen and Andress 1983, I.1).

For educational institutions, to return to the past is futile, to maintain the status quo is contrary to the essence of education, to change is inevitable. The analysis of Gerald Zaltman, David Florio, and Linda Sikorski almost forty years ago is still true:

Educational institutions are inextricably caught up in the ebb and flow of societal change. The school is contemporary society’s most salient educational institution. It is expected to carry the double burden of maintaining traditional values while preparing society’s young members to deal with a changing world (1977, p. 3).

From my personal experiences in higher education within the context of academia in the United States, as well as my involvement with fellow member institutions in the International Coalition of YMCA Universities, a coalition involving eleven higher education institutions on five continents (Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, and South America), I find that colleges and universities are experiencing a time of considerable stress that mandates serious consideration of means toward and ends for change.

### **Stresses Necessitating Change**



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The three primary directions from which I note stress being exerted upon higher education institutions are budgetary limitations, technological transformations, and increased demands for accountability.

### **Costs**

First, costs of educating students are increasing and financial resources are declining. Continuing inflation, no matter how low, coupled with lessening external financial assistance, whether from governmental or non-governmental sponsoring organizations, have produced higher tuition costs and greater dependency on private contributions. With most institutions critically dependent on student enrollment for income, increasing tuition becomes counterproductive to efforts to increase enrollment with fewer prospective students able to afford the cost of education.

### **Technology**

What technology has added to the educational process has been truly incredible for those of us who started in higher education pre-Microsoft and Apple. But the technology has added a whole new dimension of necessary skills, commitments, and costs unimaginable in the days of blackboards, 16mm projectors, and overhead transparencies. Constant changes, that is, upgrades in technology require constant investment in training and purchases of hardware and software necessary for preparing students for the mid-twenty-first century, regardless of the field the student intends to enter.

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### **Accountability**

Finally, systems and institutions upon which educational institutions are dependent for incorporation, licensure, approval, and/or fiscal underwriting are increasingly holding those colleges and universities accountable for the processes and products of the educational endeavor. This is not necessarily a point of bad stress, and certainly not to be unexpected. But the extent of that accountability can sometimes seem intrusive and even unfair. In the United States the involvement of the federal government in public and private higher education over the past decade has extended to matters such as class attendance expectations and class hours-to-course credits ratios, matters that were understood in the past to be institutional prerogatives not the domain of governmental regulation. Hanging over colleges and universities who fail to comply in the American context is the threat of the loss of federal financial aid assistance to students, a critical component for most students being able to complete their studies.

### **Dynamics Supporting Change**

Early in the administrative phase of my academic experience (I moved from the classroom as an instructor to an office as an administrator in the late 1980s), I read the book Opportunity in adversity: How colleges can succeed in hard times by Janice Green and Arthur Levine (1985), a book that significantly impacted my view of higher education administration in general and dealing with change in particular. Green and Levine studied five colleges that faced overwhelming challenges and overcame them through innovative changes. The five colleges represented a diversity of geographical locations within the United States and a diversity of educational constituencies. Nevertheless, they concluded that

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[t]he fact that colleges can learn to thrive in a time of stress has been established. And while there is, happily, no single road to success, there are certain elements common to the quite divergent paths chosen by each of the institutions. (p. 302)

### **Mission Statement**

The first of these elements or institutional dynamics for change is a well-defined mission. An institutional mission statement must provide a three-dimensional picture of the college, according to Green and Levine, combining “the academic program(s), the co-curricular life of students, and the general ethos of the place” (p. 59). The mission statement for a college or university is the focal point of the “double burden” of the Zaltman, Florio, and Sikorski quotation referenced previously where higher education institutions must simultaneously preserve tradition and yet encourage change. A mission statement is

what a compass is to an explorer, a map to a tourist, a rudder to a ship, a template to a machinist. It provides a framework for thinking throughout the organization. It provides the boundaries and guardrails [one] needs in order to stay on the path to [the institution’s] preferred future (Smith, 2016).

### **Leadership**

The second dynamic is vigorous and appropriate leadership. No one model of the appropriate leader for bringing about change in an institution of higher education exists. Rather, leadership style is contingent upon numerous institutional environmental factors.

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Therefore, leadership for change involves “selective adaptation of the various available models to the idiosyncratic human and ecological landscape of a particular institution” (Green and Levine, 1985, p. 92). In other words, the ideal leader for change must be sufficiently flexible or “changeable” dependent on the nature and needs of the particular college or university.

### **Curricular Programming**

Creative and visionary curricular programming is the third dynamic needed in overcoming challenges and providing constructive change. As with leadership styles, no one curricular structure is suitable for all higher education institutions. The curriculum that is creative and visionary is one that best conforms to the needs of the institution, is most consistent with the training and interests of the faculty, and is best suited to the sources available at the institution.

### **Faculty Development**

Recognizing the faculty as “the heart and blood of a college or university” (p. 138), Green and Levine listed the development of faculty as the fourth dynamic. Faculty development must include increased expertise in their disciplines combined with improved teaching skills. To these two traditional aspects of faculty development, Green and Levine added a third aspect that

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Turns the table and asks the faculty to assist their institution in achieving specific needs—needs that are very much in the self-interest of individual faculty members as well.

Faculty members increasingly are able to renew themselves by participating in activities aimed at renewing their institutions. (p. 141-142)

Regarding this third aspect, G. Melvin Hips of Furman University in his book Effective planned change strategies (1982), referred to this as the merging of individual and institutional goals. According to Hips, each member of the academic community, particularly faculty, must “view his own interests and aspirations as inextricably bound up in the mission and goals of the institution...” (p. 121).

### **Student Body**

The fifth dynamic for change is the development of a heterogeneous student body, a student body of diversity in gender, age, race, and economic status. Recruitment of such a diverse student body must be combined with an active program of retention in order to maintain diversity through the completion of the respective academic program. To accomplish this heterogeneity, the college or university must often look beyond the barriers to recruitment for those perceived to be “qualified” for the particular fields for which the institution is preparing graduates. Many of those recruitment barriers have been removed, even in my lifetime, particularly relating to those of gender and race. But many more barriers can and should be removed.

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### **Fiscal Resources**

The next dynamic is careful planning of fiscal resources, both short-term and long-term. Specific planning of income and expenses precludes surprises and allows for financial problem-solving rather than financial panic in the face of fiscal shortfalls. In facing change, “Doing more with less” is the usual approach. But it can also be “Doing more with different,” with different involving the search for creative lines of income.

### **Tenaciousness**

The final element or dynamic for change is “a large measure of tenaciousness” (p. 301). Whereas instant solutions to the challenges of higher education would be preferred, the normal course of affairs is long-term commitment to overcoming the challenges and producing constructive change. Green and Levine concluded:

Those who seek instant cure-alls will choose different alternatives, and in the short run their institutions may benefit. But those who truly believe in the worth of their institutions, in their value and importance, will look beyond the boundaries of the immediate and will conjure up an attainable vision of the college stamped with the marks of excellence, integrity, and uniqueness, and enjoying the fullest possible measure of strength and stability. (p. 302)

Marvin Peterson of the University of Michigan in an article in the journal Change (May-June 1984) stated that changes made even after incorporating all of the above dynamics may

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necessitate reparations, that is, a willingness to reevaluate decisions and recognize their deficiencies or inappropriateness and to make necessary modifications and repairs. In other words, even after change has occurred, it may be necessary to change the change!

### **Extent of Change**

Another point made by Hipps in Effective planned change (1982) is that change cannot be accomplished piecemeal: “There must be recognition that change in one area affects many other areas; therefore, a planned change effort must involve all systems, all operations, and all personnel” (p. 119).

The best explanation of Hipps’ recommended holistic approach to change, whether in an academic or nonacademic context, was later developed by Clayton M. Christensen of Harvard University in his book The innovator’s dilemma (1997). According to Christensen, there are two approaches to change. The first, the more traditional and the one most frequently used and experienced, is that of sustaining change or sustaining innovation. This approach to innovation in addressing the stress points is the add-on, incremental process towards change. That is the piecemeal approach to which Hipps referred.

The other approach is disruptive innovation or change. Instead of adding on to produce change, an entirely new concept is developed out of “the old,” thus producing an entirely new structure or institution. It results in a change involving “all systems, all operations, and all personnel” (Hipps, 1982, p. 119).

To explain the difference between the two approaches to change, an illustration from history is best: the invention and development of the automobile. The introduction of the automobile was initially a sustaining innovation. To a horse-drawn buggy was added an engine, run either by gasoline or steam, connected to mechanisms taken from a bicycle, all

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pieces that existed that were add-ons. The outcome was an automobile that was complicated, expensive, and only available to the wealthy upper class. Then after approximately 30 years of such sustaining innovation, in 1908, Henry Ford developed the assembly-line-produced Model T automobile that was simple, inexpensive, and for the masses. Transportation experienced disruptive innovation and has never been the same since. The Model T was a disruptive innovation.

In recent years a number of such disruptive innovations have impacted contemporary culture: Skype replacing long distance telephone calls; iTunes replacing record stores; Google, research libraries; Amazon, local brick-and-mortar stores; and Twitter, newspapers. And the next disruptive innovation—higher education?

Throughout the world some colleges and universities are already working toward a disruptive innovation of higher education. In too many ways, the add-on approach to change in higher education has resulted in a product similar to the automobile before the Model T: complicated, expensive, and only available to the wealthy upper class. Those who are thinking and acting disruptively are attempting to counter these trends by challenging the traditional view of higher education by advocating for a more inclusive student body, an actively participative learning environment, a virtually delivered educational program, and an outcomes-measured completion of studies.

A more inclusive student body means looking beyond the traditional 18-22 year old student, generally male, who enrolls full-time, and broadening recruitment to females and other under-represented populations, to older students, and to those who can only study part-time.



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An actively participative learning environment means moving beyond the instructor-student dichotomy and actively incorporating the instructor and the student in a mutual learning process by respecting the formal education and life experiences of both toward accomplishing educational goals. Such a learning environment is consistent with the educational theory and practice advocated by Paulo Freire, the great Brazilian educator and philosopher (see Pedagogy of the oppressed, 1970).

A technologically delivered educational program incorporates on-line learning as the primary context in which teaching/learning takes place rather than within the four walls of a classroom. Whether a course is offered wholly on-line or by a blend of on-line and in-class activities, the emphasis is on the on-line instruction and the convenience and flexibility that it provides.

And an outcomes-based completion of studies means that graduation, that is the awarding of a degree or certificate, occurs not when a certain number of course credits have been completed or a specified grade level is achieved, but rather when the student has provided documented evidence of fulfilling all course outcomes through such means as successfully completing an examination or providing a learning portfolio. The process to get to that point may or may not involve the taking of courses in the usual manner.

The incorporation of these disruptive innovations in higher education, along with others that have not yet even been considered, would radically alter colleges and universities as we know and experience them today, resulting in institutions that are inclusive, self-sustaining, and culturally relevant, yet faithful to their historic mission.

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### **Some Concluding Thoughts**

It has been my experience, and privilege, through most of the first decade and a half of the twenty-first century to be involved with the member institutions of the International Coalition of YMCA Universities. As stated previously, I believe that the stresses experienced by the institution with which I was associated, Springfield College, are the stresses being experienced by other colleges and universities throughout the Coalition. I also believe that the dynamics supporting change as expounded by Green and Levin (1985) are to be found in all member institutions. Different strengths and emphases certainly exist among those institutions. However, I know that every member institution actively incorporates those dynamics since the list of dynamics is consistent with the quality standards required of an institution that requests admission into the Coalition.

It is the extent of change that presents the greatest challenge to the colleges and universities in the International Coalition of YMCA Universities. Are they willing and able to effect disruptive, holistic innovation in their respective institutions in order to confront and overcome the stresses, the challenges to higher education as the twenty-first century progresses? I am convinced the answer is affirmative. Yes!

I respond in that way based on the dynamic leadership that leads these institutions and the national and regional YMCA movements that support these institutions. But an even stronger reason for my affirmative response is that all of these institutions are YMCA-related—and the YMCA was birthed as a disruptive innovation in nineteenth century England and has maintained that commitment to disruptive innovation throughout its history, among its members, and within its related institutions. The actions of George Williams in 1844 in

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London along with 11 friends was a disruptive response to the massive social upheaval taking place throughout the western world as a major population shift was taking place with people, particularly young men, moving from rural towns to urban centers to find jobs. The shift resulted in major societal upheaval and personal instability. (Compare the writings of Charles Dickens related to this era.) As every YMCA member today knows, the response of Williams and his friends was to start a movement to support and encourage these young men through Christian spiritual activity as well as intellectual and social development in a supportive environment. As the YMCA of the USA website states:

Although an association of young men meeting around a common purpose was nothing new, the Y offered something unique for its time. The organization's drive to meet social need in the community was compelling, and its openness to members crossed the rigid lines separating English social classes.

This was disruptive innovation.

And so may the member institutions of the International Coalition of YMCA Universities approach their futures individually and collectively as they strive to offer “something unique for [their] time”!

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## **Sharing Experiences**

**Volunteering and Leadership: The Experience of YMCA Teachers and Students at the  
Rio 2016 Olympic Games**

**Kleber Trevisam**

**Laís Gabriel de Camargo**

**Physical Education College – Sorocaba – Brazil**

When the city of Rio de Janeiro was chosen to host the Olympic Games, competing against the cities of Madrid, Tokyo and Chicago, it became the first city in South America to organize the event.

Along with the responsibility, many doubts have arisen regarding Brazil's ability to organize such an event. Safety, transport and infrastructure for athletes and tourists were the main issues discussed by the world press as points worthy of attention.

However, along with these fundamental aspects for the good development of the games, another factor also brought some concern to the Organizing Committees that was the participation of the Brazilians in the operational aid as volunteers. According to the Brazilian Law, in the article 1 No. 9608, it is considered voluntary service any unpaid activity provided by a natural person to a public entity of any nature or a non-profit private institution that has civic, cultural, educational, scientific, recreational objectives or assistance to the person.

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According to data published by IBOPE (2012), only 18% of the Brazilian population practices voluntary work. The percentage is below the world average of 37%, and in some countries such as China and Canada the number of volunteers rises to 55% and 50% of the population, respectively.

There were 50,000 of them for Rio 2016, for example. Volunteers' areas of expertise on the huge Olympic stage take many forms and in all languages, with athletes and teams, with spectators, and during the competitions themselves. Customer service, press and communications, health services, technology, protocol and languages, transport, opening and closing ceremonies, operational support for the Organizing Committee, sports events, etc. (IOC, 2016).

Therefore, the main objective of this paper is to present the experiences of some students and a professor of the Physical Education College of ACM of Sorocaba – FEFISO - in the XXXI Olympic Games, held in Rio de Janeiro, when working as volunteers in various areas, within the Olympic Park as well as in other sports locations used in the event, relating their practices to the leadership exercised and/or awakened by the responsibilities assumed by them in their respective areas of activity.

11303 athletes of 207 nationalities participated in the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro competing in 306 events that were distributed the competition venues which were clustered in four zones – Barra, Copacabana, Deodoro and Maracanã – and connected by a high-performance transport ring. Nearly half of the athletes could reach their venues in less than 10 minutes, and almost 75 per cent could do so in less than 25 minutes. Of the 34 competition venues, eight underwent some permanent works, seven were totally temporary and nine were constructed as permanent legacy venues (IOC, 2016).

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The Rio Games also celebrated and showcased sport, thanks to the city's stunning setting and a desire to lift event presentation to new heights. At the same time, Rio 2016 was an opportunity to deliver the broader aspirations for the long-term future of the city, region and country – an opportunity to hasten the transformation of Rio de Janeiro into an even greater global city (IOC, 2016).

"Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy found in effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles." (IOC, 2016)

Olympic volunteering is also a chance to meet people from all backgrounds, and to focus individual and collective energy on serving others. It is an important commitment, which requires a combination of competences and experiences. In return, volunteers obtain benefits that can last a lifetime. They make professional contacts and new friends, are given exclusive training, and receive a uniform and a participation certificate. A fantastic opportunity for their own personal development, the pleasure of being actively involved in a global celebration, and the satisfaction that comes from that.

Anyone can be a volunteer at the Olympic Games. Each organizing committee generally launches a program around two years before the event. In Rio in August 2016, they were from 56 different countries. Eighty per cent of them were Brazilian, with 20 per cent coming from elsewhere in the world. In Tokyo in 2020, the organizers expect that some 80,000 people will be needed in all areas of expertise. Whoever has been to the Games, whether as an athlete,



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official, media representative or spectator, never forgets the smiles and dedication of the volunteers (IOC, 2016).

Since its foundation, YMCA has a great history of voluntary movement in different countries and this is one of the pillars of its development and since then, the YMCA's mission statement has been interpreted to reflect contemporary realities, first in 1973 with the Kampala Principles, and most recently in 1998 with Challenge 21, adopted at the 14th World Council of YMCAs, Frechen (Germany), states that:

Affirming the Paris Basis adopted in 1855 as the ongoing foundation statement of the mission of the YMCA , at the threshold of the third millennium we declare that the YMCA is a world-wide Christian, ecumenical, voluntary movement for women and men with special emphasis on and the genuine involvement of young people and that it seeks to share the Christian ideal of building a human community of justice with love, peace and reconciliation for the fullness of life for all creation [...] empowering all, especially young people and women to take increased responsibilities and assume leadership at all levels and working towards an equitable society (YMCA, 2016).

Based on the principles of volunteering and leadership training presented by Challenge 21 and associated with the accomplishment of the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro (BRAZIL), where three students and a professor of the Physical Education College of YMCA Sorocaba worked as volunteers, it was decided to check how important the participation in the event, volunteering and leadership empowerment were to them.

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In order to carry out the research, a questionnaire was sent by e-mail to these four volunteers who answered the questions and shared their experiences.

We asked them when there was an interest in volunteering, how the application and selection process took place, and what the feeling was when they received the "acceptance letter" to volunteer in the Games. The other questions were: upon receiving the letter, what were the necessary procedures for the participation (travel, work / study, lodging, food)? What aspects, for you, were considered positive and negative to participate as a volunteer of a large event? At the end of the Games, what have you learned that can be related to the event in the professional, personal and social aspects, as well as the development of the spirit of leadership? Here are some of the answers.

“What was interesting in being a volunteer for most of them spread in the beginning of 2014, the registration was made that same year, and the selection, interviewing and training processes started only in 2015 and lasted until a few months before the Games” (L.G. de C.).

“There was interest from the moment that on July 2014 I saw a report TV that the recruitment of volunteers for the Olympics that would happen in Rio in the year of 2016 would start” (G. C. P.)

"The interest came from the beginning. As soon as it was announced the volunteer program, I decided together with a friend to sign up" (F.A. da F.).

“On August 2014, applications for the Rio 2016 Volunteers were opened. A new report was published in the media and I therefore decided to sign up [...] and to attend and see closely a world event that maybe I did not have the chance to witness again” (F.A.).

At this point, it is possible to notice from the answers of the participating students and professors the interest in volunteering as soon as there was the announcement of the

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registration, which may reflect the YMCA ideas and when they are selected, we can see the joy and satisfaction in being able to act as a volunteer.

“The invitation letter was only sent after fulfilling all the steps and with that, it generated a certain anxiety in receiving an answer, to be able to materialize the participation in the games and, upon receiving the letter, the anxiety only increased so that games began and I could finally begin the work as a volunteer” (L. G. de C).

All the volunteers went through a period of interviews and training that began in 2015 and lasted up to a few months before the Games. The interviews were carried out in the main capitals of Brazil, and it was in the form of group dynamics. The trainings were face-to-face and/or online, and these were generally about serving the public, cultural differences and the volunteer's professional posture. The selection of the candidates was according to their experiences, because for some functions they needed people with a certain knowledge of the modality.

As the event took place from August 5 to 21, coinciding with the class period, it was necessary to have agreements and concessions from the institutions to which the teachers and students were linked.

“I communicated the places where I work, which I could not fail to thank, FEFISO and Uirapuru School, who promptly allowed me to travel to Rio de Janeiro, leaving for a few days” (F. A.).

“[...] it was necessary to skip college classes, and organize vacations at work.” (L. G. de C.).

Besides the exemption of the classes, transportation and where to stay in Rio de Janeiro were other challenges for volunteering.

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“[...] having friends who lived in Rio facilitated this process of organizing expenses” (L. G. de C).”

“In February I rented an apartment near the Arena Carioca 1 (place of basketball games), I found a very low price compared to the ones at the time of the games. After I rented the apartment, I invited friends who were with me at the Test Event to share it in the 20 days of competition.” (G. C. P.).

With everything ready, tickets, hosting (uniforms, food during competitions as well as transportation to the competition areas were Organizing Committee responsibilities), the time has come and the experiences reported demonstrate what it is to be part of an event such as the Olympic Games, where the responsibility to meet tourists and athletes from all parts of the world make the performance of the volunteer fundamental, as well as the leadership that it takes to take responsibilities that guarantee the good development of its activities and of an entire group.

“Being able to participate in an edition of the Olympic Games as a volunteer was very positive and rewarding, as it was a way of being closer to the Games, having a different view, having direct contact with athletes, coaches, organization and the public, and through that contact there was an exchange of cultures of both athletes and spectators” (L. G. de C).

“Everything was magic, perfect, I lived things that I have never thought to live in my life, I had feelings that I never imagined to feel. To be living all that from the backstage, to see athletes and to chat and to hit the ball with the world stars of basketball [...] It is an experience that only those who lived will understand our feeling, it is immeasurable, it is not possible to describe the spirit that we have and as I have learned, as a human being, professionally and personally” (G. C. P.).

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“It was wonderful to be so close to a level of sport that I never thought about being ... it was rewarding to be able to help, not only thinking about the games, the Committee, but the people I did something for. The ordinary people who were there also to live an experience perhaps unpublished. I met persons from several places of the world, Europe, Asia, Americas, Brazilians from several states. In my team, there were volunteers from Canada, Italy, Peru, Bolivia, and India. Listening to other languages, customs, ways of thinking and acting were all worth it” (F. A).

“The Olympic Games were a reality that left many good things for several people, the atmosphere in the Olympic Park was a party, we could notice the satisfaction of the people in the place, both the athletes, the fans and the volunteers, certainly there were failures, or even a few unforeseen events, but this did not take the brightness of the event. It was amazing!” (F. A. da F).

With the closure of the Olympic Games, regardless of Brazil's position in the medal table, the successes or failures of the athletes from different nationalities, it is evident that, for those who participated in the organization of the games as volunteers, the feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction for having contributed and learned a lot during the event weeks.

For the participants of the research, volunteering in the Olympic Games allowed the contact with different realities, cultures and knowledge coming from athletes and spectators awakening, in addition to the feeling of satisfaction, the essential leadership for the good development of the tasks assigned to them.

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**LIDERAZGO Y PROACTIVIDAD****Jorge Arcanjo da Silva****Physical Education College – Sorocaba – Brazil**

Cómo la Facultad de Educación Física de la Asociación Cristiana de Jóvenes de Sorocaba fomenta la capacitación y el protagonismo juvenil entre sus estudiantes.

**Consideraciones iniciales**

La facultad de Educación Física de la ACJ de Sorocaba, a lo largo de su trayectoria de 45 años, más allá de capacitar profesionales para los enfoques de naturaleza física, ha detenido su mirada en los aspectos que nortean la complejidad de su formación. Sabemos que las actividades físicas extrapolan el concepto de tratar tan solamente las cuestiones del cuerpo, alcanzando la esfera social y intelectual del individuo, una vez que son procesos educativos reversibles y motivadores: “nosotros educamos (no somos solamente educados) en ambientes informales, desde luego, mas también en entornos formales o institucionales.”(BARATA-MOURA,2004)

El conocimiento de esas particularidades ha inspirado cuestionamientos a cerca de los impactos causados e sufridos por nuestra Institución de enseñanza superior en la vida de sus estudiantes, ingresantes, en curso e egresados.

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### **Génesis: és para allá que me voy**

Hace seis años la Facultad de Educación Física de la ACJ de Sorocaba (FEFISO) desarrolla un programa de capacitación de sus estudiantes por medio de la viabilización de una experiencia de vivencia de estudios e trabajo en el exterior por períodos que pueden variar de un a tres meses, durante los cuales los participantes dedicanse a aplicar los conocimientos adquiridos a lo largo de su proceso de graduación en la facultad y en la comunidad en la cual fueram intervenir.

### **Razones**

Tal vez la real pregunta a ser hecha sea: “por qué no? ” La Fefiso cree que el hecho de propiciar una experimentación tán importante nada mais sea que concretizar su credo y misión institucional, haciendo llegar a los jóvenes las posibilidades de concretizar una idea lejana de sus aspiraciones, por todos los obstáculos de orden práctica que representan. El desconocimiento, ausencia de recursos financieros, la muralla cultural y idiomática además del soporte legal que una jornada de esa dimensión requiere. La gran motivación és la extensão del Reino de Diós a los pares, sin cualquier reserva, donando de nosotros lo que tenemos de mejor, para el fortalecimiento próprio y de los que si encuentran al alrededor.

### **Actores**

Son susceptibles de participar del programa todos os jóvenes regularmente matriculados em cualquier ciclo de estudio de la Facultad de Educación Física de la ACJ de Sorocaba que no tengam ningun tema pendiente con plan de estúdios, así cómo jóvenes asociados al programa de la ACJ de Sorocaba que actuan como líderes voluntários submetidos a um proceso de entrenamiento para las acciones voluntárias que vendrán a ser desarrolladas y que sean mayores de dieciocho años, con la devida autonomia para viajar.



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### **Proceso**

La forma inicial de participar passa por expresar su deseo a través del cumplimiento de un formulario de inscripción voluntária, abierto a todos los estudiantes en la Jornada internacional de Educación Física, realizada en el mês de mayo del año lectivo. Todos los postulantes son invitados a un convívio de entrenamiento e aclaración de dudas a respeto de las formas operacionales del intercambio, que siguen:

- Intercambio de intervención y estágio práctico (pasantía), cuando los participantes realizan acciones directas en el programa de la comunidad donde está inserida la unidad de la ACJ. Tiene la duración média de un mês.
- Intercâmbio de intervención académica: actualmente realizado en la Universidad Ciudad de México y en el Instituto Universitario Asociación Cristiana de Jóvenes-Montevideo, Uruguay onde los participantes concurren a las clases en esas Instituciones por dos meses, en el comienzo del semestre lectivo e o concluyem al regreso a Sorocaba. No hay cualquiera demanda de interacción o estágio práctico relacionados a esa forma de intercambio.

### **Destinos**

Los intercambistas destinanse a los países los cuales mantemos un convenio de cooperación y instalaciones para a práctica de servicios e acciones humanitárias relacionadas al plan de estudios de la Facultad de Educación Física de la ACJ de Sorocaba, y por supuesto, de acuerdo a los deseos y expectativas de la comunidade donde se pasa el intercambio.

Actualmente los destinos son Argentina, Uruguay, Perú, Colombia y México.

### **Valores**

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El desarraigo personal sin duda, es el valor que ponemos en la pantalla cuando hablamos a los postulantes al programa de intercambio de FEFISO. Salir de su zona de comodidad para vivenciar una realidad distinta es un presupuesto de los postulantes que desean hacer la diferencia y evidenciarse de sus pares.

No hay ninguna virtud, mérito personal, o mismo institucional en la viabilización de ese programa de parte de la Facultad de Educación Física de la ACJ de Sorocaba, mas si el reconocimiento de su misión como mediadora en el proceso vital, largo e duradero que es la construcción y formación de un individuo apto a interactuar con la sociedad a su alrededor pleno de una lectura remozada de su propio tiempo.

### **Experiencias Compartidas:**

Presentamos las opiniones compartidas de los participantes de la última edición del programa, con sus hablas, fotos y consideraciones.

### **ISRAEL ANDRADE – MÉXICO**

“Por mediación de la ACJ tuve la oportunidad de vivir dos meses en la Ciudad de México, donde viví momentos únicos y simplemente indescriptibles. Conoci personas nuevas, una nueva cultura y tuve un crecimiento muy grande en mi vida profesional como en la personal. Esa experiencia superó a todas mis expectativas, en las cuales sabía que pasaria por muchos desafios, como el nuevo idioma, la forma de estudiar de los mejicanos, como viver en una de las mayores metrópoles del mundo. Mas, todo eso fué superado con tranquilidad, pues las personas a mi alrededor (familia que me recibió, alumnos y profesores de la Universidad) me ayudaram y me dieram soporte en todo. Fueram 60 dias que marcaram mi vida, llevaré esa

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experiencia y aprendizaje por toda mi vida, sou muy agradecido a la ACJ y FEFISO por proporcionarme ese intercâmbio”.



### **KLAUS ZAGATO - COLÔMBIA**

“La oportunidad del Intercambio para Colombia ha hecho con que yo pudiera conocer y convivir con personas que tienen como único objetivo hacer la vida de chicos e adolescentes ser más segura y digna. Esa experiencia me ha hecho crecer tanto en la parte personal cuanto profesional, agregando conciencia y responsabilidad social en mi manera de ver el mundo. Tengo que agradecer a FEFISO, ACJ Sorocaba y ACJ Bogotá, por la oportunidad de poder hacer más por el otro, aplicando conocimientos adquiridos en la Facultad”.

**LIDERAZGO Y PROACTIVIDAD...****DANIELE ALVES FOGAÇA - ARGENTINA**

“Intercambio, yo comprendo como salir de su zona de comodidad, pudiendo salir de la ciudad donde vive para estudiar en otra, o trabajar en una empresa que tiene muchas filiales y por alguna razón tener que cambiar. Más, todo lo que disse se pasó. Mi destino fuera más lejos, no estaba en la ciudad vecina y ni en la más prójima. Fuy para Argentina, Buenos Aires, más específicamente al campamento de Sierra de laVentana, llamado YMCAPOLIS, para un intercambio de trabajo voluntario. Sin ninguna duda, la mejor experiencia personal y profesional que jamás pensé vivir. Ese mes fuera de mi casa, sin dormir en mi cama fue ímpar, y ni que yo quisiera describir...iba ser imposible. Un momento que llevaré por toda mi vida. Un mes intenso, onde más que apreender queria enseñar todo que ya aprendi. Conoci

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personas maravillosas, y hoy puedo decir que tengo más que amigos, hermanos e familia en Argentina”.

“Fue para allá que yo fui hacer la diferencia, llevando un poco de todos que pasaram por mi, y ahora trayendo um poco de todos los argentinos conmigo, porque todos somos uno.”



### LUCAS BELCHIOR E BEATRIZ SANTOS - PERU

"Yo vivi una experiência increíble em la YMCA-PERU, donde tuve el placer de apoyar al programa de deportes y campamentos con niños, jóvenes y adultos.

Con el intercambio he evolucionado personalmente, y aprendi a tener más confianza en mi mismo y valorar las minimas cosas y mis emociones. Hice verdaderos amigos que llevaré conmigo para toda mi vida, agradezco a la ACJ SOROCABA Y FEFISO por la gran oportunidad de vivenciar esa experiencia increíble."(LUCAS BELCHIOR)

“Con el intercambio pude vivir experiências nuevas y hacer muchos amigos, tanto de Peru, como de Alemaña, Colombia, e Estados Unidos, con idiomas y personas diferentes al mi alrededor, vivenciando cada país e sua cultura. Eso lo voy a llevar para siempre. Yo creo que esa oportunidad ofrece conocimiento en várias áreas, espiritual, profesional, familiar y en la

## LIDERAZGO Y PROACTIVIDAD...

comunidad, aproveché cada momento al máximo, pues mi objetivo se resumía en 3 palabras: Aprender, Conocer y Ofrecer. Yo tenía solamente un mes, mas no sería un mes cualquier, era un mes en Peru. Pasé por experiencias increíbles e puedo decir que ACJ/FEFISO ofrece muchas oportunidades, lo que tienes que hacer es buscar y creer, que así tendremos grandes realizaciones. Ha sido un gran placer representar esa Institución". (BEATRIZ SANTOS)



### CÉSAR AUGUSTO DE CARVALHO – URUGUAI

"El programa de intercambio contribuyó mucho con la cuestión de mi autonomía y con nuevos conocimientos, mismo en un país cercano de nuestra realidad. Fue una nueva cultura e una nueva lengua. Los mismos temas han sido enfocados de forma distinta, otra didáctica, eso nos deja más ricos e nos hace buscar nuevos retos, nuestra visión pasa a ser ampliada, y comienzas a mirar todo de otra forma."

**LIDERAZGO Y PROACTIVIDAD...**



**Implementation of Moot-Courts at the YMCA-University Kassel, Germany: How to Establish Sensitivity about Application of Law among Students of Social Work**

**Prof. Dr. jur. Jan-Friedrich Bruckermann**

The Kassel YMCA – University was established in 2009 and since then has been experiencing a positive development with a rising number of students and professors. Students intending to study social work sciences in combination with theology are offered either the possibility to choose online-studies with several practical education days at the campus in Kassel or regular studies at the campus at Kassel.

Subjects of education are german public, social and family law as well as relevant references to juvenile criminal law and proceedings. As a reaction to the current high number of refugees in Germany, we now include migration law in our curriculum.

Starting as a professor of social law last year, I decided to offer during my lectures as much legal practice experience as possible: the mere presentation of legal provisions and the solution of practical cases does not enable students to really deal with legal problems in different situations. Preparing a case and establishing an own legal opinion which has to be defended in a simulated court situation requires individual in-depth confrontation with relevant legal provisions. This leads to the necessity of an acquirement of a broad overview of possible legal instruments to solve a case: A correct final selection of a legal provision can only be achieved within a broad knowledge about the implementation of substantive law.

Additionally, students have to obey various codes of procedures: According to the German law, different codes of procedure are applicable to miscellaneous substantive laws. Therefore,



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before starting trial, a correct selection of the applicable code has to be made as well.

Consequently, students face the challenge of a necessary decision between two different legal branches.

With the end of fall 2015 the students of social work of the fourth term were offered the opportunity to take part in a simulated hearing of a social court trial. With just one term of education in law, I had been struggling to convince my students to take part in the challenge: so I offered different prizes in a lottery - either some portions of sweets or a performance of a character in the action. The roles were accepted so far without further discussion.

The long-term result of the simulated hearing appears to be very effective:

According to the latest evaluation, the different dialogues between judge, lawyers and clients in contrast to the own preliminary opinion about the applicable substantive and law of proceedings remained in a vivid memory of everybody.

Actually flabbergasting appeared the effect of my order to use official German court dress code during the trial – black long coat and white scarf. This semiotic element had an impressive impact on my students: A real focus on the dialogues without personal infringement between the actors could be achieved.

As a result, I will establish a moot court session as a mandatory element in my lectures – with updates to come!

**ACTIONS AND INSPIRATION: EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP WALKING  
TOGETHER**

**Milena Stephanie do Amaral**



When we are speaking about language, it is important that we keep in mind the language. Although we try to communicate the same thing, it is rarely understood in the same way by everybody, and this characterizes the different ways of thinking.

Therefore, we will not start this text by explaining the meaning of this image, but rather presenting one of the possible meanings that can be assigned to it, remembering that no interpretation can be considered wrong.

**ACTIONS AND INSPIRATION ...**

What do we see in the picture? Shoes, tennis shoes, soccer shoes, slippers. Perhaps, for “linguistic reasons”, we keep in mind that only the soccer shoes should be inserted in this sporting environment, since the other footwear may not be adequate. Why? Do Physical Education teachers, in their classes, only find soccer shoes? And, if not, should they insist on the right footwear or in the most correct way to use a certain space? I make an analogy with the teachers because the shoes, for me, represent the students and their diversities.

When we talk about education (or about the world), we certainly talk about differences. The difference, perhaps, is what is the most present among people. In my view, there is no longer a homogenizing education that looks only for soccer shoes in sports spaces or shoes in classrooms. It is important to work the difference! It is important for the tennis shoes to talk with the slippers and for the shoe to work with the soccer shoes, without necessarily having to mark someone as right and someone as wrong, looking for examples at the expense of the oppression of the other and working on this binary logic of a Modern past, not so distant - and even much closer than we imagine.

In addition, it is working together that we can recognize leaders - represented in this image by the slippers. Leaders differ from bosses. The leader is usually chosen, even if not formally. He/She takes on the responsibility of collective errors and exalts the qualities of the different successes of his/her colleagues. The leader has no followers, but comrades. The leader has no face and is not born leading, he/she learns to lead. He/She is not defined by the most beautiful soccer shoes, and that is why the slipper is shown. The less glamorous footwear, which covers less and may dirt more the foot of the wearer. In this image, it is from the slippers that emerges the leadership.

**ACTIONS AND INSPIRATION ...**

The leader is turned to both sides because he/she recognizes and is recognized by everybody. And let's face it, it is not difficult to recognize the leader: he/she can be anyone! Education emanates leaderships, companions and friendships, but, even more, differences arise, which must be respected and worked on. Leadership and difference are within each one of us and can be exercised. Let us be free, let us be leaders, let us be different! And to you? What does this image mean?

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE EIGHTH EDITION

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We welcome articles, essays, sharing experiences,  
interviews and book/film reviews in English or in  
Spanish.

Contact: [gisele@fefiso.edu.br](mailto:gisele@fefiso.edu.br) / [massari@fefiso.edu.br](mailto:massari@fefiso.edu.br)

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