



# MILAB



Mentoring and Language Acquisition in Brazil | 2014 - 2015

**MLAB January Program in São Paulo, Brazil**  
January 12-23, 2015



**Organizing Institution:**



HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
David Rockefeller Center  
for Latin American Studies

**Institution Support:**



**Program Partners:**



**Caros participantes (Dear Participants),**

*Sejam bem-vindos à São Paulo!* It is a joy to have such a diverse, talented, and dedicated group of students together from Harvard and Brazil for the third edition of the Mentoring and Language Acquisition in Brazil (MLAB) program. *Parabéns* to all of you for being accepted to MLAB and for your dedication during the first semester of the program. After much progress via videoconference and Skype, we're looking forward to an intensive and enjoyable couple of weeks of in-person interaction. There is no substitute for spending time together.

MLAB was inspired by our positive experiences running collaborative Harvard-Brazil programs over the past eight years and by the opportunity to help eliminate barriers to internationalization in Brazil and at Harvard. There is a talented pool of young students in Brazil with incredible life stories, overwhelming potential and an admirable eagerness to take advantage of the chance to study abroad. Many of the most talented candidates, however, lack sufficient English-language abilities and direct contact with inspiring role models. MLAB aims to eliminate these barriers and to create a more solid, broader foundation for international collaboration with Brazil – regardless of students' financial circumstances.

**The 2014-2015 edition of MLAB would not have been possible without the generous support and active engagement of Colégio Bandeirantes, Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante and Primeira Chance.** Progress in the first two editions of MLAB has been exciting. All MLAB participants have full financial aid to enroll the program. A number of past MLAB participants have already gained acceptance to competitive international universities, including Harvard. Fundação Estudar and other MLAB partners continue to play a central role in preparing record numbers of Brazilians to enter the world's best universities.

As you will read in the pages of this packet and – more interestingly – learn from each other throughout the program, the backgrounds of MLAB participants are as diverse as they are impressive. Participating Harvard students represent Dominican Republic, Haiti, Peru, El Salvador, Cuba, Mexico, Portugal and various states in the U.S. Many are the first in their families to attend college. Most could not be at Harvard without significant or full financial aid. Participants from Brazil, all originally from public schools, have shown exceptional commitment to learning and to overcoming major obstacles. We are targeting life-changing experiences for both groups. Harvard students, please take full advantage of your time in Brazil to explore this fascinating country. We would love to have you back as participants in formal programs or to help you chart your own course. *Amigos brasileiros*, please make the most of this opportunity to learn from your mentors and don't hesitate to ask questions.

To our MLAB partners, thank you for believing in this program, for your advice and suggestions along the way, for supporting your students and for your collaboration in getting ideas off of paper and into practice. We owe you and the many individuals who have generously agreed to participate in MLAB our warmest and most sincere thanks. You are certain to inspire the MLAB participants to dream big and to continue to work hard to achieve their goals. We look forward to working together to expand the program.

Grande abraço,



**Jason Dyett**  
Director, Brazil Office  
Harvard University, DRCLAS



**Manuela Parisi**  
Program Analyst, Brazil Office  
Harvard University, DRCLAS

## ***PROGRAM OVERVIEW***

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In 2012, Brazil's President, Dilma Rousseff, announced the goal of offering 100,000 scholarships to Brazilians seeking to study in foreign universities. While there is a talented pool of young students in Brazil with incredible life stories, overwhelming potential, and an admirable eagerness to take advantage of the chance to study abroad, a large percentage of the most talented candidates lack sufficient English-language abilities and direct contact with inspiring role models who understand what it takes to make it to a place like Harvard. The Mentoring and Language Acquisition in Brazil (MLAB) program aims to help eliminate those barriers for the next generation of Brazil's leaders while simultaneously providing Harvard College students a unique cultural immersion experience in one of the world's most vibrant and forward-thinking countries.

During this program, 15 carefully-selected Harvard College students will work to inspire 15 young Brazilians through a one-on-one college prep mentorship, focused group discussions, and fun hands-on activities. The Brazilian students are chosen in close collaboration with our local partners based on their extraordinary commitment to learning, demonstrated resolve to overcome socioeconomic obstacles, and ability – with mentoring – to successfully apply to and succeed in top-tier international universities..

### **OBJECTIVES**

- *Nourish* positive intercultural exchange and investment between students who have made it to a top-tier college and Brazilian students who would like to be on the same path.
- *Develop* a model of virtual mentorship focusing on identity development, inspiration, and language acquisition that can be adopted more broadly and have impact at scale.
- *Establish* a program that stimulates deeper engagement with Brazil at Harvard.
- *Inspire* Brazilian students to see English fluency as an achievable goal that will help them reach their highest academic and personal dreams. Inspire Harvard College students to see achieving Portuguese fluency as a fulfilling academic and personal endeavor.
- *Strengthen* network of collaborations between Harvard and existing partner institutions in Brazil through a shared, hands-on initiative.

### **CORE PROGRAM FEATURES**

- *Highly-selective application process*: Only 15 exceptional Harvard College students and 15 Brazilian high school students were selected to participate after a rigorous application process.
  - *Need-blind selection in Brazil and at Harvard*: Harvard students volunteer their time. Brazilian students selected based on their exceptional commitment to learning. Given high financial need, participants receive substantial financial aid.
- *1:1: Ratio* of Harvard College mentors and high-potential, high-need Brazilian mentees ages 15-17.

- *Orientation*: Mentors and mentees participated in orientations introducing the program structure, timeline, expectations, and tips on taking advantage of the MLAB experience for mutual growth and benefit.
- *Training*: Mentors participate in mentorship training workshops throughout the year to equip them with the tools they need to successfully build effective relationships with their mentees.
- *Virtual Mentorship*: Mentors and mentees engage in the mentorship by following a mentoring session schedule. All students participate in biweekly one-on-one video chat sessions and brief weekly email or social media conversations with a topic or question as a starting point for discussion. The content of the sessions is meant to aid in personal development, positive academic and behavioral outcomes, and improved English language skills.
- *January Immersion Experience*: Mentors and mentees meet for the first time in January and participate in a week of culturally relevant and engaging events. Brazilian students will be immersed in English, as all activities will be conducted in English.
- *MLAB-Wide Events*: Several events are held throughout the year to bring MLAB participants and partners together for conversations with special guests.
- *Assessments*: The program will seek continuous feedback throughout the year from all participants to determine program effectiveness.
- *Inter-institutional*: MLAB is a tool for strengthening and selectively extending key Harvard/Brazil partnerships.

## STUDENT PROFILES

MLAB seeks to attract the most talented young Brazilians from underprivileged backgrounds and the Harvard College students most able to inspire them. We are targeting *life-changing experiences* for both groups, which require extremely careful participant selection. There is a strong and natural fit between the target participant groups that will translate into the motivation required to help sustain interest and dedication far beyond formal program dates.

- *Harvard College Student Body Characteristics*
  - Over 70 percent of all Harvard College students receive financial aid.
  - Minority students comprise nearly 40% of the student body.
  - Foreign student population, drawn from more than 140 countries, makes up approximately 11% percent of total enrollment at Harvard College.
  - Increase of more than 150% in Portuguese language study at Harvard in last decade.
  - During the school year, 1,400 Harvard students volunteer in 86 different service programs in the Boston-area (PBHA).
  - Demand for hands-on, outside-the-classroom learning and teaching experiences is very high - several hundred Harvard students have volunteered as educators in developing countries since the inception of World Teach in 1986.

- *Brazilian student characteristics*
  - Exceptional young Brazilians who receive supplementary instruction already face very long days (often from 5am to 8pm). Making learning enjoyable is a critical success factor in sustaining their efforts to learn English.
  - Most Brazilian students have had few interactions with students at prestigious universities in the US, if any. This program will shatter the stereotype that most Harvard students are wealthy and homogenous, fostering eye-opening bonds that leave students believing they can achieve anything they put their minds to.
  - Students from low-income families have little opportunity to travel; this program will bring together students with diverse backgrounds, further enhancing the variety and depth of exchanges that will take place.
  - Academic deficiencies are a challenge to reverse in all areas, particularly in English language acquisition.

## ***PARTNER INSTITUTIONS***

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### **INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT**

#### **Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante**

The objective of Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante, in Fortaleza, Ceará, is to develop the intellectual, affective, and locomotor potentials of its students, in addition to providing a complete education that develops a social conscience and a historic and critical perspective of society to strengthen national unity and international solidarity.

#### **Colégio Bandeirantes**

Located in the city of São Paulo, Colégio Bandeirantes aims to empower its students through knowledge and training, encouraging leadership and civic participation by promoting critical thinking, initiative, creativity, independence and social responsibility.

#### **Primeira Chance**

Founded in 2011 in Fortaleza, Ceará, Primeira Chance is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, non-governmental organization that promotes the social inclusion of socioeconomically disadvantaged youth by investing in their education. Primeira Chance acts by identifying talented youth from disadvantaged backgrounds who demonstrate the capacity and dedication necessary to be successful in their academic and professional lives.

### **PROGRAM PARTNERS**

#### **Fundação Estudar**

The Estudar Foundation is the ideal place for anyone who wants to change Brazil. Created in 1991, Estudar is a nonprofit institution that supports the development of high-potential Brazilian youth who inspire and contribute to the development of Brazil. With the aim of being a hotbed of leaders and generating an exponential effect for the country, Estudar bets on change by way of promoting study and knowledge. Considering inspiration by way of success stories, it constitutes a community of leaders from diverse areas. Its principal mission is to invest in the development of Brazil.

#### **Fundação Lemann**

The Lemann Foundation is a nonprofit founded in 2002 by Brazilian entrepreneur, Jorge Paulo Lemann. It works to better the quality of public education in Brazil, with a focus on a guarantee of student learning. The objective behind all of the Lemann Foundation's projects is to contribute so that the country will be able to offer a high-level education to all.

#### **ISMART**

Created in 1999, the Social Institute for Motivating, Supporting and Recognizing Talent (ISMART) aims for the well-rounded development of low-income talent, identifying students in their home communities and providing them with quality formal education as well as opportunities and experiences that allow them to develop their full potential. Through a rigorous selection process, ISMART identifies students with outstanding academic promise in the cities where it operates, aligning its program content with that of the best private schools in these regions and continually supporting the personal and intellectual development of participants throughout the process.

## MLAB PARTICIPANTS: HARVARD COLLEGE MENTORS

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**Alexandra Nicole  
Cunningham**  
Class of 2018  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Kenard Dillon**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Ariel Smolik-Valles**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Matthew Disler**  
Class of 2016  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Caleb Lewis**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Neimy Escobar**  
Class of 2015  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Chelsea Cherenfant**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Rony Cepeda**  
Class of 2015  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Claudia Martinez**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Sergio Martinez**  
Class of 2018  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Daniel Mayor**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Steven Esteves Wessman**  
Class of 2016  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Francesca Simoni**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Zachary Emanuel Brazão**  
Class of 2016  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Jasmine Fernandez**  
Class of 2016  
Harvard College (FAS)

## MLAB PARTICIPANTS: BRAZILIAN HIGH SCHOOL MENTEES

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**Arthur Yamazaki Gomes**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes



**Jose Wanderclesson Nobre**  
High School Student  
Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante



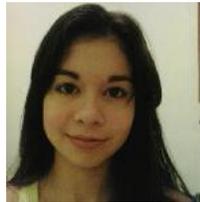
**Artur Queiros Azevedoz**  
High School Student  
Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante



**Leonardo C. Hiagon Mellado**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes; ISMART



**Beatriz Tucci Schiewaldt**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes



**Letícia Pereira De Souza**  
High School Student  
Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante



**Carolina Emy Ono Leal**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes



**Mariana Yumi da Cruz**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes



**Cassio Tales Castanho Caetano**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes; ISMART



**Matheus Lucena**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes; ISMART



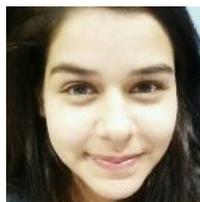
**Cindy Lie Tabuse**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes



**Paulo Ricardo Fonteles de Castro**  
High School Student  
Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante;  
Primeira Chance



**Gustavo de Almeida Silva**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes; ISMART



**Raquel Viana Gomes do Vale**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes; ISMART;



**Isabelle Caroline Stapf**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes

## MLAB PARTICIPANTS: MENTOR & MENTEE PAIRS

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### Harvard College Mentors



**Alexandra Nicole Cunningham**  
Class of 2018  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Ariel Smolik-Valles**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Chelsea Cherenfant**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Claudia Martinez**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Francesca Simoni**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Jasmine Fernandez**  
Class of 2016  
Harvard College (FAS)

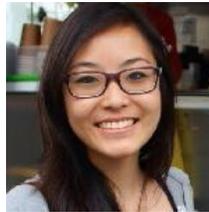


**Neimy Escobar**  
Class of 2015  
Harvard College (FAS)

### Brazilian Mentees



**Isabelle Caroline Stapf**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes



**Cindy Lie Tabuse**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes



**Beatriz Tucci Schiewald**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes



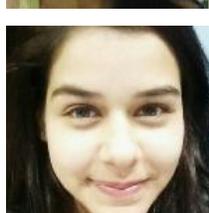
**Carolina Emy Ono Leal**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes



**Mariana Yumi da Cruz**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes



**Letícia Pereira De Souza**  
High School Student  
Colégio Ari de Sá  
Cavalcante



**Raquel Viana Gomes do Vale**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes; ISMART;



**Caleb Lewis**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Arthur Yamazaki Gomes**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes



**Daniel Mayor**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Matheus Lucena**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes; ISMART



**Kenard Dillon**  
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**Artur Queiros Azevedoz**  
High School Student  
Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante



**Matthew Disler**  
Class of 2016  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Gustavo de Almeida Silva**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes; ISMART



**Rony Cepeda**  
Class of 2015  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Paulo Ricardo Fonteles de Castro**  
High School Student  
Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante;  
Primeira Chance



**Sergio Martinez**  
Class of 2018  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Cassio Tales Castanho Caetano**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes; ISMART



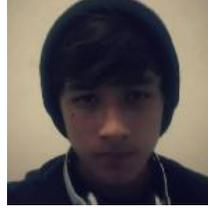
**Steven Esteves Wessman**  
Class of 2016  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Jose Wanderclesson Nobre**  
High School Student  
Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante



**Zachary Emanuel Brazão**  
Class of 2016  
Harvard College (FAS)



**Leonardo C. Hiagon Mellado**  
High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes; ISMART

## MLAB BIOGRAPHIES: HARVARD MENTORS

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### **Alexandra Nicole Cunningham**

Class of 2018  
Harvard College (FAS)

Hey everyone! My name is Allie Cunningham and I'm currently a freshman at Harvard University. I was raised in Setauket, New York, a quiet town on Long Island. I went to a small high school, The Stony Brook School, where I participated in theatre, choir, and mentoring programs. I love reading, especially Jane Austen and sci-fi novels, and I also like to sing and knit as well. I haven't declared a concentration, but I'm interested in learning about different cultures and people. My fascination with culture began with studying Classics. Studying the complexities and nuances of ancient cultures sparked my interest in modern cultures as well. I'm in love with Brazilian culture in particular because of its rich history and beautiful music, dances, and traditions. I'm so honored to be a participant in MLAB this year. I hope to explore more about Brazilian culture and work hard to become the best mentor I can be.

### **Ariel Smolik-Valles**

Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



My name is Ariel Smolik-Valles and I am a sophomore at Harvard. Originally I am from Chicago, Illinois. At Harvard I am studying Social Studies, which is a combination of government, economics, history, and sociology. Outside of the classroom I play club volleyball, am involved in a pets as therapy volunteer program, and write for the newspaper. I also really enjoy reading, exercising, and watching television. My favorite shows are Orange of the New Black and How I Met Your Mother. In the future I would like to be involved in either the education field or journalism. I really like working with students and would like to be able to live in a world where everyone has equal access to education. Sports are also a large passion of mine, so having a future in that field interests me as well. I am extremely excited to go to Brazil because I get the chance to explore a different country, culture, and continent.



### **Caleb Lewis**

Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)

Caleb Lewis was born in Cincinnati, Ohio and is a sophomore at Harvard University where he studies Cellular and Molecular Biology and English. In high school, he discovered his passion for the biological sciences as well as a knack for writing. Through his secondary school education he was involved in many different mentoring and volunteering programs. In 2013, Caleb graduated 2nd in his class with distinctions from the National Merit and AP programs. Since childhood, Caleb has had a strong belief in charity and giving back, and ultimately hopes to synthesize his science training and his creative skills in a way that would allow him to help those less fortunate than himself.

**Chelsea Cherenfant**

Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)



I'm Chelsea Cherenfant, and I'm mentoring Beatriz Tucci Schiewaldt. I'm a sophomore at Harvard, and I study biology and global health. I was born in Ann Arbor Michigan, lived in Haiti for 8 years, then moved to Cambridge before settling down in Wayland, Massachusetts. I have an older brother, who moved out to New York last year, and a younger sister who goes to boarding school in New Hampshire. Some things that I enjoy doing are playing music (I play piano and the ukulele), watching movies, and spending time with family and friends. Some of my favorite movies include the Batman movies with Christian Bale, Lion King, and 21 Jump Street. My favorite class this semester would probably be Case Studies in Global Health: Biosocial Perspectives – we get to look at a lot of interesting cases in public health, and I love coming to lecture and learning something new everyday. One fun fact about me is that I have a birthmark on my back shaped like Australia. I'm really excited to join M-LAB, and I can't wait to learn more about Beatriz, the mentees, and the other mentors this year!



**Claudia Martinez**

Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)

My name is Claudia Martinez, and I'm from Los Angeles, California. I was born in Mexico City, and lived in the "Barrio Mágico," or "magical neighborhood" of La Condesa - an artistic and fashionable neighborhood that fundamentally shaped who I am today. My family then moved to the United States and in L.A. I continued pursuing my interests in design, fashion, innovation, technology, and education. I remember being in elementary school and one day looking up in the computer lab the best university in the U.S. and finding out it was Harvard. From that day onwards I dreamed about attending Harvard, and one day that dream came true. At Harvard, I am currently in my third year and studying Computer Science and Philosophy. Apart from being very interested in building a sustainable and innovative future, I am very passionate about giving every child a chance to develop their own potential. I firmly believe education when combined with mentoring can open new possibilities and foster immense personal growth, and that's why I'm extremely proud to call myself an MLAB mentor.



**Daniel Mayor**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)

My name is Daniel Mayor and I am a sophomore here at Harvard College. I was born in Colombia, but have been living in the U.S. since I was 9 years old. I play rugby here at Harvard and I'm very passionate about the team. I also love watching Football and Basketball. I also volunteer at a homeless shelter here on campus. I am studying Neurobiology and my dream is to go to Harvard Medical School and one day become an orthopedic surgeon.



**Francesca Simoni**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)

My name is Francesca Simoni and I am a sophomore at Harvard College. I was born in Arequipa, Peru but I moved to Punta Gorda, Florida when I was ten years old. Punta Gorda is a small peaceful town in Southwest Florida three hours north of Miami. After mentally switching concentrations numerous times during my freshmen year, I finally chose to concentrate in Statistics and get a language citation in Portuguese. The broadness and applicability of Statistics drew me to the major. My favorite class right now is Chinese Philosophy. I am fascinated by the music industry and after college, I hope to get a job at a record label or a management company. I currently work at Lamont Library, the main undergraduate library at Harvard, at the circulation desk. During my free time, I love going to concerts and watching movies with my parents. I also enjoy hip-hop dancing. I am really excited to be part of this program and get to know more about my mentee and develop a bond with her.



**Jasmine Fernandez**  
Class of 2016  
Harvard College (FAS)

Jasmine is a junior at Harvard College concentrating in Neurobiology with a Portuguese Secondary. She is a first generation college student of Mexican/Salvadoran descent from Los Angeles, and is heavily involved in the initiatives of inclusion on campus -- specifically that of first-gen students. The move from sunny northeast Los Angeles to the cold New England city of Cambridge was fairly difficult at first, but with the help of her peers and mentors, she was able to find a place for herself at the College. As a result, of these struggles, however, she now works toward creating spaces on campus that better support different identities. She hopes to one day complete an MD/PHD in either Public Health or Health Policy in order to merge all of her very diverse interests.



**Kenard Dillon**  
Class of 2017  
Harvard College (FAS)

My name is Kenard Dillon and I am a sophomore at Harvard College studying history with a secondary in government. I enjoy learning about colonization, imperialism, and revolution to better understand systems of social inequality. I am originally from northern Arizona and of the Navajo, Apache, and Hopi nations. My favorite classes so far have been Portuguese and the US in the World of the 1960s. On campus I involve myself with queer and indigenous student groups, where I can enjoy and discuss my intersecting identities with like-minded people. I enjoy Vampire Weekend, phō, collecting postcards, burritos, art museums, the Fenway Victory Gardens, and egg tarts from Boston's Chinatown. I love learning Portuguese and am eager to immerse myself in the culture of the Lusophone world. In the future I hope to work in the fields of public policy, indigenous rights, and migrant workers' rights.



**Matthew Disler**  
Class of 2016  
Harvard College (FAS)

My name is Matthew Disler and I'm a junior at Harvard majoring in Social Studies (which is an interdisciplinary program at Harvard that incorporates economics, government, history, sociology, anthropology, and philosophy). It's a somewhat broad program, which I enjoy because I'm interested in learning about pretty much anything, although I have a special interest in politics both in the United States and in Latin America. I'm from Richmond, Virginia, which is about two hours away from Washington, D.C., and as I was growing up I became very involved in clubs at school that talked about government and diplomacy. At Harvard, I am an editor for the Harvard Political Review, and I also write for a satire magazine and do a little bit of stand-up comedy (I'm not very good). I also really enjoy playing piano and saxophone, and I love to ski and run, but not at the same time.



**Neimy Escobar**  
Class of 2015  
Harvard College (FAS)

Neimy Escobar is a senior at Harvard studying religion. She grew up in Las Vegas, Nevada with her mom, dad, and two older sisters. Her parents emigrated from El Salvador making her a first-generation American and college student of Salvadoran descent. Her hobbies include planning events, playing board games, and trying all kinds of new foods. While she is still unsure about her plans after college, Neimy hopes to be able to travel to Brazil or other Latin American countries and learn more about her heritage before returning to America for graduate school.



**Rony Cepeda**  
Class of 2015  
Harvard College (FAS)

My name is Rony Cepeda and I was born in the Dominican Republic to a humble family. I am currently a senior at Harvard University studying development economics. During my undergraduate career, I have developed a special interest for Latin America. I love the different cultures and languages within the region, and have dedicated a large portion of my undergraduate career to studying this region. On my spare time, I like to explore new places and things. Recently, I have started to experiment with the art of cooking. I also love to pick up a fiction book every now and then. Currently, I am reading Dan Brown's "Inferno". Another hobby that I enjoy is watching and playing several sports, with my two favorites being American Football and Basketball. When I was about 8 years old, my family and I immigrated to the United States. Although I struggled significantly to learn English, my family and mentors motivated me to never give up. From my previous experiences, I truly believe that a mentor-mentee relationship is something special that can have a tremendous impact on our lives. I look forward to seeing so many bright students achieve their dreams and aspirations! Um grande abraço! -Rony



**Sergio Martinez**  
Class of 2018  
Harvard College (FAS)

I was born in Colima, Mexico where I grew up for most of my life. I have one brother and one sister who, as well as the rest of my family, still live in Colima. When I was twelve years old, I moved to Dallas, TX where I lived with my two aunts. I went to school in Dallas from seventh grade all the way through high school. When I was in ninth grade I learned about Harvard and wanted to come here ever since. I am currently a freshman at the college and I live in Weld Hall. Until I came to Harvard, I thought I wanted to study Economics. However, by taking Portuguese and getting involved with MLAB, I have learned that I would really like to study Romance Languages and Literatures and specialize in Latin American studies so that I can learn more about my birth-country Mexico as well as Brazil and other South American countries. Recently, I also became involved in Crew where I am a coxswain for the Harvard Freshman Lightweights. I knew nothing about the sport before I came to Harvard and now it has become a huge part of my life. I am very excited to get to know Cassio better over the next few months and I'm really looking forward to our trip so that I can experience the Brazilian culture first-hand.



**Steven Esteves Wessman**  
Class of 2016  
Harvard College (FAS)

My name is Steven Esteves Wessman, and I am 20 years old. I live 30 minutes outside of New York City in Westchester, New York. I am a junior studying Economics, and I am interested in pursuing a career in business or law. In my spare time, I enjoy running, playing golf, practicing piano, and reading. My favorite band is The Beatles and my favorite movie is There Will Be Blood. I am very excited to visit São Paulo in January!



**Zachary Emanuel Brazão**

Class of 2016  
Harvard College (FAS)

I am a third year student at Harvard studying Social Studies with a minor in Portuguese. I am originally from a small fishing village on the coast of Massachusetts and have been loving the big city life in Cambridge. My lifelong proximity to Boston has left me with a Boston accent that may or may not be fake. As a Portuguese American I am very interested in the Portuguese language and the interactions between Portuguese and Brazilian Americans in southeastern Massachusetts. Outside of the classroom I serve as an after school tutor for the Keylatch Afterschool Program in Boston's South End and perform improv comedy. In my free time I love to explore other neighborhoods of Boston and read. I am particularly fond of the short stories of Rubem Fonseca and the plays of Christopher T. Durang. I am excited to learn more about Brazil and give Brazilian students perspectives on life in the U.S.

## MLAB BIOGRAPHIES: BRAZILIAN MENTEES

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### **Arthur Yamazaki Gomes**

High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes

I am from Sao Paulo and have been attending Colegio Bandeirantes since this year. Since childhood I have been interested in sports—my favorites are handball and basketball. I've played competitively for six years, and a lot of my favorite memories are moments I experienced on the court. Playing sports has been character-building for me, a large part of who I am today is because of the sports that I've played. My family is Japanese and Portuguese. My mother Silvia comes from a family from the province of Miyagi in Japan and my father João comes from a family from Serra da Estrela in Portugal. I also have a brother, Vinicius, who is one year younger than me. I am a very dedicated student. I specially like math classes, so I think that in the future I would like to work with something like engineering or statistics.

### **Artur Queiros Azevedoz**

High School Student  
Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante



My name is Artur Queirós, I'm sixteen years old and I am student of the 1st year of High School at Colégio Ari de Sá. I'm from Fortaleza, in the northeast of Brazil, and I was born here too. My favorite subjects are Physics, Biology and History. I like hanging out with my friends and girlfriend, watching movies at home, going to the movies. I love eating different things, but I prefer Japanese food or native Brazilian food! I participate in a social action program that helps elderly people, and I love them, I fell very happy when they talk and smile to me, it is very rewarding because I know I am doing something for them! I have many plans for my future. I want to run my own program of social action and I want to work in the health area, either providing medical care or working on the biological field research, like the regeneration through stem cells, or the cure of diseases that remain incurable to this date. This comes from the desire to help people, either by performing surgery or finding the cure of mysterious illnesses. This is a little part of my life.



### **Beatriz Tucci Schiewaldt**

High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes

My name is Beatriz and I am 16 years old. I am in second year of high school at Colégio Bandeirantes. My mentor is Chelsea, who is also in the second year, but she does biology in Harvard. I really love the arts, especially cinema and music; sometimes, they cleanse my soul. I love hanging out with my friends and meeting new people. It is too hard for me to pick a favorite class because I think each one is a piece of knowledge, but Mathematics could be the most interesting. It rules the world. Actually, nowadays you have to know a little bit about everything to live in the world and to understand what happens around you. My greatest goal in life is to make this world better for everyone, and I see knowledge as a tool that I am going to use to do my part.



**Carolina Emy Ono Leal**

High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes

My name is Carolina Emy Ono Leal. I'm sixteen years old and my birthday is on October 13th in Brazil. As it's in a plateau region, the city is full of hills. Although my parents are Brazilian, my grandparents are immigrants. On my mother's side they're Japanese and on my father's side they're Portuguese. As for siblings, I have a sister who is two years younger than me. Since kindergarten, I've been learning Japanese as part of my education. To make my learning of Portuguese and Japanese easier, my parents encouraged me to read a lot. As a result, I'm very influenced by Japanese culture and one of my favorite things to do in my free time is reading books. When I moved to my current school in sixth grade, I met my first friend, Ana, who introduced me to the world of online manga and anime, and soon this became my favorite pastime. And through Ana, I met other students who became my friends. Currently, one of my goals is to become a chemical engineer. Ever since I was given a chemistry kit in elementary school I've wanted to be this. When I mixed some liquids and they bubbled, I was so fascinated with the chemical reaction that I knew I wanted to work in this field. I was born in São Paulo, one of the most important business cities.

**Cassio Tales Castanho Caetano**

High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes  
ISMART



My name is Cassio. I'm 15 years old and my birthplace is Sao Paulo. Actually, I've lived all my life until now in the same place, in the same house in Tucuruvi, a neighborhood of Sao Paulo. The city where I live is really big, noisy and a little bit polluted, and has a lot of people (really, A LOT, about 12 million citizens). The people are most of all very focused on their jobs and they usually don't have time to enjoy the life. I'm used to this kind of people, but I'm completely different from them. I like this city, I never stay bored and I can do anything I want, there are a lot of things to do here. I live here with my parents, Clovis and Sandra, and with my sister, Talita (who is 23 years old). I study at Bandeirantes, a private school in the south of the city, and I take the subway to go there. I'm in the first year of the high school, and I really love 'Band', the educational quality is just super. There, we have a lot of projects in the first year, and my favorite is the 'MONU-EM'. It's a model of the United Nations' discussions, where we study for 4 months about a specific international question (like modern slavery) and pass one entire day representing countries and finding solutions for the problem. This day is called "the simulation day". This project showed me that my favorite school subject is Geography and geopolitics. Also it showed me that I want to be some kind of delegate or UN delegate, somebody who deals with international relations. I think that's a really funny and producible job, so I'll be happy working on this. I don't have a lot of friends, but I have friends for a long time. Most of my friendships are longer than 3 years, and they are really strong friendships. They help me a lot with my academic life and social life, so I like to pass most of my time with them when it's possible. And about sports, I think I'm very specific... actually I only like water sports, and I used to practice swim some years ago. Today, I'm not practicing any sports, but I have projects to come back to swimming classes soon. Until today, this is basically my life in some words. I still alive and just want to live my life on the best way



**Cindy Lie Tabuse**

High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes

My name is Cindy Tabuse and I'm sixteen years old. I live in São Paulo, which is considered to be one of the most hectic and culturally diverse cities of Brazil. Currently, I'm in the second year of high school at Colégio Bandeirantes. When it comes to studies, I am very dedicated and I work hard in order to reach my goals. I am in the Biologics area and my favorite subjects are biology and math. I am very interested in languages, so besides English, I also study Japanese, since I am a Japanese descendant. When I am not at school, I like to go out with my friends, watch movies and TV shows and listen to music, which I love! Other than that, I like playing volleyball and tennis. I also have a lot of fun volunteering at a public school where I teach math to 6th graders. In the future, I want to attend college to study medicine or engineering.



**Gustavo de Almeida Silva**

High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes  
ISMART

My name is Gustavo de Almeida Silva, I am 16 years old and currently I am studying at Colégio Bandeirantes, where I have a scholarship since 2011. Before getting into Band (as it is commonly referred), I used to attend classes in a public school located in the North Zone of São Paulo called CEU Jaçanã. Although Brazilian public schools are widely known for being inefficient, during the time I was there I tried to enjoy as much facilities as I could, taking part in the choir and taking violin and drama classes. Once I got a place in Band with the help of a social project, ISMART, I truly consider that I underwent the most significant and positive change of my life. Getting in contact with such a different reality with the background I had, helped me both develop a deep critic sense and expand my viewpoints. Because of the excellent opportunities that I was given in the last few years, I had the chance to go to a summer program at Yale University on July, where I had marvelous experiences I could never imagine I would. After getting back from the US, I was convinced that studying in such an enriching and inspiring environment that foreign universities provide would suit perfectly for my character, and today studying social sciences abroad has become a dream and is one of the main focus of my life.



**Isabelle Caroline Stapf**

High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes

My name is Isabelle, but everyone usually calls me Isa. I'm fifteen, born and raised in São Paulo. When I was born, my family was going through financial problems. Therefore, I went to bad schools, where English wasn't a priority. When I was ten, I had the opportunity to come to Colégio Bandeirantes with a full scholarship. At first, not knowing much more than the colors in English used to frustrate me. Well, here I am now, five years later, with bigger dreams than I've ever had. I hope to travel all around the world, study abroad and, most of all, become a successful writer. Some of my hobbies (besides writing, of course) are reading, singing and watching every single movie I can put my hands on. I'm beyond excited to start MLAB and get one step closer to reaching one of my dreams. I just can't wait to meet you all!

**Jose Wanderclesson Nobre Damasceno Filho**

High School Student  
Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante



I was born in 1998 in Fortaleza, Brazil. My city has many beaches and I love it. I like to play soccer (I love soccer!), read books (especially theology), play video games, and travel. I am very sociable and I like to meet new people, discover new places, and learn about other cultures. My favorite television shows are House and Ground Floor. I love Brazilian bands such as Oficina G3 and Charlie Brown Jr. I intend to pursue a degree in economics at university. I want to study at Harvard.



**Leonardo Cesar Hiagon Mellado**

High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes  
ISMART

My name is Leonardo, I'm 16 and I live in Diadema, São Paulo. I study in Bandeirantes. São Paulo is a big city like any other. So has much traffic and noise pollution, many people everywhere and, of course, pollution. However there are also many positives, such as transportation and easy access to everywhere and the variety of places to visit. I study in Bandeirantes and my favorite subjects are history and biology, because they are subjects with much written theory and I quite like reading. Talking about my hobbies, I think that read is the principal, specially mangás, sagas and trilogies. I also like to write and play basketball. I play every day on the break and end of class, even though small. In Bandeirantes we have to choose from three areas: Humanas, Exatas e Biológicas. I chose the equivalent to Biologic Science, but I've no idea what I'll do in college. My main goal is to work and do something that does not bring benefits only for me but for the whole society I live, in other words, my main goal is help the people around me.



**Letícia Pereira De Souza**

High School Student  
Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante

I'm from a small city of São Paulo, which may not seem like much, but tells a lot about me. The small city's habitants usually have the tendency to remain there, seeing things from outside as impossible or too complicated to get, and thus, worthless to fight for. However, I got lucky. Since I was young, people have seen that there was something different about me, that I didn't fit the model of the "regular small citizen". Well, I grew up seeing my father be the first of the family to go to college. It wasn't a great one, but it showed me that, like him, I didn't need to be the rule and dream low. Thus, every year, my dreams have gotten bigger, and my effort to make them come true grows with them. Lately, I have gotten some results: I represented my country in two international science competitions, I live on my own in Fortaleza due to a scholarship on school Ari de Sá Cavalcante, and I'm in MLAB. I still got many dreams, like studying in the United States, or travelling the world knowing new cultures and interesting people. However, since it has been with the help of many people that I am here, I'd say my biggest dream is to become like them: somebody that helps other people's dreams come true.

**Mariana Yumi da Cruz**

High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes



My name is Mariana and I am 16 years old. I have been studying at Colégio Bandeirantes for two years. I participate in ICONS, a UN conference simulation with people from all over the world, organized by the University Of Maryland. I also participated in MONU-EM last year, which is another simulation exclusively for people from Bandeirantes. Although I'm really interested in politics and foreign affairs, my biggest passion is graphic design. I take extracurricular Art History classes on Thursdays at school. I am particularly interested in typography and drawing. I hope to build my career on graphic designs so I'd love to study graphic design in the United States, and I believe MLAB is going to help me achieve said goal.



**Matheus Lucena de Macedo**

High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes  
ISMART

I was born February 9th, 1999, and my parents are Genevaldo and Rosa, a couple that moved to São full of dreams. My childhood was incredible, I've had many best friends, and I admit many passions too. I've faced many difficulties in my lifetime; for example, when I was 9 years old my teacher told my mom I was having difficulty writing. I went to an oculist who prescribed glasses and since then my performance improved. In my 7th grade, I was accepted into "ISMART", and that's how I'm here in Colégio Bandeirantes. Nowadays I live in a very peaceful place; all my neighbors are kind and helpful people. I love playing Basketball; I'm pretty tall, which helps me play well. I love watching Michael Jordan and LeBron James' moves, they are my favorite players. My dream is to become a professional cardiologist and have my own office one day. Briefly, that is me.



**Paulo Ricardo Sousa Fonteles de Castro**

High School Student  
Colégio Ari de Sá Cavalcante

My name is Paulo Ricardo, I have 15 years old and I was born in a city inside Ceará. My childhood was a lot more exciting than the childhood of other citizens of my town, because I had always an interest for environment and technology. Perhaps because of that I was so excited during my first Science Olympiad. In the 9th grade, I was selected by First Chance/Primeira Chance, an institution that searches for great talents in public schools to send to private schools in order to develop their skills. After one year, I went to Ari de Sá Cavalcante School, enrolling a class for ITA and IME preparation, where I've meet several personalities and future allies. Now I participate in Physics, Chemistry and Math Olympiads, and I practice my English that I have learned by myself until coming to Ari. I like to disassemble machines to make new things with them and to study robotic engineering, which I dream to use for increase the skills of humanity to discover secrets of its own world.

**Raquel Viana Gomes do Vale**

High School Student  
Colégio Bandeirantes  
ISMART



My name is Raquel, I'm 15 years old and I was born in São Paulo, where I have lived for most of my life. São Paulo is a big, noisy and polluted city, but I love living here - perhaps because I am now used to it. My father died when I was six so I live in Jardim Esperança with my mother, my stepfather, and my two sisters, Sara and Susana, both 17 years old. It's an unknown and quiet neighborhood. I study at Colégio Bandeirantes, which is a bit far from my home, but it's not a hassle to go there because I take the subway. I'm in my first year of high school, and the Colégio Bandeirantes is a nice place and the education is very advanced. My favorite subjects are biology and geometry, which is weird because both are too different. Next year, I'll go into my second year in a specific area: biology. I want to be a biologist and maybe a psychologist too. I always had the dream of understanding how the human mind works, and I think biology and psychology would help. I spend much of my day at school, but if I'm not in class I am spending time with my friends. We usually play basketball or games on our phone, like Soccer Stars. Currently, my friends and I are trying to do a project that helps the environment, but we're still brainstorming how to make it real. Outside of school I like to read and watch television. Adventure time is my favorite. They are all easy ways that connect me to another world - through imagination.

## **MLAB JANUARY PROGRAM BREAKOUT GROUPS**

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Please, we ask all MLAB participants to pay careful attention to the groups that will be together during site visits and specific activities.

ORANGE	
Alexandra Cunningham	Isabelle Stapf
Neimy Karina Escobar	Raquel Viana Gomes do Vale
Francesca Raquel Simoni	Mariana Yumi da Cruz
Kenard Dillon II	Artur Queiros Azevedoz
Zachary Emanuel Brazao	Leonardo Cesar Hiagon Mellado
Stephanie Charles	

BLUE	
Claudia Lorena Martinez	Carolina Emy Ono Leal
Ivan Daniel Mayor	Matheus Lucena de Macedo
Steven Alden Esteves Wessman	Jose Wanderclesson Nobre Damasceno Filho
Chelsea Cherenfant	Beatriz Tucci Schiewaldt
Caleb Lewis	Arthur Yamazaki Gomes
Manuela Parisi	

GREEN	
Rony Cepeda	Paulo Ricardo Sousa Fonteles de Castro
Ariel Smolik-Valles	Cindy Lie Tabuse
Jasmine Ariana Fernandez	Letícia Pereira De Souza
Matthew Joseph Disler	Gustavo de Almeida Silva
Sergio Octavio Martinez Acosta	Cassio Tales Castanho Caetano
David Coletti	

## STAFF

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**Breno Carvalho dos Santos** joined Harvard University's Brazil Office in São Paulo as an Administrative Assistant in April 2014. While studying business administration at FMU College, he worked in real estate site operations at IBM. In that role, he was responsible for planning and for layout changes across a wide range of departments to improve operational efficiency. Breno has prior experience as a health insurance broker and with gathering market intelligence in the health sector. He speaks native Portuguese and fluent English.



**Carlos da Silva**  
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**Carlos da Silva** joined the Brazil Office of Harvard University's David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies in São Paulo in October 2012 as Administrative Assistant. Carlos acquired expertise in various administrative, financial, and educational areas. Prior to joining the Brazil Office, Carlos worked as assistant in the fiscal and financial area of a German company, was an advisor for cultural exchange and study programs in Ireland, where he lived, studied, and worked. At the Brazil Office, Carlos assists the finance management, is responsible for the operations and maintenance of the office and provides support for events, programs and collaborative courses. Carlos earned a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Fernão Dias College in 2007.



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**David Coletti** joined the Brazil Office of Harvard University's David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies in São Paulo in October 2012 as Administrative Assistant. Carlos acquired expertise in various administrative, financial, and educational areas. Prior to joining the Brazil Office, Carlos worked as assistant in the fiscal and financial area of a German company, was an advisor for cultural exchange and study programs in Ireland, where he lived, studied, and worked. At the Brazil Office, Carlos assists the finance management, is responsible for the operations and maintenance of the office and provides support for events, programs and collaborative courses. Carlos earned a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Fernão Dias College in 2007.



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**Gerson Gouveia** is an intern at the Harvard University DRCLAS Brazil Office. He is a junior at Universidade Presbiteriana Mackenzie, where he is majoring in Advertising and Media. In 2013, Gerson studied abroad and lived in Tóalmás, Hungary. Gerson loves traveling, exploring new cultures, watching movies, riding his skateboard, playing sports, and spending time with his family and his girlfriend. He dreams of seeing the world, contributing to society through his profession, and spreading joy and hope around him.



**Jason Dyett**  
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**Jason Dyett** is Program Director of the Brazil Office, managing the activities and operations of the office in São Paulo. Having initially moved to Brazil in 1996 after two and a half years at Harvard's DRCLAS, he established the Brazil office of the Economist Intelligence Unit's telecommunications research division. During his first five years in Brazil, Dyett gained experience growing technology companies backed by international and Brazilian investors. In April 2006, he rejoined the DRCLAS from the Corporate Executive Board, a Washington, DC-based organization that provides executive education to public and private companies. Dyett obtained an MBA in Finance from the University of Chicago, Graduate School of Business in 2004 and graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Vermont in 1994 with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and Spanish.



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**Manuela Parisi** is a Program Analyst in the Brazil Office of Harvard University's David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies. She holds a B.A. in Journalism from the Universidade Presbiteriana Mackenzie, where she focused on innovation within the communications field. At Mackenzie, Manuela took an active role in the student-run audiovisual producer MackPro, part of Mackenzie TV, among other activities. She interned in Harvard's Brazil Office from 2010 to 2012, working directly with students, staff, and faculty, and helping to coordinate events, programs and courses. She has also worked as a news producer and media intern at the Radio BandNews FM, which broadcasts nationally in Brazil. Now a Program Analyst in the Brazil Office, Manuela works closely on student programs and communication strategy.



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**Stephanie Charles** (Harvard College '14) is the 2014-2015 Post-Graduate Fellow in the Brazil Office of Harvard University's David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies. Stephanie graduated magna cum laude from Harvard College, where she pursued a joint concentration in History and Science, and Government, along with a language citation in Portuguese. While at Harvard, Stephanie sought to explore her particular interest in Latin America, both inside and outside the classroom. Originally from Haiti, she grew heavily involved with the leadership board of the Harvard Haitian Alliance. During the summer of 2012, she interned with the Social Development Division of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, in Santiago, Chile. Throughout her undergraduate career, Stephanie developed an especially strong interest in Brazil. The summer before her senior year, she traveled to Brasilia where she interned in the Department of STD, AIDS, and Viral Hepatitis of the Brazilian Ministry of Health. Through her work, she laid the foundation for a senior thesis that explored the history and politics of HIV/AIDS treatment and antiretroviral drug production in Brazil. During her post-graduate fellowship in the DRCLAS Brazil Office in São Paulo, Stephanie looks forward to helping to expand lasting collaborative ties between Harvard and Brazil.