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Brazilian Olympic security delegates visit Conyers

By Staff Reports

news@rockdalenews.com

A 10 member delegation of high ranking officers from the State Military Police of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil visited the Georgia International Horse Park last week as part of a week-

long mission to learn about the 1996 Olympic Games and how they can apply lessons learned in the games to Olympic Games planned in Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

The delegation came to Georgia under the auspices of the Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange at Georgia State University's Andrew Young School of Policy Studies headed by founding director of GILEE and Professor Emeritus of Criminal Justice Dr. Robert R. Friedmann. Its members were briefed by federal, state and local law enforcement officials who had Olympic venue responsibilities and were directly involved in planning efforts of the games as well as hands-on experience in how to secure large events.

While in Georgia, officers visited agencies such as the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, the Georgia State Patrol, the University of Georgia Police Department, the Georgia Public Safety Training Center, the Stone Mountain Park Department of Public Safety, the Georgia World Congress Center and the Georgia International Horse Park.

In Conyers, the delegation heard from City Manager Tony Lucas, who served as chief of police in Conyers during the 1996 Olympic Games, Chief Operating Officer David Spann, who served as the equestrian venue manager at the GIHP during the games and Police Chief Gene Wilson, who was chief of the MARTA Police during the games. Chief Financial Officer Isabel Rogers also attended the meeting and assisted in translating for the majority Portuguese-speaking delegates.

Following the briefings and a tour of the GIHP, there was discussion on the challenges that Rio faces as it prepares for the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympic Games.

"Certainly Brazil has a number of challenges they're facing that don't compare to what Atlanta faced nearly 20 years ago when hosting the Olympics, but one challenge that always remains priority is safety of the public and the athletes," said City Manager Tony Lucas. "We stressed the importance of communication, constantly working closely with all levels of police agencies and having a plan, as well as backup plans, in place should the need arise."

The Conyers Police Department is a proud participant in GILEE and has had a number of officers participate in the law enforcement exchange visiting and learning about public safety from high-ranking officials in countries including Israel, Hungary and Great Britain.

