Cognitive Genesis: Assessing Adventist Academics
FEATURES

5 Assessing Adventist Academics: A Mid-Point Update on CognitiveGenesis
By Elissa A. Kido, Jerome D. Thayer, and Robert J. Cruise

11 Adventist Education and the Challenge of Postmodernism
By Humberto M. Rasi

18 The Prayer of Last Resort
By Stephen Chavez

22 The Role of Campus Chaplaincy in the Mission of Adventist Education
A Philippine Perspective
By Don Leo Garilva

27 Pastors and Schools: A Dream Team
By Bill Keresoma

33 How to Fill a Job in Adventist Education
By Lisa M. Beardsley

40 Relationships—Staying Connected With Alumni
By Robert R. Mendenhall With Beverly A. Mendenhall

45 Collaboration: An Alternative for Mentoring New Faculty
By Earl Thomas

DEPARTMENTS

3 Editorial
4 Letters to the Editor

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CognitiveGenesis Study Identifies Predictors of Superior Academic Achievement

This issue of THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION reports on the findings from the first two years of the CognitiveGenesis study. The findings are robust: Students in K-12 Adventist schools in the North American Division outperform the national averages. More data will be collected in the next couple of years and then analyzed for final conclusions. So far, whether in a small rural multigrade classroom or a large urban single-grade class, grades 3-5, 6-9, or 11, at all ability levels, students in Adventist schools perform at or above the national average in every subject tested in the study. How good? On average, performance is one-half-grade level higher than their national peers. What is more, students perform even better than their own ability level would predict.

The researchers conducting the 30,000-student CognitiveGenesis study found a cumulative beneficial effect—attending an Adventist school for multiple years is directly related to superior academic performance. Moreover, they found that non-curricular factors such as a healthy diet and adequate sleep contribute to this success. Student interaction with parents, parental involvement in schools, and family control over television viewing and Internet use also contribute to superior achievement. These findings affirm Adventist education’s emphasis on a healthy, balanced lifestyle and its historic commitment to educating the whole person.

We expect the role of parents to feature in student academic achievement, but the CognitiveGenesis researchers found that support of the school by the church and pastor are also important. For this reason, you will be interested in reading about how to get pastors involved in schools on page 24 of this issue of the JOURNAL.

Our church’s education system depends on a qualified and committed Adventist workforce, so I hope you will find the article I wrote about how to fill a job in Adventist education to be helpful for administrators and candidates alike. Also in this issue, “Collaboration: An Alternative for Mentoring New Faculty” on page 45 addresses the need to grow the people who grow denominational schools increases the likelihood that young people will remain members of the Adventist Church in adulthood. Make a point of sharing this positive information in your church and community this week and whenever you can. I hope that the empirical findings of the Adventist Church in adulthood. Make a point of sharing this positive information in your church and community this week and whenever you can. I hope that the empirical findings of the

Addressing an increasingly influential worldview, Humberto Rasi highlights positive and negative implications of postmodernism in this issue of the JOURNAL and provides some practical suggestions for steering a safe course for learning and faith formation in the classroom.

The CognitiveGenesis study, together with the two Valuegenesis studies, makes a compelling case for the advantages of Adventist education. The latter studies showed that three factors contribute to growth in faith: attending Adventist schools, being raised in an Adventist home, and being fostered in an Adventist church. Other studies have shown that attending denominational schools increases the likelihood that young people will remain members of the Adventist Church in adulthood. Make a point of sharing this positive information in your church and community this week and whenever you can. I hope that the empirical findings of these studies will encourage the teachers and school administrators reading this editorial as they work with students and parents.

The CognitiveGenesis study also raises questions and points to a research agenda that deserves attention. Why are math computation scores consistently lower? Can these findings be replicated outside of North America? How does the Sabbath fit into academic achievement? THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION seeks to communicate and promote the very best practices in classroom and extracurricular components of an Adventist education. To that end, we solicit more research like the CognitiveGenesis and Valuegenesis studies that help us understand why Adventist education has the power to transform lives—and how we can do it even better.

In the meantime, we have reason to celebrate that Adventist education is positively contributing to our students’ growth in faith and academic performance.
Letters to the editor

Peacemaking Issue
Let me add my heartiest congratulation and gratitude for the February/March 2008 issue of The Journal of Adventist Education! Here is a link to my “post”: http://adventistpeace.typepad.com/peacemessenger/2008/04/peacemaking-and.html. We also highlighted it in the electronic newsletter that went out today.

Douglas Morgan
Adventist Peace Fellowship
http://www.adventistpeace.org

- The Education Digest has requested permission to publish a condensed version of Tiffany Hunter’s article on peacemaking in the elementary classroom that appeared in the February/March 2008 issue.—Editor.

Enjoyed Higher Education Issue
I just wanted to let you know I really enjoyed reading all the articles in the April/May 2008 Journal of Adventist Education. Thanks for devoting a special issue to higher education topics.

Grant Leitma
Columbia Union College
Takoma Park, Maryland

School Boards III (Summer 2008)
Recently, President Andreasen sent a copy of the Summer 2008 issue of The Journal of Adventist Education to each of the Andrews University trustees. I read the issue from cover to cover. The emphasis on school boards was outstanding. The information is timely and hits the heart of the importance and should be the guide used by all school board chairs.

Thank you for the thorough job you did in presenting this subject.

Juan R. Prestol
Under Treasurer
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
Silver Spring, Maryland

I was very impressed with the Summer edition of The Journal of Adventist Education, which I received this week. It was so timely. Issues with K-12 boards and school boards were clearly discussed. I plan to purchase several copies to hand out to our local board members. The magazine needs to be studied carefully and the guidelines followed with prayerful consideration.

Thank you for such an excellent magazine.

Catherine Lambert
British Columbia, Canada

Thank you very much for the JAE complimentary issue on Boards III. And congratulations again for the great quality of this resource.

God bless you abundantly,

Roberto Badenas
Education and Family Ministries
Director
Euro-Africa Division
Bern, Switzerland
Via e-mail

- A complimentary copy of the issue was sent to every division president, division director of education, union conference president, college and university president, rector, and tertiary-level board chairperson worldwide.—Editor.

We are in the process of preparing a guidebook for board members using mainly the presentations made during the East-Central Africa Division board members’ seminar held at our offices in 2007.

The purpose of this inquiry is because I have read all the School Boards III issue of the Journal, and found some of the articles very useful. Is it possible to get permission to include some of them, with acknowledgement, in the guidebook we are preparing? If possible can we have copies sent to us electronically?

Hudson E. Kibuuka
Director of Education
East-Central Africa Division
Nairobi, Kenya

- Contact the Editor for permission to reprint, to photocopy, or to obtain electronic copies of articles in recent issues.

“The Firing of Mary Mediocre: The Case for Due Process at the School Board”
(Summer 2008)
Professor McKinstry has a heart for teachers who are treated unfairly. I applaud him for that. After more than 30 years of defending the rights of teachers, I wish more school board lawyers had his attitude. However, I am concerned that Adventist teachers who casually read his article (i.e., ignoring his footnotes) will come away with the impression that they have a federal constitutional right to fair treatment by their board or conference. They do not. The U.S. Constitution restrains only the actions of the government. Public school teachers, not church school teachers, can raise constitutional claims. Adventist teachers who believe they are treated unfairly, but who want to avoid the courts, can obtain both a hearing and binding arbitration of their claims by invoking the church’s “Conciliation and Dispute Resolution Procedure” (NAD Working Policy 2006-07 BA 45).

Bruce N. Cameron, J.D.
Reed Larson Professor of Labor Law
Regent University School of Law
Virginia Beach, Virginia

The author responds: I agree with Professor Cameron’s statement that Adventist teachers do not have due process rights provided by the U.S. Constitution. I made that point in a footnote in my article, but his letter is a helpful warning to prevent misunderstanding. He is also correct in noting that the thrust of my article is a call for school boards to use fair procedures when considering teacher termination. Many union education codes have fair procedures clauses, which should be followed carefully.—Charles McKinstry.

write to us!
Want to share your thoughts or comments about the articles in the Journal? Send your letter by e-mail to rumbleb@gc.adventist.org or by mail to The Journal of Adventist Education, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904, U.S.A. Include your name, title, e-mail/mailing address, and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

http://jae.adventist.org
Assessing Adventist Academics: A MID-POINT UPDATE ON CognitiveGenesis

BY ELISSA E. KIDO, JEROME D. THAYER, AND ROBERT J. CRUISE

Overheard at church on Education Day: “It would really strap us to send our kids to church school, and they’ll get a better education in public school, anyway. Their curriculum is more rigorous than the church school’s. The kids can get their religious training at home and at church.”

Overheard at a church board meeting: “The teachers at our little church school are doing the best they can, bless their hearts, but my girls need to get a quality education in order to be competitive with those applying to good universities. That’s why we are sending them to the private school in town.”

These are parts of actual conversations and represent the perceptions of many Adventist parents in the North American Division (NAD). How do Adventist educators respond to these perceptions? Several small studies have indicated that students in Adventist schools do well academically, but CognitiveGenesis is the first large-scale study to examine the academic achievement of students in NAD K-12 schools in a comprehensive way.

Research studies over the past 20 years or so have measured many of the spiritual goals of Adventist education. Two Valuegenesis studies revealed that students grow in faith.
as a result of three things: attending Adventist schools, being raised in an Adventist home, and being fostered in an Adventist church. In addition, a number of research studies have demonstrated that students who attend denominational schools are much more likely as adults to remain members of the Adventist Church.

Adventist education is unique because of its commitment to educating the whole person. Thus, in addition to spiritual growth, cognitive and physical development are also regarded as essential to a well-rounded education. The goals of Adventist education are both broad and deep. In terms of breadth, Ellen White states that true education “is the harmonious development of mental, spiritual, and physical powers,” and in terms of depth, she writes: “higher than the highest thought can reach is God’s ideal for His children. . . . Before the student is opened a path of continual progress. . . . He will advance as fast and as far as possible in every branch of true knowledge.”

Although the research cited by this article clearly shows the importance of Adventist schools in helping enhance students’ walk with God, there is a lack of empirical evidence supporting the success of these schools in the academic realm. While church membership in the NAD is growing, enrollment in denominational schools is declining, thus reducing the potential influence of Adventist education. For example, during a recent 13-year period in a large NAD union, church membership increased by 17 percent, but school enrollment declined by 18 percent. The decline in enrollment, the lack of empirical evidence to assuage parental concerns about the academic quality of Adventist schools, and the increasing demands for assessment and evaluation to ensure continuous improvement prompted researchers at La Sierra University and Andrews University to initiate CognitiveGenesis. This four-year research project, undertaken with the cooperation of the NAD Office of Education, documents elementary and secondary students’ academic achievement in Adventist schools throughout the United States, Canada, and Bermuda.

Halfway through the data-collection phase, findings from CognitiveGenesis indicate that NAD students have above-average achievement even after controlling for ability.

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The goals of CognitiveGenesis, as first discussed in The Journal of Adventist Education by Hamlet Canosa (October/November 2006 issue), are to provide answers to three vital questions:

• What is the academic achievement of students in NAD K-12 Adventist schools?
• How do students in NAD schools compare to the national norms?
• What student, home, and school factors are associated with achievement?

CognitiveGenesis not only analyzes standardized achievement test scores (the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills for grades 3-8 and the Iowa Tests of Educational Development for grades 9 and 11),
but also compares these scores to the Cognitive Abilities Test. This allows the researchers to find differences between students’ predicted academic achievement (based on ability) and their actual level of achievement.

Some have claimed that the above-average achievement for students in Adventist schools is due to the superior ability of the students, not the quality of the schools. Halfway through the data-collection phase (which runs from school years 2006-2007 through 2009-2010), findings from CognitiveGenesis indicate that NAD students have above-average achievement even after controlling for ability.

To control for student ability, the researchers use statistical procedures, taking each student’s score on the standardized ability test and calculating a score that would best predict that student’s score on the standardized achievement test. Each student’s actual score on the achievement test is then compared to the predicted score based on the student’s ability.

The good news thus far from CognitiveGenesis indicates that on the standardized achievement test, students in NAD Adventist schools score well above the national average on the standardized achievement test and above what would be predicted based on their ability test scores.

**Relationships From Survey Data**

Along with administering tests that provide an annual “snapshot” of the comparison between student achievement and national norms, CognitiveGenesis also seeks to discover what student, home, and school factors contribute to academic success. Each year, students, along with their parents, teachers, and school administrators, complete surveys to measure factors that might impact learning.

Two student surveys have been developed—one for grades 3-5, and one for grades 6-9 and 11, which is longer and includes more complex questions. Both student surveys include questions about the students, their home, their class, and their school, such as:
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• How much time do you spend after school watching TV?
• How often do your parents not let you watch some kinds of TV programs?
• How much time in a typical day do you spend interacting (talking, shopping, working, etc.) with your parents?
• How common is it in your school for older students to help younger students with their class work?

The parent surveys, which are offered in English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese, include some questions related to those on the student surveys, as well as others unique to their role, such as:
• What type of school did your child attend in each grade?
• How involved is your family in school activities?
• What best describes the extent to which English is spoken in your home?

The teacher survey includes questions about school resources as well as student and parent interactions with educators. Teachers are asked, for instance:
• How would you rate your school in parent support for the teachers and school?
• To what extent are student disciplinary problems a problem in your school?

The administrator survey, which is sent to all K-12 principals, includes questions on the school’s various curricular activities and the adequacy of school resources, such as:
• How many students in your school participate in music organizations?
• Rate the adequacy of number of computers for your school.

Student and school identification numbers from the NAD database are used to match student test and survey data with responses from the parent, teacher, and school surveys. A longitudinal design has been used to match data for all four years in order to study each student’s change in achievement from year to year.

To ensure confidentiality, students, parents, teachers, and administrators place their completed surveys in sealed envelopes and mail them directly to Cognitive Genesis for processing. The research team is committed to fully respecting privacy and maintaining the highest ethical standards.

A Massive Undertaking
Gathering data from more than 30,000 students in three countries (the United States, Canada, and Bermuda) for four consecutive years is a massive undertaking. Rather than following the usual research procedure of drawing conclusions from a small sampling of schools, Cognitive Genesis was designed to in-
clude every Adventist elementary and secondary school and every student in grades 3-9 and 11 in North America. The NAD Office of Education and the educational teams in all of the unions have approved the study and have been very supportive. Cooperation at the teacher, school, conference, and union levels has been essential for the efficient gathering and processing of more than 105,000 tests and surveys for each of the past three years. The 16-member CognitiveGenesis Advisory Committee has also provided invaluable counsel and support. (See membership list below.) Financial support has been obtained from individuals and foundations in both the Adventist and public communities to underwrite the multi-year expense of the research.

Results So Far
The test results for the nine unions that comprise the NAD are all similar. Separate analyses have been prepared for each of the unions, along with a combined report for eight of the unions. The Canadian Union is not included in the combined results because the achievement and ability tests used in Canada, though similar, are not identical to the tests used in the other eight unions and are based on a different national norm group. No report has been prepared that combines results from the Canadian Union with the other NAD unions. The data reported in this article are for the combined eight unions whose territories include the United States and Bermuda.

The results from years one and two have been very encouraging. Students in NAD schools are both achieving above the national average (by about half a grade level) and higher than would be predicted based on their ability test scores (also about half a grade level). This superior achievement is wide-ranging. Students in every grade tested (3-9 and 11), at all ability levels (from special-needs to gifted), and in schools of every size (from one-room schools to the largest schools), perform at or above the national aver-

Rather than following the usual research procedure of drawing conclusions from a small sampling of schools, CognitiveGenesis was designed to include every Adventist elementary and secondary school and every student in grades 3-9 and 11 in North America.

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 underage in all areas tested (reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and sources of information). There are negligible differences between achievement levels in large and small schools.

One area for improvement already observed across the North American Division has been confirmed in the CognitiveGenesis data. Scores on the Mathematics Computation test were consistently lower than any other area on the achievement test, including the other two mathematics areas: Mathematics Problems and Data Interpretation, and Mathematics Concepts and Estimation. The NAD Office of Education has formed a task force and asked CognitiveGenesis to provide information that can be used to guide discussions about why the scores are low and how to strengthen the mathematics curriculum.

Complete analysis of the relationships between survey information and achievement will begin in 2009 at the end of the fourth year of data collection. Some initial preliminary findings, however, are providing support for the relationship between student, home, teacher, and school factors thought to be important for student achievement in NAD schools. For example, we are finding that students have superior achievement when:

• They attend an Adventist school for multiple years;
• They do not spend a great deal of time watching television or playing on the computer;
• They have a healthy diet and get adequate sleep;
• They do not spend a lot of time participating in sports;
• They have a lot of interaction with their parents;
• There are many good books and magazines in their home;
• Their parents control time and content of TV watching and Internet use;
• Their parents are involved in school activities; and
• The church and pastor support the school.

What’s Ahead?

Once the data-collection and analysis are completed, several peer-reviewed articles and one or more books will describe the findings. Already, the CognitiveGenesis researchers are meeting with unions and conferences to discuss local findings that might lead to school improvement. Several doctoral dissertations at La Sierra University and Andrews University are already underway using the CognitiveGenesis data. Other groups are taking note of the project. Riverside Publishing, which distributes the standardized achievement and cognitive ability tests used in CognitiveGenesis, held an invitation-only leadership summit on assessment in the summer of 2008 and invited the research team to present a report on CognitiveGenesis. A top leader at the company hopes the project will be a model for other parochial school systems to follow.

CognitiveGenesis and the NAD Office of Education will continue to work together to share widely the good news about Adventist education with parents, pastors, educators, and administrators at every level. The CognitiveGenesis research team has already presented annual reports to all the unions and to many conferences at their teacher workshops and pastor meetings. Results of the first two years are also being disseminated via the CognitiveGenesis Website (http://www.cognitivegenesis.org), its newsletter, and a video that has been sent to each school and church in the division. Local conferences and schools are also doing their part in sharing the good news at parent meetings and through newsletters.

The Heart of the Matter

Whenever we talk with teachers across North America about CognitiveGenesis, they become passionate about what they hear. The results give them cause for renewed pride that they are teaching in an Adventist school. In every subject, their students are doing better than the national average and better than what would be predicted based on their ability! We’re also hearing stories of parents who get the news and decide to enroll their children.

Ultimately, we hope that CognitiveGenesis will provide affirmation of Adventist education in the academic area in the same way that Valuegenesis affirmed the spiritual. It will give parents confidence that an Adventist school offers the very best environment for their children to learn, and that it will equip them for success here and for an eternity with their Lord.

Elissa E. Kido, Ed.D., CognitiveGenesis Project Director, and Robert J. Cruise, Ph.D., Research Director, are members of the faculty at La Sierra University in Riverside, California. Associate Research Director Jerome D. Thayer, Ph.D., is a faculty member at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

REFERENCES


Imagine that teacher Susan Jones falls asleep in the 1950s and miraculously wakes up 50 years later, in the early 21st century. What changes will she notice upon re-entry to the educational scene?

The most obvious change will be the technological advances—lightweight portable computers, the Internet, wireless telephones, digital media, exploration of the cosmos, 24/7 television infotainment.

At a deeper level, however, Ms. Jones will likely be puzzled and even disoriented by the way many young people think, talk, write, and view the world and life. The decline in educational standards is also likely to cause concern, with students increasingly ignorant about art, geography, history, and the sciences.

Adventist Education and the Challenge of Postmodernism

By Humberto M. Rasi

Since the 1980s, Western culture has been undergoing a significant shift affecting the humanities, social sciences, education, and religion. This development also poses a threat to the prestige and power of the sciences.

Allan Bloom sensed this cultural shift more than 20 years ago in his classic book, The Closing of the American Mind: “There is one thing a professor can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes, or says he believes, that truth is relative... Relativism is necessary to openness; and this is the virtue, the only virtue.”

In this article, we will situate postmodernism in the context of Western cultural periods, sketch the main ideas advanced by its leading proponents, review the impact of postmodernism on certain aspects of contemporary culture, and assess some of the challenges it poses for Seventh-day Adventist education.
Tradition molded customs and controlled behavior. Each individual occupied a preordained place in society. Wars, famines, and pandemic diseases killed thousands of people. Ethics were based on a mixture of divine law and human convention. In the field of knowledge, theology and tradition ruled.

The Modern Period (16th to 20th centuries) marked a shift from theocentrism to anthropocentrism. In politics, many social groups experienced a bumpy journey from feudalism to national identity and representative democracy. Humanism and the Protestant Reformation ushered in a new cultural era in Western Europe, which eventually reached many other locations. Truth was no longer accepted as revealed by God, but as discovered by humans. In religion, Christianity slowly lost its privileged position, and the predominant culture moved from theism to deism to agnosticism. God and supernatural revelation became marginalized in public life. Religious convictions were confined to the subjective, as human reason emerged as autonomous and dominant. Formal education reached a larger portion of the world’s population. Increased knowledge and emerging technology gave humans the power to harness and exploit nature and make life more comfortable. Modern science gradually moved away from its Christian roots and became more experimental, ambitious, and successful in its technological achievements. Darwinism became the preferred philosophical foundation of science, postulating the spontaneous origin of life and a long organic evolution guided by chance and natural selection, which culminated in human beings. Bloody revolutions and devastating wars impacted millions. Ethics became anchored in autonomous human reason and social consensus. Philosophy, and later science, emerged as the dominant disciplines.

The Postmodern Period (late 20th to early 21st century). During the past 30 years, Western culture has been undergoing a general shift toward postmodernism, which can be seen both as a reaction against and a radicalization of certain aspects of modernity. It reflects a relentless pursuit of absolute human autonomy and individual freedom.

Although the transition toward postmodernism is incomplete, certain foundational ideas can be discerned:

- Humans are prisoners of language, which limits their perspective on reality.
- Any worldview or meta-narrative that claims to be universal is oppressive and marginalizes certain people.
- The personal narrative is a trustworthy method of understanding and communicating reality.
- Ethics are relative to time and place—depending on what is acceptable within a community.
- “Spirituality,” rather than doctrine, is at the core of religion.
- Preferred attitudes are relativism, irony, ambiguity, and skepticism.

In this postmodern climate, literary theory, sociology, linguistics, and communication are the predominant disciplines. The various electronic media play a major role in spreading postmodern concepts and lifestyle throughout the world.

Three trends can be identified within postmodernism: Radical postmodernism has provided the philosophical foundation and is the engine of change creating this new cultural climate.

Eco-libertarian postmodernism emphasizes environmental care and equal rights for all social groups.

Eclectic postmodernism attempts to preserve some rational and scientific features of modernism while accepting many characteristics of the new culture.

Antecedents and Representative Voices
Several thinkers have provided the ideological foundation of postmodernism:

Thomas Kuhn (1922-1996). This renowned U.S. historian of science wrote The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1962, 1970), whose main thesis is that science is not an empirically autonomous and objective enterprise, but instead a socially and historically constructed activity guided by dominant paradigms. Scientific progress is not incremental, but proceeds in stages. During periods of “normal science,” scientists conduct research and practice their specialties in the context of a generally accepted set of assumptions and rules. Scientists are aware of some phenomena that cannot be understood within this model, but assume that in the future they will be explained. When these anomalies become too numerous to fit into the predominant model, a period of “revolutionary science” follows, with the old and the new frameworks competing for acceptance. If the new model prevails, a paradigm shift occurs, which explains the
exceptions and provides the basis for new approaches and research.

Jean-François Lyotard (1924–1998), a French philosopher and literary theorist, described postmodernism as “incredulity toward meta-narratives” (The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, 1979). For him, there was no unifying, large-scale story or universal theory that could explain human history and behavior. He questioned the power of reason and stressed the importance of sensations and emotions in human decisions. He believed that science has claimed for itself an undeserved position of prestige and authority, and this hegemony must be contested and rejected. Humans belong to different communities of meaning, each with its own language codes, rules, and micro-narratives. In his essay “Lessons in Paganism,” Lyotard proposed that just as pagan religions worship different deities rather than one God, justice must also accept a plurality of criteria, rules, and judgments—there are no universal ethics.

Michel Foucault (1926–1984), a French philosopher and historian, rejected traditional notions of truth, history, and morality. In books such as Madness and Civilization (French, 1961), The Order of Things (English, 1970), and Discipline and Punish (English, 1977), he argued that those who occupy positions of power in society use the medical establishment, the penal system, and even public education to control the populace. He held that truth is never absolute, but the product of power relations and oppressive ideologies, and that reason creates arbitrary standards of normality that must be abandoned. Foucault demonstrated his ideas by a “liberated” lifestyle and experimentation with drugs. He died at age 57 of AIDS.

Jacques Derrida (1930–2004), an Algerian-born French philosopher, was the founder of deconstructionism. He saw Western culture as built on certain presuppositions and biased dichotomies—sign/signifier, speech/writing, nature/culture, sacred/profane, mind/body—that should be questioned. Derrida held that all texts have implied hierarchies that impose a certain order on reality and called deconstruction the task of revealing and unsettling these dichotomies. For him, language was an unreliable vehicle for communicating meaning and truth. He asserted that there is no single meaning to a text, nor does it express any absolute truth. The reader is therefore free to interpret a text without reference to the author’s intention.

American philosopher Richard Rorty (1931–2007) maintained in Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (1979) that there is no logical correspondence between language and the objective world. He also rejected the privileged position of science in modern culture, asserting that there is no need to understand the meaning of life or discover ultimate truth (Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity, 1989). Rorty held that humans should be free to hold their beliefs lightly, avoiding religious and secular fanaticism.
cism. Referring to fundamentalist Christianity, he wrote: “When we American college teachers encounter religious fundamentalists, we do not consider the possibility of reformulating our own practices of justification so as to give more weight to the authority of the Christian scriptures. Instead, we do our best to convince these students of the benefits of secularization. . . . So we are going to go right on trying to discredit you [parents] in the eyes of your children, trying to strip your fundamentalist religious community of dignity, trying to make your views seem silly rather than discussable.”

Other postmodern philosophers include Roland Barthes, Jean Baudrillard, Gilles Deleuze, Paul Feyerabend, Julia Kristeva, and Jacques Lacan, but for our current purpose, these profiles provide an overview of core postmodern ideas.

In summary, postmodernism’s major themes center on language, truth, power, identity, interpretation/hermeneutics, equality/rights, the environment, and personal freedom.

Impact on Culture
A survey of the contemporary landscape reveals the impact of postmodern premises on cultural emphases and scholarly practices. In language, for example, there has been a shift toward gender-inclusive speech and politically correct expressions. In literature, the traditional canon is being expanded or has been replaced by a new list of authors from the margins of society, emphasizing the transgressive—the deliberate breaking of literary conventions and moral taboos. In history, documented events from the past have been reinterpreted and at times manipulated to fit the agenda of multiculturalism.

The effects of postmodernism on theology are significant, moving the discipline away from propositional claims based on the Scriptures to culture-specific, socially constructed religious concepts. The Christian meta-narrative is challenged or abandoned altogether. This has caused the core of Christianity to shift from creed-based to general spirituality, triggering a disconnect between personal experience and fundamental beliefs. Several liberation theologies—African, Asian, black, feminist, Latino—have emerged, in addition to process theology, which postulates an immanent God who is becoming Himself as He interacts with the universe and human beings. In parallel fashion, Christian worship and music have moved toward popular sentimental expressions that mirror media spectacles.

Toward a Christian Evaluation of Postmodernism
How should we assess postmodernism and its socio-cultural impact? Evangelicals and Seventh-day Adventists are divided...
The effects of postmodernism on theology are significant, moving the discipline away from propositional claims based on the Scriptures to culture-specific, socially constructed religious concepts.

in their evaluation of this new trend. Some perceive it as a positive development that opens new vistas and opportunities for Christians in the intellectual arena, while others believe postmodernism undermines the validity of the biblical meta-narrative, rationality, and the propositional truths revealed by God.8

Using biblical-Christian worldview as a foundational template,9 three major categories can be identified in postmodernism:

**Valuable Insights**
Postmodern authors have provided us with perspectives compatible with the Christian worldview that help us to:
- Appreciate anew the intrinsic worth and dignity of all human beings and their inalienable rights, regardless of ethnicity, gender, or condition;
- Acknowledge the significant role that the culture plays in forming our personal identity and ideas as well as prejudices;
- Recognize both the inability of human language to capture the whole truth and its power to manipulate, exclude, and control others;
- Highlight and critique the blind optimism, arrogance, and deterministic assumptions of scientism,10 along with its harmful effects on Planet Earth; and
- Understand that the Bible contains not only doctrines, but also narratives that reveal a living God mercifully interacting with His creatures in their struggles.

**Potentially Problematic Components**
Postmodernism’s positive concepts can be corrupted or taken to extremes that produce negative outcomes. See the list in the box below.

**Destructive Concepts**
Some postmodern ideas are incompatible with biblical Christianity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Postmodern Value</th>
<th>Corruption/Extreme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance</td>
<td>Once power is achieved by a particular group, it often deteriorates into hostility toward those who disagree with the new order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition that knowledge is both discovered and constructed</td>
<td>Denial that ultimate truth is revealed by God and personally embodied in Christ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respect for other cultures</td>
<td>People become reluctant to judge immoral practices and to condemn evil.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opposition to the corrosive individualism of modernity and emphasis on the role of the community</td>
<td>“Group think”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concern for the marginalized in society</td>
<td>A sense of victimization; people tend to separate into social and tribal groups that compete for power</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regard for the environment</td>
<td>The sacralization of nature and devaluation of human beings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest in spirituality and individual piety</td>
<td>Indifference or animosity toward organized religion and its teachings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits of electronic media</td>
<td>Preference for “virtual reality”; detachment from real life and its responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allowing Christians a seat at the intellectual table</td>
<td>Considering biblical principles as only one among a multiplicity of equally valid perspectives on truth</td>
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• Both modernism and postmodernism reject God as a reality and enthrone human autonomy in its search for unfettered freedom. However, without trust in a Creator, Sustainer, and Lawgiver, humanity inevitably sets its own agenda in the struggle for power and pleasure.

• Rejection of a shared worldview and meta-narrative undermines the sense of purpose that men and women need to experience fulfillment: If we don’t know our origin or our destiny, how can we find meaning in our existence?

• The relativism that characterizes much of postmodern thought deprives knowledge and values of a reliable foundation: What is the trustworthy point of reference in matters of truth? Are ethics relative for each individual and for time and place? Or are there actions that are wrong at all times in any culture? Who decides? On what basis?

Challenges to Adventist Education

As postmodern ideas exert a wider influence on contemporary culture, the fundamental philosophy and principles of Adventist education are also at risk. For example:

• God and His written revelation, the Scriptures: Are they a reliable and a solid foundation for our beliefs, ethics, and hope?

• The story of salvation: If universal worldviews are no longer considered valid, how will we convey Christianity’s foundational meta-narrative—Creation, Fall, Redemption, Consumption—to our students?

• Christian beliefs and values: If cultural relativism is embraced, are there any universally valid biblical teachings that are applicable to all believers?

• Standards of behavior: Who will establish the norms and take responsibility for applying them in an educational institution?

• Bible history and prophecy: Do they have any meaning in a postmodern context?

• Adventist identity, distinctive, and mission: Can they be maintained and carried on in a postmodern world?

• Worship music: On what basis will we decide what type of music is appropriate for worshiping God?

A Thoughtful Response

These challenges demand a thoughtful response on the part of Adventist educators and administrators. Here are a few suggestions for consideration:

• Select carefully the textbooks and reading materials assigned to students, taking into account the worldview and values espoused by the authors. Be ready to discuss whether the views presented are congruent with biblical principles.

• Foster the formation of small faith communities among Adventist students, using the electronic media and personal interaction. Assign to each a mature mentor.

• Involve students in worthwhile service projects designed to address real human needs, including service learning as part of the school curriculum.

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Worldviews are usually expressed through a story—a narrative that ties together concepts of origin, purpose, and destiny. In spite of the protests of some of its promoters, postmodernity also offers a worldview—a way of interpreting the world and a meta-narrative with its own values.

For Seventh-day Adventists who accept God's revelation in the Scriptures as foundational, the Great Controversy theme provides the framework and point of reference for both epistemology and ethics.


10. Scientism maintains that all truth must be scientifically explained and proved.

11. Christians fundamentally disagree with both modernism, which places the locus of truth on the human ability to discover it, and with postmodernism, with its emphasis on the human capacity to create and construct it. The Scriptures, in the Old Testament, use the word ʼemet to speak of truth, conveying the concepts of faithfulness and conformity to fact, referring to what is authentic and reliable. David prays to “the God of truth” (Psalm 31:5). “The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful” (Proverbs 12:22). Through Isaiah, God states, “I, the Lord, speak the truth; I declare what is right” (Isaiah 45:19). The New Testament uses words such as aletheia and pisto to convey the concepts of faithful, reliable, accurate, and trustworthy, in opposition to error and lies. Jesus was “full of grace and truth,” “grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:14, 17). He Himself stated, “I am the truth and the life” (John 14:6). When He prayed for the disciples, Jesus said, “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth” (John 17:17). The Holy Spirit is called “the Spirit of truth” (John 14:17, 15:26). Before Pilate, Jesus affirmed, “For this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me” (John 18:37). Paul speaks of “the truth of God” (Romans 1:25; see also 3:7, 15:8) and connects it with “the truth of the gospel” (Galatians 2:5; see also Ephesians 1:13). In summary, the Scriptures maintain that ultimate truth is revealed by God, that truth exists and is knowable, absolute, and universal (see Douglas Groothuis, Truth Decay [Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000], chapter 3, “The Biblical View of Truth”). All texts in this endnote are quoted from NIV.


13. Alain Coralie has written a significant paper on this subject, “Out of the Worship Maze: Revelation 14:6, 7, as an Integrative Framework for Conducting Public Worship on Adventist University Campuses.” It will be published by the Institute for Christian Teaching, a service of the General Conference Department of Education, in Chrit in the Classroom, Volume 37.

15. Some observers of contemporary cultural trends believe that we are experiencing a reaction against the “anything-goes” stance of early postmodernism that, for lack of a better term, has been labeled post-postmodernism. This trend is said to have emerged toward the turn of the century either at the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 or following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

16. Looking at “the big picture,” Walter Truett Anderson identifies four worldviews competing in contemporary Western culture: (a) The postmodern-ironist, which sees truth as socially constructed; (b) The scientific-rational in which truth is “found” through methodical, disciplined inquiry; (c) the social-traditional in which truth is found in the heritage of American and Western civilization; and (d) The neo-romantic in which truth is found either through attaining harmony with nature and/or spiritual exploration of the inner self. Retrieved March 7, 2008, from Wikipedia article “Walter Truett Anderson.”

Not long ago, I rode my motorcycle to a luncheon meeting. Upon arriving, I went to the restroom to change out of my motorcycle clothes and into my meeting clothes. After the meeting, I went to another restroom to change back into my motorcycle clothes. But when I got back to my motorcycle, I couldn’t find the key—it wasn’t in my pants pocket. So I searched the pockets in my other pants—nothing.

No problem, I thought, I must’ve dropped the key ring in the restroom when I changed clothes. So I went to the first restroom—nothing. I went to the second restroom—nothing. I went to the dining room—nothing. I went to the hostess’ desk and asked: “Has anyone turned in a set of keys?” Nothing.

So I retraced my steps. I walked through the parking lot, back to the first restroom, then the second restroom, then the dining room, then the parking lot—nothing. I didn’t have a set of spare keys (I do now), and I distinctly remember praying, “God, I need a miracle.” After all, keys just don’t disappear. God knew where my keys were. And if He did, why wouldn’t He help me find them?

So back through the parking lot, into the restrooms, into the dining room, back to the hostess’ desk—nothing. I finally had to call my wife to come pick me up, and I spent most of the next 24 hours trying to figure out how to get a spare set of keys for my motorcycle.

The Problem of Prayer
Most of us understand prayer as some kind of cause-and-effect deal we transact with God. Our part is to ask and have faith; God’s part is to give us what we ask for. Go to any Christian bookstore, and you’ll find shelf after shelf of books about prayer: how to pray effectively, how to get answers, how to pray and get results. Most of these books reduce prayer to some kind of formula: ask, believe, claim; confess, praise, and petition, etc.

It’s almost as if prayer is the same as slipping some coins into a vending machine, pushing the right buttons, and, voila!, answered prayer.

I do believe God answers prayer; I’ve experienced answered prayer countless times. But I also believe that prayer is exceedingly complex and mysterious—just as God is. Often our questions and descriptions of prayer defy simplistic explanations.

Where I live, in the United States, Christians have a tendency to trivialize prayer. We find a parking place close to the store and we say, “Thank you, Jesus!” We get stopped by a police officer who lets us off with a warning and we say, “Thank you, Jesus!” We go to the doctor who says, “That lump on your arm is nothing to worry about,” and we say, “Thank you, Jesus!” The implication being that God
has somehow intervened to make our lives easier or more comfortable.

If that’s so, why do so many people around the world—including some Christians—live such pitiful, desperate lives?

In some parts of the world, corrupt dictators perpetrate—or at least ignore—the brutality inflicted on religious and ethnic minorities. In one country in Africa, the inflation rate is 66,000 percent. In the spring of 2008, massive flooding displaced thousands and caused billions of dollars of damage in the Midwestern United States. This past summer, hundreds of people lost their homes to rampaging forest fires in the western United States.

Presumably, at least some of those people prayed to be spared, but to no avail. Is it because they didn’t pray correctly? Did they not have enough faith?

Some Biblical Models

When we talk about prayer, it’s important to do more than just cobble together a few verses and draw some snap conclusions. It’s important to look at some models of prayer.

Let’s start with Abraham (Genesis 18). You remember the story: Three visitors approached Abraham’s camp and were invited to enjoy his hospitality. One of the Beings announced that within the next 12 months, Abraham and Sarah were going to become parents. Then, as they prepared to leave, Abraham was told that God’s judgment was about to be poured out on Sodom and Gomorrah, where Abraham’s nephew, Lot, lived with his family.

So Abraham engaged God in conversation: “What if there are fifty righteous people in the city?” (Genesis 18:24, NIV).*

“The Lord said, ‘If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake’” (vs. 26).

Then Abraham, essentially playing the part of a used-car salesman, says, “What if there are only forty-five? Forty? Thirty? Twenty? Ten?”

God and Abraham are involved in a conversation. They both have opinions, points of view. Abraham knows God’s character of love and compassion, so he boldly asks Him to extend mercy toward a community he knows well to be corrupt and nearly irredeemable.

Did God answer Abraham’s prayer? Well, Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. But Abraham’s nephew, Lot, and his two daughters, were spared.

Wrestling With God

Another story I like is that of Jacob. Let’s pick it up where Jacob receives news that his long-estranged brother, Esau, is making his way to meet him as Jacob is returning to Canaan (Genesis 32).

With his 400 men, the warrior Esau approaches Jacob’s company of women, children, and flocks. Twenty years before, Jacob had deceived his father, Isaac, and stolen Esau’s birthright. So Jacob had every right to believe that his elder brother was approaching with revenge on his mind.

Jacob did what any prudent man in his position would do: He divided his group into sections and sent them ahead in this...
order: first, his least favorite handmaid and her children; second, the next least favorite handmaid and her children; third, his least favorite wife and her children; then his favorite wife. Then knowing that, humanly speaking, he's still no match for Esau should he be attacked, Jacob goes to a solitary place to pray.

There in the dark, Jacob feels a presence; and fearing an attacker, he engages the individual in fierce, hand-to-hand combat. As Jacob struggles, he realizes that he’s fighting something more than human. Then the Stranger touches Jacob and puts his hip out of joint. Near dawn, when the Being warns, “Let me go, for it is daybreak,” Jacob replies, “I will not let you go unless you bless me” (vs. 26).

This is one of the Scripture’s great statements of faith. While Jacob was in physical, emotional, and spiritual agony, he threw himself on God’s mercy and prayed a simple prayer (if you can call it that): “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” In other words, “Where can I go; what can I do; where can I find relief from the burdens I’m carrying?” Jacob didn’t ask for anything specific; he asked, begged, demanded, only a blessing.

Did God answer Jacob’s prayer? The immediate threat posed by Esau and his 400 men was removed, but Jacob experienced many other heartaches, trials, and disappointments. However, God changed his name, so that he faced those trials not as Jacob, “he takes by the heel [deceiver],” but as Israel, “he struggles with God.”

What it Is; What it Isn’t

Prayer is not a tool to get God to give us what we want; it is a means of communicating with the Almighty. Prayer didn’t keep Daniel out of the lions’ den; in fact, prayer got him thrown in there. Prayer didn’t keep the three Hebrews out of the fiery furnace, but in answer to their prayers, they didn’t face the flames alone.

Prayer is simply the mechanism by which we communicate with God. We share with Him the burdens of our hearts, and He opens our minds to the unsearchable depths of His love, mercy, and justice.

When Paul was afflicted by “a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me” (2 Corinthians 12:7), God did not answer by way of physical relief. Instead, He answered Paul: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (vs. 9).

When Job found himself an unwitting pawn in a cosmic struggle between good and evil, he lost his wealth, his family, his health, and very nearly his sanity. But in another great statement of faith, he exclaimed, “Though [God] slay me, yet will I hope in him” (Job 13:15). In other words, “Where else can I go? To whom else can I turn? If I can’t get help from God, from whom will it come?”

Prayer is not handing God a list of favors to be granted, it is bowing in humility before the Sovereign God of the universe, sharing with Him our heartaches and burdens, and allowing Him to craft an answer to our prayer that is at the same time loving, merciful, and just; not just for us, but for the entire universe.

Bruce Almighty

A few years ago a film called Bruce Almighty was released. It concerned a character named Bruce Nolan (Jim Carrey),
who believed God was treating him unfairly. In the film, God (Morgan Freeman) hands over His supernatural power so that Bruce can solve all the world's problems (at least the ones in Buffalo, New York).

Nolan soon discovers, however, that being God is not easy; and he ends up messing everything up. His job, his relationship with his girlfriend, Grace (Jennifer Aniston)—indeed, nearly everything he touches—gets ruined.

But in one scene near the end of the film, Bruce finally learns something about what God looks for when we pray:

“What do you want me to do?” Bruce asks God.

“I want you to pray, Son,” says God.

“Lord,” Bruce prays, “feed the hungry. And bring peace to all of mankind. How’s that?”

“Great,” says God, “if you want to be Miss America. Now, come on. What do you really care about?”

“Grace.”

“You want her back?”

“No,” says Bruce, “I want her to be happy, no matter what that means. I want her to find someone to treat her with all the love that she deserved from me. I want her to meet someone who’ll see her always as I do now, through Your eyes.”

The scene ends with God saying, “Now that’s a prayer.”

When we pray, we’re essentially saying to God: “Here’s where I’m at; here are my struggles; here’s what I need to survive physically, emotionally, spiritually.” But prayer isn’t over until we say, “God, please don’t just answer my prayer. Help me recognize how Your answer is building up your kingdom and accomplishing Your will on earth.”

No wonder the apostle Paul counseled us to “pray continually” (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

And Finally . . .

Two weeks to the day after I lost my keys, I rode my motorcycle to another luncheon meeting at the same restaurant. When I walked in, the woman at the hostess’ podium held up a set of keys and said, “Do these belong to you?”

I had to wait two weeks for an answer to my prayer, “God, I need a miracle.” And when I had all but given up, God answered my prayer of last resort.

Teaching About Prayer Depends on the Spiritual Maturity of the Students

Discussion Questions

What’s the most important thing students of the following ages should know about prayer?

Pre-school to grade 2
Grades 3 through 6
Grades 7 through 9
Grades 10 through 12

When talking about prayer, why is it important not to promise too much?

Why is it so easy to talk about prayer in terms of what we say, rather than what we hear? How can that be changed?

How can classroom prayers be more conversational and less demanding (“Gimme, gimme, gimme”)?

When is it most appropriate to share prayer experiences—when you get answers, or when it appears your prayers are ignored?

Who, for you, are some role models of great pray-ers? Why do you think of them when you think of prayer?

According to missiologist Gottfried Oosterwal: “Mission is the heartbeat of the church. If it stops, the church ceases to be. Each institution... has meaning—and a right to exist—only if it participates in mission.”1 Having been involved in campus chaplaincy for more than half of my denominational employment, I have not only learned to love this unique ministry, but I have also come to believe that it has an important role to play in fulfilling the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s distinctive mission to proclaim the everlasting gospel of salvation in Christ Jesus to all the world (Revelation 14:6-12).2

This article will look at why the campus chaplaincy ministry can play an important role in fulfilling this mission, using the example of Mountain View College (MVC) in the province of Bukidnon in the southern Philippines.

A Quick Background

Of the more than 100 colleges and universities operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church around the world, nine are in the Philippines. All of these schools have active campus chaplaincy ministries. We will take a look at MVC.

Over the years, MVC has become known as an institution where students and teachers are involved in both inreach and outreach ministry. Every Saturday morning, 200-300 of its 3,000 students, together with faculty sponsors, fan out to more than 70 churches within 60 kilometers of the college, where they participate in these churches’ services and ministries.3 Most of these churches have been built through the efforts of the off-campus ministry of the college. No wonder the majority of Filipino church-sponsored missionaries in Asia, Africa, and Oceania are MVC alumni! During MVC’s almost 60 years of existence, its campus chaplaincy programs have played a major role in providing a model for students to follow in...
reaching out to others inside and outside the school in shaping MVC’s identity as a mission-oriented institution.

Rationale for Campus Chaplaincy Ministry

Campus chaplaincy ministry can play a major role in fulfilling the mission of Adventist education for at least eight reasons:

First, many non-Adventists are attracted to our educational system. There is a growing recognition today by secular governments and non-member families of the value of Adventist education.4

In an informal survey done in 2002 in the South Philippine Union Conference territory, Gladden Flores, former associate director of education of the South Philippine Union Conference, discovered three reasons why non-Adventist parents chose to send their children to our schools:5

(a) They like the way the schools handle disciplinary problems, contrasting the campus climate with the constant brawling they see on secular campuses. They believe their children are a lot safer at an Adventist school than in a public institution.

(b) They like the emphasis on values formation. They realize that secular education does not adequately prepare their children for responsible citizenship. Franklin Roosevelt said that to educate a person in mind, and not in morals, is to educate a menace to society.6 In religion classes, the students learn about biblical virtues. The emphasis we place on Bible teaching is a “value-added” factor in our educational system. This may be one of the major differences between our institutions and public schools.7

(c) The excellent academic standards of Adventist schools. Our students excel scholastically because of the wholistic approach we follow in shaping their academic and personal lives. The results of the Philippine government licensure examinations indicate that our students consistently earn top scores.8

Contributions to Church Growth

The second reason why campus chaplaincy fulfills a vital role in the mission of our educational institutions is its significant contribution to church growth. A 1996 study showed that in the former Asia-Pacific Division, schools ranked as the fifth highest factor (13.5 percent) that influenced people to join the Adventist Church. Ten years later, our schools had even higher percentages in both the North Philippine Union Mission (17.1 percent) and the South Philippine Union Conference (14.4 percent).9 The South Philippine Union Conference, one of the biggest and fastest-growing unions in the Adventist Church,10 owes a large part of its growth to campus ministry work at Mountain View College.11 Currently at MVC, like many other Adventist colleges and universities, the challenges are even greater, since many of the students come from non-Adventist families.12 Rather than seeing this increase as a cause for concern, we should view it as a reason to support and expand the work of campus chaplaincy.

College-Age Students Are Open to the Gospel

The third reason why the campus chaplaincy ministry fills an important role in achieving our educational mission is that during this stage of life, students’ minds are open to new ideas and new interpretations about God. Their minds must be placed in an environment where faith is nourished by the Word of God. Andrews University’s Website for Campus Spiritual Leadership program states:

“In the development of faith, the critical years are the college years when young adults gain their first real independence and must move through a period of searching that leads from a ‘given faith’ to an ‘owned faith.’ During these years of searching and decisions, these students need to be given ‘a dream and a community.’ If mature Christian adults are not available and prepared to provide these, our young adults will find their dream and community outside of the Christian faith.”13

Research shows that the overwhelming majority of Christians give their hearts to Jesus in their youth. Carl Trutter observes that college students have not yet settled on personal
careers, value system, or lifestyles. George Barna notes that “three-quarters of all people who have consciously, intentionally, and personally chosen to embrace Jesus Christ as their Savior did so before their eighteenth birthday.”

Joe Jerus points out that statistics indicate that “nineteen out of every twenty persons who become Christians do so before they reach the age of twenty-five.” Significantly, in the South Philippine Union Conference, where Mountain View College plays a major role in its church life, 60 percent of the church members are 35 years old or younger.

Higher Education as an Engine for Change

The fourth reason why campus chaplaincy is a major factor in achieving the mission of the church is the power of higher education today in promoting social, economic, political, and spiritual welfare. Charles Habib Malik in his influential and stirring book, A Christian Critique of the University, states that “the university determines the course of events and the destiny of man more than any other institution or agency today.” He continues: “The university is a clear-cut fulcrum with

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which to move the world . . . . More potently than by any other means, change the university and you change the world.”

College and university students comprise only about one percent of the world’s population, yet “what a powerful 1 percent they are” because they compose the future leaders of the world and of the church. MVC is considered an excellent reservoir of Christian music, culture, and arts in the city and province where it is located.

Fertile Grounds for Evangelism
The fifth reason why the campus chaplaincy ministry has a vital role in accomplishing the church’s mission is that institutions of higher learning are excellent venues for evangelism. Billy Graham has said that “universities might well be among the most fruitful fields for evangelism.” Our own church considers schools as “fertile mission fields.”

Because of the importance of the campus chaplaincy ministry to Mountain View College, it is divided into three parts:

1. The college pastoral staff, which are also in charge of campus chaplaincy, run specific on-campus ministry programs: (a) The LIGHT and Friends organization specializes in evangelizing non-Adventist students; (b) the Prayer and Friendship Circle mainly encourages members in friendship evangelism and the daily study of the Bible; and (c) the Prayer Warriors specialize in prayer ministry.

2. The off-campus ministry to the neighboring churches and communities, called Ministerial Seminar, is assigned to a specific faculty member in the School of Theology to administer. The main participants, though, are students.

3. SULADS (Socio-Uplift Leading to Anthropological Development and Services), is a specialized off-campus ministry that trains students as missionaries to the indigenous mountain tribes of the South Philippines. All of these branches of campus ministry are geared toward training students and winning people to Christ.

Training Grounds for Leadership
The sixth reason why campus chaplaincy is making a major contribution to our mission in education is that colleges and universities are essential for training the next generation of academic and professional church leaders. They are the “required training ground[s]” for men and women who will occupy “key positions” in the world. Mountain View College supplies almost 100 percent of the South Philippine Union’s leaders and workers, as well as many key leaders for the two other Philippine unions.

A Ministry Whose Time Has Come
The seventh reason why campus chaplaincy is making a major contribution to the mission of the church is that it is a ministry whose time has come. Until recently, our church had no training program for those who minister to college students on Adventist campuses. In fact, very few campus chaplaincy ministry training programs exist in any Protestant seminary.

Many Adventist leaders did see the need for campus ministry and so wrote plans and passed resolutions. However, most of the plans and ideas remained on paper until October 2002, when things began to change. Andrews University held a summit for 16 people working in Christian and public campus ministries. These practitioners reviewed the Campus Spiritual Leadership graduate certificate program planned by the Religious Education Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. The plan was implemented in the summer of 2004.

General Conference President Jan Paulsen believes that this is a timely program: “Higher education in our schools is increasingly becoming the site of ministry.” Indeed, revitalizing the campus chaplaincy ministry is an idea whose time has come.

It Furthers the Mission of Adventist Education
The eighth reason why campus chaplaincy is making a major contribution in attaining the mission of the church is that our schools are tasked to be mission-driven. Being the most visible witnessing spiritual dynamo in Adventist colleges and universities, campus chaplaincy must be an indispensable element in our schools. It must reach out to the schools’ non-Adventist constituency both inside and outside the campus.

At Mountain View College, a typical student’s life is considered incomplete if he or she has not participated, at least once, in some kind of campus ministry. Remarkably, this is true even for its many non-Adventist students. The spirit of mission seems to infuse the very atmosphere of the college. Mission has become a given in MVC’s life and culture.

Conclusion
Campus chaplaincy ministry has an important role in fulfilling our church’s mission. Mountain View College has set an example of what every campus chaplaincy ministry in ev-
Campus chaplaincy fulfills a vital role in the mission of our educational institutions because of its significant contribution to church growth.

Don Leo Garilva, D.Min., is Dean of the School of Theology at Mountain View College in the southern Philippines. He worked as a chaplain in two major hospitals in the Philippines before spending 13 years in MVC as church pastor and campus chaplain. His dissertation was on campus chaplaincy. He has designed a six-part spiritual retreat series called “The Power of God in My Life,” which is used to enhance spirituality in educational institutions, hospitals, conferences, and churches. Dr. Garilva is also conducting research on integrating spiritual mentoring in Adventist classrooms and reaching students on secular campuses.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

4. This is especially true in the Philippines. Humberto M. Rasi with Enrique Becerra, C. Garland Dulan, John Fowler, and Beverly Rumble, “Report to the Executive Committee” (report presented at the annual General Conference Spring Meeting by the Department of Education on April 2002).
5. Gladden Flores, until recently the associate director of education of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division, is now president of Adventist University of the Philippines. Tape-recorded interview by Don Leo Garilva, October 30, 2002, Cagayan de Oro City, Misamis Oriental, Philippines. He worked as a chaplain in two major hospitals in the Philippines before spending 13 years in MVC as church pastor and campus chaplain. His dissertation was on campus chaplaincy. He has designed a six-part spiritual retreat series called “The Power of God in My Life,” which is used to enhance spirituality in educational institutions, hospitals, conferences, and churches. Dr. Garilva is also conducting research on integrating spiritual mentoring in Adventist classrooms and reaching students on secular campuses.

10. Remelito Tabing, until his retirement in December 2007, was president of South Philippine Union Conference (SPUC). Telephone interview by Don Leo Garilva, June 28, 2006, MVC.
11. Ibid.
15. George Barna, Generation Next (Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 1995), p. 77. Barna says that this is one of their most significant discoveries.
17. Remelito A. Tabing, telephone interview by Don Leo Garilva, February 23, 2004, MVC.
22. Because of the magnitude of its program, SULADS, though still based at MVC, has recently been voted to become an independent entity directly under the South Philippine Union Conference. For recent information and stories about SULADS, see Adventist World’s cover story, “The Kerosene Lamp and Other Stories” (April 2006), pp. 16-19. For more information, visit their Website at http://suladsonline.org/.
27. I admire what the late Malcolm Maxwell, president of Pacific Union College for 18 years, told his teachers: “In accepting a position on the faculty of Pacific Union College, you are accepting pastoral and evangelistic obligations; part of your job at PUC means you will reach out and touch our students for Christ. This is the one thing that sets our school apart. . . . That’s what we all are about” (Greg A. King, “Should Adventist Colleges Require Religion Classes?” The Journal of Adventist Education [February/March 2006], pp. 24, 25). This quote is taken from an interview with D. Malcolm Maxwell entitled, “Our Distinctive Difference—Seventh-day Adventist Higher Education,” Pacific Union Recorder (April 15, 1996), p. 5.
Pastors can and do serve in many roles at Seventh-day Adventist schools. Board chair, speaker at week of prayer, counselor, transportation coordinator for service projects, softball pitcher at recess, Bible teacher, fundraiser for the worthy student fund, and director of Bible studies for baptismal class are only a partial list of ways that pastors contribute to their local Adventist school.

In preparation for writing this article, I asked educational leaders in the Pacific Union Conference to share what exceptional pastors do to support Adventist education. The following are their testimonies and tributes to involved pastors.

**Pastor as Board Member**

“Pastor Rockney Dahl of the Lancaster, California, church came on board during a time when the enrollment was only 47 students. Morale was down, and support for the school was minimal at best,” says former associate superintendent W. R. Dennis. “Pastor Dahl became involved in helping restructure the board and its membership. In just a few years, the constituency built a new school, enrollment grew to 90 students, and the reputation of the school in the community is excellent. He understands the symbiotic relationship between church and school. His support has been invaluable!”

According to Dennis Kingma, former principal of Miramonte Adventist School in Los Altos, California: “Pastor Curtis Church was phenomenal as far as helping children in his church obtain adequate funds for Christian education. He placed full priority on having his church children in school by finding money and assuring that the bill was paid. Pastor Church organized meetings with his colleagues to discuss financial plans for student aid, and encouraged them to raise their school subsidy. Pastor Church served on the board and very rarely was absent from board meeting. He encouraged other pastors to attend.” Kingma went on to say that “most of the pastors [of my constituent churches] participated in providing devotions for chapel. I also understand the Sunnyvale church subsidizes the salary of the youth pastor [taskforce worker], whose major responsibility is servicing the school.”

**Pastors Put Children First**

Elder Joseph Krplek often said: “Bring the little children to me.” His son, Principal Don Krplek of Boise Valley (Idaho) Adventist School, recalls, “My dad would in-
struct the elders that anytime the principal wanted to feature a student in worship service, they were to step aside. He wanted to make every opportunity available for students to be involved in the worship service.”

Former Loma Linda Academy (LLA) principal J. Brent Baldwin says of Doug Mace, youth pastor at the Loma Linda University church: “Pastor Mace’s passion is sharing Christ with young people. What truly makes this evident is the time he spends on the campus of our school. Pastor Doug led out in games on the senior class trip and runs the sound system at various student activities. He also sells vegedogs-on-a-stick at school events and visits with students on campus (even bringing them lunch). Pastor Doug is an avid supporter of LLA and Adventist education.”

When Principal Sarah Seaman came to Peninsula Adventist School, in Seaside, California, Pastor John Egan was one of the first people she met. He invited her to call him whenever she needed assistance. Principal Seaman says: “Pastor Egan helps me with everything. He helped me move. He plays with the kids. He serves on the school board. He is always checking on me to see how I am doing. He repairs and fuels our school vans and maintains their financial records. He attends all our events and helps us clean up. He is on campus before and after each event. If we have a difficult board meeting, he sends me chocolates and an encouraging note. He is the most humble person I have ever met.

“On average, Pastor Egan is on campus two to three times a week. If we do not ask him for help, he still comes and serves quietly. He arranges for chapel speakers and is willing to chaperone when needed. Yet what I appreciate the most is that every Sabbath he is either talking about the school from the pulpit, or has news about what is going on at the school in the

This article suggests some ideas for developing a positive relationship between Adventist schools and their local pastors.
church bulletin. Because of his serious involvement with the school, his church is actively supportive. His heart is in our school.”

Principal Alfred Riddle of Mesa Grande Academy in Calimesa, California, praises Pastor Eugene Bartlett, associate pastor for the Palm Springs church, for his involvement with student activities three to five times a week at the school—from providing music at sports events to organizing spiritual retreats for students. In fact, Pastor Bartlett has just been hired as the chaplain/Bible teacher for the 2008-2009 school year!

**Offices of Education Recognize Contributions of Pastors**

Beverley Bucknor, an associate superintendent for the Pacific Union Conference, reports that “Pastor Anthony Paschal teaches physical education twice a week at Valley Fellowship Resource Center in Rialto, California. He has donated and raised money for running shoes and equipment for the students.”

Teryl Loeffler, Hawaii Conference superintendent of education says: “When I was principal of Sierra View Junior Academy in Exeter, California, Pastor Jim Milburn would come on campus one day a week offering his services. He would conduct faculty worships, class devotions, and shuttle students on field trips.”

Deloris Trujillo, a veteran educator and former education superintendent for the Hawaii Conference, remembers that Pastor Roger Cain would substitute when needed, eat lunch with the kids, play tag on the playground with the younger children, and help plan camping trips for students in the Mauna Loa School. Whenever he was in town, he would come to school at recess time and play whatever the students were playing that day. Former principal Alan Lipps adds: “Pastor Cain’s effect on the school was astounding. Enrollment increased. When students really like their pastor and their church, it is easy to get them to consider baptism.”

Without the intentional involvement of the pastor, a school’s ability to grow and be productive will be severely limited.

Dr. Mario Negrete, associate superintendent of education for the Southern California Conference, says he has known pastors who were dedicated and willing to provide the financial means by truly going out of their way to ensure that all the children in their church are in an Adventist school. Negrete sums up their contribution in this way: “If they have to, they knock on doors to raise money for the child’s tuition. They do not miss board meetings and have invested in a long-term commitment to Christian education.”

**Priceless Time With the Pastor**

“Pastor Jon Ciccarelli calendars a meeting with me every Thursday to see how I am doing. He prays for me and for our
“I am thankful for Youth Pastor Pierre Steenberg,” says Principal Roymond Koubong of the Hollister Adventist School. “On average, he spends at least two-thirds of his week on campus. He is a mentor to me and schedules an appointment to visit, encourage, and pray for me. It is always at the right time and when I need it the most. Seventy percent of our students are non-Adventists. Pastor Steenberg also visits students in their homes. They consider him their pastor, even though they do not attend the Seventh-day Adventist church.”

**School and Church in True Partnership**

I learned from Principal Cyril Connelly that Dan Smith, who was for many years the pastor of the La Sierra University church (Riverside, California), was always committed to La Sierra Academy (LSA). Connelly says: “In his busy schedule as senior pastor, he found time to visit campus and attend many of our events. Dan was visible. He was not a stranger to our students and faculty. He talked candidly with them, and they knew that he was approachable with a ready ear. If there was a rumor, he picked up the phone and called me to discuss our side of what he heard, which I really appreciated. He was passionate about our school. He took on a project to lead out in raising funds for the renovation of our cafeteria, and through his efforts raised more than $20,000. He was supportive of the concept of local church financial support for education, and a significant percentage of the church budget is earmarked for LSA. The church subsidy to our school has been increased over the past few years without any request from the school. An innovative scholarship program is in place that allows more than 60 students to attend the K-12 program. Dan has been affirming and supportive. Our school and church are in a true partnership thanks to his leadership.”

**Teachers have shared with me how grateful they are when their pastor visits the classroom.**

Former Principal Arsenio Hernandez says, “Pastor Robert Costa, while pastoring my church, Mercedes Spanish, in the Texas Conference, was always ready to assist the schools where I worked. His presence at the school, whenever needed, was just a telephone call away. On several occasions, he would go with me to visit a non-Adventist school,” says Principal M. Kristine Fuentes of Escondido (California) Adventist Academy.
principal Monica Greene reports that “In my 17 years at Hilltop Christian School, in Antioch, California, Pastor Ron Cook has been one of the most involved pastors I have known. He holds chapel every Friday and conducts a baptismal class annually. Pastor Cook and I visit each new student before he or she enters school. He has participated in most of our Outdoor Education trips. He is always promoting the school in church and attends every school board meeting. My students really love him!”

Principal Ken Preston of Paradise (California) Adventist School says, “Ben Maxson is an incredible pastor. He accepts the responsibility to lead the church into positive ownership of the school. He marshaled the congregation to participate and complete the school building program. He is not just talk; he is a man of action! His philosophy is: If you do not have a thriving school, you will not have a thriving church. A large share of the church budget is committed to the school. In our church, at least two Sabbaths a year are dedicated to Adventist education. Regularly from the pulpit, Pastor Maxson promotes the excellence of Christian education by acknowledging and affirming the students and staff.”

I.E.P. (Involved Exceptional Pastors)

Principal Alexis Emmerson of Pleasant Hill (California) Adventist School told me that the pastors who made a difference were the ones who connected with students at school functions. One of Emmerson’s senior pastors made it a point to work with junior high students even though his own children attended the elementary school. Emmerson said, “One of our pastors taught Grades 3 and 4 archaeology for a couple of weeks. All the pastors can relate to youngsters because they are so accepting. Our pastors have so many interesting hobbies of which teachers are eager for them to share in the classroom.”

“Many pastors are involved at least once a month,” says M. Kristine Fuentes, principal of Escondido (California) Adventist Academy. “They are on a rotation schedule to conduct worship for the students. Pastor Jon Ciccarelli has taught a class on worship, instructing students how to lead out in worship.” ECHOING this sentiment, Principal Greg Coryell from Napa (California) Christian School, says, “Some schools I have been involved with had for each classroom a pastoral representative participating weekly or monthly. Some pastors would be responsible for two to three classrooms as spiritual advisors, presenting worships, or teaching a class. I relied on them as spiritual advisors for our campus. Pastors make an unbelievable difference. It is huge!”

Vic Anderson, principal of Pine Hills Junior Academy in Auburn, California, says: “We have two youth pastors who are on campus two to three times per week, and average two weekends during the school year. Throughout the year, they take students out for a weekend, training them to participate in ‘power week,’ a spiritual activity for the school. They also organize a spiritual retreat at the beginning of the year. We appreciate our senior pastors, who attend board meetings regularly.”

It’s All About T.E.A.M.

I have had the privilege of working with many dedicated pastors. Pastor Jose Luis Argumedo is a champion for Adventist education. Working with his La Habra Spanish congregation, he has inspired them to place their children in West Fullerton (California) Seventh-day Adventist School. The church holds numerous fundraisers ranging from selling tortillas and other foods, to doing various jobs in the community in order to raise money for the church education fund. Pastor Argumedo visits his church families and shares the importance of Adventist education. In his eyes, a Christian education for each of his church children is an absolute must!

At Napa Christian School, one pastor approached Principal Coryell and said: “I am your school pastor and will do whatever you want me to do. Use me in any way that will serve the school.” Coryell says, “We started carving out ideas regarding her involvement. She is on the campus two to three times a week. I love it!”

Here in the Southeastern California Conference, we have adopted the acronym T.E.A.M. signifying “Together Educators And Ministers collaborating to build children into spiritual champions.” We are in the process of building up our S.E.C.C. T.E.A.M.

On October 29, 2007, the conference dedicated the day to furthering the process of nurturing “relationship and collaboration” for T.E.A.M. Pastors and educators worshiped and fellowshipped together and spent productive time in discussion groups responding to three questions drawn from surveys that had been administered to seminar participants:

1. In an ideal world, what does a strong T.E.A.M. of churches and schools look like?
2. What are some of the reasons our young people disconnect from the church?
3. How can we work together to do a better job of keeping our youth connected to God and our church?

We are in the process of disseminating the responses from
our group meetings and surveys. The next steps are to determine the directions in which to proceed in order to continue the “building of our T.E.A.M.” and deploying them for positive action!

The Pastor’s Vital Contributions to Church Schools

Without the intentional involvement of the pastor, a school’s ability to grow and be productive will be severely limited. Most educators welcome having their pastors engaged with the school. Teachers have shared with me how grateful they are when their pastor visits the classroom. One said: “I appreciate the time they spend with my students, yet what I value the most is when they pray for me. My pastor makes a big difference in my educational ministry and understands the magnitude of educational evangelism.”

Helping Your Pastor Get Involved

Pastors are incredibly busy people. Some are assigned to oversee multiple churches and must deal with the physical constraints of being unable to visit each church regularly, let alone spend large blocks of time at the local church schools. Still, many would get more involved if they had an idea what is needed and what a difference they can make. So don’t be afraid to ask your pastor to help out, and be sure to make him or her feel welcome on campus. Here are a few ideas for developing a positive relationship between your school and the local churches:

1. Ask the pastor to establish prayer teams in his or her church(es) that have a designated time each day when they pray for the school and staff.
2. Suggest that the pastor deploy local elders to dialogue with the school on how church can provide support, even if resources are limited. This could include work bees, assisting in the classroom, or recruiting students.
3. Invite the pastor to join the students for lunch on a certain day each week, or to help supervise sports or field trips.
4. Ask the pastor to find creative ways to involve students in church leadership, worship services, and overall church life.
5. Offer the teachers and principal as possible worship and prayer meeting speakers at the local church(es).
6. Work with the pastor to arrange for the students’ artwork to be posted in the church atrium, and for school events to be featured in the bulletin.
7. Regularly send notes from students and staff affirming the local pastors’ ministry and telling them that you are praying for them.

A study conducted by George Barna found that a person’s moral foundation is in place by the time he or she reaches 9 years of age, and spiritual beliefs are irrevocably formed by age 13. Those who are active in church life in their 30s and 40s have likely been involved in active training as children. The probability of a person making a permanent commitment to God between ages 5 and 13 is 32 percent, between ages 14 and 18 is four percent, and the chance of such a decision after age 18 is only six percent. Barna said, “Having spent the first two decades of my ministry engaged in research and leadership that targeted adults, the Lord has recently accomplished an extraordinary thing in my life. He changed my mind about the nature of effective ministry in our nation today. . . God opened my mind and heart to ranking ministry to children at the top of the priority list.”

I would like to hear about activities in which pastors are involved. Please e-mail me at Bill.Keresoma@seccsda.org, and I will share this information with pastors and educators in order to continue to strengthen the relationship between the church and the school.

I believe that educators and pastors must nurture one another. Borrowing the phrase by the late Dr. Martin Luther King, “I have a dream” that pastor and teacher walk as one in providing the spiritual direction for our precious children. Without each other, we are nothing. “I have a dream” that church and school collaborate to surround our children with direction, mentorship, and scholarship. “I have a dream” that principal and pastor make it their highest priority to execute the ways and means to enhance both institutions. “I have a dream” that pastors and educators become “one and the same” in the eyes of our children. “I have a dream” that pastors and educators become the “Dream T.E.A.M.” that will be second to none!

Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?”

“Yes, Master, you know I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my lambs” (John 21:15, Message). Isn’t it interesting that the first community of people Jesus instructed us to take care of are our children! T.E.A.M., Together Educators And Ministers, collaborating to build children into spiritual champions! Go T.E.A.M.!

Bill Keresoma is currently Associate Superintendent of Education at the Southeastern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Riverside, California. He holds a B.A. in Religion and a M.A. in Counseling, and has served as a youth pastor and senior pastor, taught academy-level religion classes, and served as a guidance counselor and academy and college dean of men. He can be reached by e-mail at Bill.Keresoma@seccsda.org.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. My thanks to Pastor Bert Anderson for introducing the acronym T.E.A.M.
3. The Scripture passage credited to NKJV is from the New King James Version, copyright 1982, Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers. All rights reserved.
How to FILL A JOB in Adventist Education

A

n e-mail address was posted at the end of the advertisement, so I presumed that _____ Adventist University had an urgent need to quickly fill the position listed. A few months later, I received word that the job I applied for was filled, but would I consider another one? (Yes, I would.) Then, after eight months of waiting for the job descriptions that I requested (which never arrived), I received a letter from the president saying, “Thanks, but no thanks. We have filled the second position.”

A month later, I received a phone call from the same university president, full of apologies. The search for the first position had fallen through. He was going to head up the search process this time, and would I be willing to let my name be considered again? It took yet another six months before I began to work for that school, where I eventually held both positions.

Horror stories abound of flubbed recruitment efforts, some describing searches that were conducted unprofessionally. Perhaps the Adventist perception of “The Call” is one reason why so many searches get stalled: School administrators can’t find the right people to call or are suspicious of those who express interest in a position. Potential candidates protest that a call suddenly comes after they have made commitments to another employer or that they get no response to their queries.

Because of the sheer number of job openings every year in Adventist schools, there are inevitably either people left standing or empty chairs when the music stops. As of the end of 2007, nearly 75,000 teachers worked in Adventist schools (about 40,220 elementary teachers, 26,000 secondary teachers, 550 training school teachers, and 8,000 college and university professors). God does call people into the ministry of education, but the global network has gotten so big that reliance on one’s personal contacts alone is insufficient. The use of business-like recruiting practices to fill positions in no way diminishes God’s call.

There are several types of searches, including a full, open search where candidates may apply, and one that is limited by region or time frame. It is generally preferable to conduct an unhurried full search. Such a process, conducted ethically and transparently within the constraints of professional confidentiality, increases the likelihood of hiring the best employees for your school.

But sometimes you already

GOD DOES CALL PEOPLE INTO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, BUT THE GLOBAL NETWORK HAS GOTTEN SO BIG THAT RELIANCE ON ONE’S PERSONAL CONTACTS ALONE IS INSUFFICIENT.

BY LISA M. BEARDSLEY
know who you want to hire—perhaps a suitable internal candidate is ready for advancement, or a vacancy occurred on short notice and must be quickly filled. In such cases, obtain approval from administration to conduct a limited search (by posting only on campus if an internal candidate is preferred). Expedited searches should be the exception and not the rule, however, and conducted with awareness of the abuses inherent in this approach.

This article is written for school administrators at all levels and chairs of search committees as well as those seeking employment in Adventist schools. It outlines a process to use in conducting an academic search. Following the steps described will ensure that “everything is done in a fitting and orderly way” to recruit and hire qualified and committed candidates for jobs in Adventist education and to ensure that people seeking employment are treated with dignity and respect.

Job Description and Search Committee

1. Typically, the person to whom the employee will report should chair the search committee and provide overall leadership for filling the position. Before the committee’s first meeting, the supervisor/principal/dean should update the job description. Then, the search committee must discuss, further refine, and approve the job description and advertising copy (including deciding what documents are needed to evaluate the candidate, such as CV [curriculum vitae], references, background check,1 proof of eligibility to work in the country, and academic transcripts). Some schools may require the personnel committee or human resources office to review and post advertising copy. In addition to a CV, the search committee should request an essay in which candidates describe their spiritual journey and philosophy of education.

The committee itself ought to be a diverse, representative group of key stakeholders—including an alumnus and a current student. When filling top leadership positions in higher education, the search committee is usually a subcommittee of the board.

The chair must orient the search committee to its assignment, including the need for confidentiality, the sacred nature of their work, and the manner in which the final decision will be made (e.g., the search committee will recommend one or more names from which the board or administration makes the final selection). The search process for Adventist education is both an academic and a spiritual task—finding qualified people who understand and support the mission of the school. Prayer is essential throughout the search process—from reflecting on school mission, revising the job description, and generating prospects to evaluating candidates.

Any conflicts of interest should be discussed and agreement sought about how to manage them. This might require recusal from certain discussions or votes by a member of the search committee. If later in the process a conflict of interest becomes apparent—perhaps the desired candidate is related to the supervisor or a close friend of a board member—the committee may recommend changes in the search process or the job description itself to manage the conflict in an ethical manner. The search process for Adventist education is both an academic and a spiritual task.
search committee must always behave in a manner that minimizes the appearance of impropriety.

**Establishing Deadlines and Schedules**

2. Establish a deadline for the submission of applications and a schedule for meetings of the search committee. The deadline should be no less than two months after the job is posted.

The search committee's first task is to create a large and diverse pool of candidates. One meeting of the search committee could be devoted to screening candidates if this has not been done by the chair (or by the principal in the case of secondary-level institutions). Members of the search committee can be asked to probe the various candidates' interest in the position without making any commitments.

3. Post the job description on the Adventist Professionals' Network (APN), local church bulletins, union papers, and Websites. Also, mail or e-mail it to alumni, friends of the school, Adventist professional associations, and the deans of Adventist colleges or universities in your region.

**Organizing the Paperwork**

4. Create a folder for each applicant. Immediately acknowledge receipt of the candidate's application, provide him or her with a copy of the detailed job description, and indicate whether the search committee needs additional information. It may be helpful to designate one person (a member of the search committee, the assistant to the chair, etc.) to handle and process the paperwork, notifications, etc. Place a tracking sheet inside each folder where you can note key actions and record the date when items are received (letter of acknowledgement, references, spiritual journey or philosophy of education statement, completed file, final communication, etc.). Inform the candidates that when the files are complete, the search committee will review all applications. Provide a date by which they can expect to hear from you again.

5. Contact the references provided by the candidate. This task may be assigned to members of the search committee. Call if possible to obtain in-depth information that will help you match the candidate to the position. It may be useful to follow up on references not identified by the candidate such as a retired former supervisor or home church pastor.

It is often a challenge to obtain candid responses. Some references will want to limit the information they provide to the legal minimum (position and dates of employment) because they are afraid of the legal consequences of giving an honest recommendation or worry that what they say will get back to the person. To elicit pertinent information, describe key attributes of the position or provide a copy of the job description and ask questions about specific requirements such as ability to work with others. Make notes for the candidate’s file.

Certain jobs (such as K-12 positions) will also require a background check (verifying that the person does not have a criminal record). The candidates should be informed of this.

Verify applicants’ academic degrees by contacting the records office of the awarding institution(s). Make note of and investigate degrees from unknown institutions, and ask about any...
gaps or irregularities in the CV or references.

If someone on the “short list” has not provided the current supervisor or employer as a reference, request permission from the candidate before contacting the employer. If the applicant is not selected, the employer may question his or her commitment or loyalty, so be sensitive when checking current references.

Evaluating the Candidate

6. At every meeting, provide search committee members with an updated file for each candidate. Number the files and require their return at the end of the meeting. Search committee members should be reminded to treat all information as confidential.

7. Ensure that the search committee has ample opportunity to discuss the suitability of each candidate. Blind balloting, especially where there are a few vocal and influential members, provides a way to ensure everyone’s input. Consider giving each member a limited number of votes (e.g., three blank pieces of paper on which to write the preferred candidate’s name, even if the same name is written on each ballot). Record the number of votes for each candidate on a chalkboard or whiteboard, and discuss the distribution of votes. This process can be repeated with the top vote-getters to produce a manageable number of names or to determine the level of support for the various candidates.

8. Promptly telephone each person who has been eliminated from consideration. Follow up with a written communication. While not chosen for the current position, he or she might be suitable for another job in the future, so it is important to be cordial. Express gratitude for the person’s interest in the school and desire to serve Adventist education.

9. Invite the candidates on the “short list” (usually no more than three people) to visit the school. Provide them with the schedule of events during their visit, a list of interviewers’ names and titles, and a description of other expectations such as giving a presentation.

10. Decide who will interview the candidates besides the search committee in session. Agree in advance about what issues to explore, and develop a common set of questions to ask each candidate, such as how he or she has handled specific situations (integrating faith with learning, dealing with plagiarism, etc.). If various stakeholders will also interview the candidate, provide them with the job description, the candidate’s CV, and an evaluation sheet to use (see sample in the sidebar on page 37).

Advise those conducting interviews to explore how the candidate’s Adventist faith relates to the job. Interviewers must, however, be cautious with respect to questions about race, color, national origin, age, marital status, number of children, disability, or status as a veteran. In the U.S. and a number of other countries, it is illegal to discriminate in employment decisions on the basis of these protected categories. Even where no such protections are specified by law, the search committee must be careful to conduct an impartial, ethical evaluation of all candidates so as to give preference to attributes that enhance diversity in the workplace.

Collect the completed forms within two days of the candidate’s visit. Collate results for review and discussion by the search committee.

The Candidate Evaluates You

11. Allow the candidate ample time to evaluate housing options in the community, employment for his or her spouse, etc. Scheduling the visit near the weekend and inviting the spouse...
enables the family to worship with the local congregation. If the spouse comes along, assign a host/hostess for the couple during the visit, especially if they do not know anyone in the area.

12. Following the interviews, the search committee should convene, keeping in mind that there are many elements to consider in selecting a candidate. Some people interview well but are weak in teamwork or job performance, while others who don’t interview as well may become stars in the position. The search committee should balance the candidate’s performance in the interview with the other elements in the process.

13. After the preferred candidate is selected, contact him or her orally, and follow up with two copies of the written contract, signed by whoever is authorized to make the job offer, outlining salary, benefits, timeline for arrival, etc. Have the candidate sign and send back one copy as confirmation that

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**Evaluation of Applicant**

**Administrative Position**

Name of Applicant: ____________________________

Date of Visit: ______________ Name of Interviewer: ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEADERSHIP QUALITIES</th>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>COMMENTS/ SUMMARY STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Quality Interpersonal Relationships</td>
<td>N/O 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Communication Skills</td>
<td>N/O 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Goal Orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ability to set and meet goals</td>
<td>N/O 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ability to motivate others</td>
<td>N/O 1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Style of Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autocratic</td>
<td>N/O 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Awareness of Financial Affairs</td>
<td>N/O 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Skilled in Friend Building</td>
<td>N/O 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Skilled in Fund Raising</td>
<td>N/O 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INSTITUTIONAL PHILOSOPHICAL COMPATIBILITY**

| 1. Understanding of Institution Mission/Philosophy | N/O 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 2. Avowed Support of Institution | N/O 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 3. Unequivocally a Committed Christian | N/O 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 4. Has Serious and Unquestioned Commitment to Christian Education | N/O 1 2 3 4 5 | |

**GOALS**

| 1. Goals for {area/position} | N/O 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 2. Goals for Local and Global Outreach | N/O 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 3. Goals for Faculty Development & Student Recruitment, Including Ethnic & Gender Diversity | N/O 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 4. Goals for Fund Raising | N/O 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 5. Vision for {area/position} | N/O 1 2 3 4 5 | |

**ATTITUDES**

| 1. Values Integrity and Ethical Conduct | N/O 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 2. Demonstrates Respect and Loyalty | N/O 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 3. Respects Confidentiality | N/O 1 2 3 4 5 | |
| 4. Demonstrates Diversity Sensitivity | N/O 1 2 3 4 5 | |

Used with permission from Loma Linda University.
THE SEARCH COMMITTEE . . . OUGHT TO BE A DIVERSE, REPRESENTATIVE GROUP OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS—INCLUDING AN ALUMNUS AND A CURRENT STUDENT.

both parties agree on the terms. Once the candidate has accepted, contact runners-up promptly by phone so they don’t hear about the decision through the Adventist grapevine. You might ask whether they would still be willing to be considered if the finalist withdraws.

Follow school procedures regarding a formal recording and approval of the hire. Some schools have a department of human resources or another office that assists with this process. In large schools, the board usually delegates the responsibility for hiring to administration and simply votes the list of new hires, sometimes months later.

Wrapping Up the Search

14. Destroy duplicate files, retaining only a master list of candidates. Don’t forget to remove job postings from Websites and other locations.

15. The administration (or board for executive-level positions) should be given a summary report of the number of candidates considered and interviewed, the percentage of males and females, ethnic mix (if known), and final outcome of the process. Search committees must maintain confidentiality while still providing sufficient information to show that the search process was conducted ethically.

Adventist schools in the U.S. have the legal right to discriminate—i.e., to preferentially hire—on the basis of religion. But they may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, age, disability, or status as a disabled or Vietnam era veteran. Indeed, the search committee must give preference to Adventist candidates because failing to do so in the

Applying for a Position

When you learn about a job opening, prayerfully reflect on and consult with others about whether this is what God is calling you to do, based on your qualifications, aptitude, and experience. Prepare an up-to-date, error-free CV, a cover letter, and a list of references, including their telephone numbers and e-mail addresses. If you are currently employed, the search committee will understand if you don’t want your immediate supervisor contacted unless you are on the “short list” for the job. Even if the application form does not ask for it, provide a cover letter (or an attachment to the CV) describing your teaching and research interests, spiritual commitment to Adventist education, and philosophy of education. Your cover letter should demonstrate an understanding of the school’s needs and show why you are a good match for the position.

Check with references before providing their names. Supply them with a copy of the job description, and describe the correlation between your experience and the requirements of the position.

Before your interview visit, educate yourself about the institution, community, local church, etc. Prepare questions ahead of time to ask the search committee and other interviewers. You may want to ask the search committee to schedule time when you can talk with colleagues in your discipline to evaluate the work climate.

Being offered the job not the ultimate goal. Remember, you are also “interviewing” the institution to evaluate whether the school and position are a good match for you. Politely withdraw from a search if you determine that they are not. If there are some obstacles to an otherwise suitable fit, discuss and explore terms of employment to find a mutually agreeable solution.

The candidate should be encouraged to bring his or her spouse for a campus visit, to evaluate the fit of the new job for the family.

Using an evaluation form, the search committee should explore the candidate’s faith and understanding of the school’s mission.
U.S. jeopardizes the future exercise of that right. The search committee should be made aware of any legal constraints—and beyond that, of the ethical duty of fairness. The final report to administration (or the board) will reveal whether a diverse pool was created and considered.

When the recommendation is brought to administration or the board, members of the search committee can be invited to explain their choice. If pertinent, they should report on how any conflicts of interest were managed, or how extra steps were taken when hiring relatives of existing employees to minimize allegations of nepotism. It should be clear that the best interests of the school were served rather than those of any individual or group.

The search process for an elementary teacher in a small school or for support staff is likely to be more streamlined while that for an administrator of a large university will be more detailed and may require, for example, reprints of recent publications and a formal presentation on current research. The key to a successful search, however, is good communication at all levels throughout the process. Setting up a carefully designed search process provides an opportunity for the school to evaluate and communicate its needs and dreams for the future. Who gets hired reflects the mission and values of the school—and moreover, helps to shape its future direction.

Be sure to evaluate the commitment of every candidate to the mission of the school—including support staff, whose tenure may be even longer than that of administrators or teachers. The success of Adventist education depends on teamwork by teachers, administrators, and support staff, each one of whom ministers to students and seeks their eternal welfare. This is the reward of a search well done.

Unsolicited Inquiries

Unsolicited job requests will arrive from time to time. Acknowledge them promptly, and if there are no current vacancies, say so. Advise applicants of any anticipated openings, and suggest that if they haven’t already done so, they should register with APN. Be sure to thank them for their interest in your school and its mission. File the letter and CV for future reference. Use the opportunity to affirm the applicants’ desire to support Adventist education and to build goodwill.

Dr. Lisa M. Beardsley is an Associate Director in the General Conference Department of Education in Silver Spring, Maryland, and Executive Secretary of the Adventist Accrediting Association. Dr. Beardsley has conducted many academic searches in public and private schools. The author thanks Larry Blackmer, Ester Bobixo-Chapman, C. Garland Dulan, Richard Osborn, Beverly Robinson-Rumble, and Robert Young for their constructive review and comment on the manuscript.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Background checks draw on public records or contacts with law enforcement to verify personal history, credibility, and potential risk to an organization. Areas verified may include past employment history or credit reports. Criminal background checks would likely involve a search of county, state, or national records (or a formal request submitted to law enforcement authorities) to determine whether the candidate has been convicted of a serious crime. Some organizations and candidates prefer to use services such as http://www.MyBackgroundCheck.com to expedite background checks.

2. The Adventist Professionals’ Network is a database that is used to facilitate job searches, consultancies, and communication among professionals. Adventist professional associations are also listed there. See http://apn.adventist.org.

3. E.g., the NAD employment site for K-12 higher education is http://www.nadeducation.org.


5. Many U.S. universities have authorized the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) to provide enrollment and degree verification information on their behalf. Their contact information is: National Student Clearinghouse, http://www.studentclearinghouse.org; Phone: (703) 742-4200.

The idea for this article probably began some 25 years ago. As both a communication professor at Southwestern Adventist University (SWAU) and general manager of the institution’s radio station (both in Keene, Texas), I enjoyed as much as the students did the weekly “polls” that appeared on the station’s old blackboard. But the one I will never forget was the question that asked simply, “What is your philosophy of life in one word?”

The teacher in me grabbed the chalk and wrote, “Learn,” and I smugly thought my answer was at least semi-brilliant—that is, until I passed the board a couple of days later and was captivated by another answer a student had written: “Relationships.” Immediately, I realized the significance of that response, and over the years that idea and all it implies has become my philosophy of life.

Nothing in life is more important than relationships. Whether it’s your spouse, your children, your best friend, the books you read, the food you eat, the way you relate to your environment, or any other aspect of your daily life, relationships are essential. Attention to all our relationships is critical—especially our relationship with God. Cultivating relationships takes time, but relationships with former students often grow to be lifelong friendships and are among the greatest joys a teacher can know.

About the same time I was relishing my new one-word philosophy of life, my wife, Bev, was asked to join SWAU’s Advancement Office team, where one of her duties was to assist with alumni relations. Among the courses I was teaching was public relations. It didn’t take us long to recognize the affinity of our assignments—hers with all the university’s alumni and mine with current students, as well as our communication graduates around the world. No doubt about it, we realized, interpersonal relations and communication are inextricably interwoven.

Nearly 10 years had elapsed since SWAU graduated its first communication major, but I quickly set to work collecting their names from my own files and from university records. With Bev’s help, I found current addresses for everyone. Recent graduates tend to move more often than those who have “settled down,” and while it’s sometimes a challenge to keep alumni addresses current, it’s not impossible.

Try a Quarterly Newsletter
The primary method I use to keep addresses current is another great way to stay in touch with grads. I write and mail each one a quarterly departmental newsletter. Each edition of the newsletter is sent in an envelope with a first-class stamp and with Address Service Requested printed below the return address. Because address service requests are generally honored for six months, the newsletter is forwarded to any grad who has moved, and the post office sends us changes of address so we can update our records. Even today,
with 234 communication graduates since 1975, at last count I had current addresses for all but four.

We call our newsletter the Live Wire! It’s just a single, bright-yellow page printed front and back that generally includes two or three feature stories. On the back page of every edition is another key to staying in touch with alumni—a column entitled “What We’ve Been Up To.” Each starts—“Here’s what we’ve heard from our Southwestern Communication grads in recent weeks” and ends with: “We’d like to share what you’ve been up to with communication students and alumni in the Live Wire! Just e-mail Communication Department Chair Dr. Bob Mendenhall at bobm@swau.edu.” Our grads love to read the newsletter, and many keep in touch with each other using the e-mail addresses we include at the end of each person’s information. As our on-campus students read the publication, they get great ideas about the wide range of communication-related careers available after graduation. We always have lots of material—in fact, nearly all “What We’ve Been Up To” columns take up much of the back page.

We always list graduates for whom we need addresses, and alumni will often send e-mails with information about “missing persons,” including even “My Space” addresses to help us locate them. Keeping addresses up-to-date is always a work in progress, but faculty and alumni—even relatives, classmates, and friends—network with one another and with us to make it happen.

While alumni are potential donors, there are a number of other good reasons to stay in touch—many, we would argue, just as important as the possibility of future gifts. Many will offer to become mentors for those who live nearby and/or have similar careers.

Other reasons to carry on a systematic program of planned, personal, and continual contact with alumni include the opportunities that such a program provides for inviting them to attend annual alumni reunions, for advancing them in their careers, and for encouraging them in their personal relationship with Christ.

Alumni Weekend at Southwestern

Registration for our annual Alumni Homecoming Weekend begins Thursday afternoon with a homecoming banquet, generally featuring a Southwestern Adventist University “memories” theme. During this festive occasion, the current year’s honorees are recognized, including our Alumna and Alumnus of the Year, as well as new inductees into our university’s Hall of Fame. Friday morning begins with a prayer breakfast featuring an alumnus as speaker, then we hold the annual meeting of our “Committee of 100,” a group that is now much larger than 100 persons, each of whom supports Southwestern with gifts totaling more experiences on campus, and makes them more likely to recommend their alma mater to both their children and to others as they plan for college.

During group meetings or in individual phone calls, e-mails, or letters, alumni can be encouraged to volunteer their time for special projects. Those who live within driving distance of campus are generally willing to share their ideas and expertise in the classroom or at specially arranged seminars. Established alumni can be introduced to new graduates, and

Reasons to Stay in Touch

While alumni are potential donors, there are a number of other good reasons to stay in touch—many, we would argue, just as important as the possibility of future gifts. Frequent contact with alumni reminds them of their own favorable expe-
than $1,000 annually. Alumni have the afternoon free for tours of campus and the community, after which the Friday evening vespers program spotlights our student music groups. The two Sabbath morning church services feature different speakers from the honored classes. For example, the sermon at our early service in 2007 was presented by Leighton Holmes, president of the Texas Conference, while Don Schneider, president of the North American Division, delivered the message for the second service. In 2008, Jeff Bromme, an attorney in the Washington, D.C., area, gave the message at the early service, and the sermon for the later service was presented by retired Kansas-Nebraska Conference president Jim Hoehn.

After church, the focal point is the annual alumni potluck lunch in the university’s gymnasium. Practice and experience have made it possible for our alumni volunteers to direct some 1,500 alumni and their families through multiple serving lines in less than 15 minutes! Besides providing the food quickly, the system also creates time for visiting, as alumni gather in small clusters at tables and chairs on the main floor.

On Sabbath afternoon, there are departmental open houses, some of which are open to all visitors—such as our biology department’s bone collection from their notable dinosaur digs in Wyoming. Other departments, like communication, education, business, and music, invite alumni to reminisce with teachers and students. Our nursing department hosts an annual tea, and every five years the university’s radio station, KJCR (88.3 FM), invites communication grads and other students who worked on the air to gather at the station.

Saturday night brings a host of honored class reunions and parties—usually from nine to 11 of them each year—all very

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**For Additional Information on Alumni Relations, Try These Resources**

**Organizations**

CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education)
1307 New York Avenue, NW
Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20005-4701
(202) 328-CASE (2273)
http://www.case.org

PSI (Philanthropic Service for Institutions)
Adventist World Headquarters
12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600
(301) 680-6138
http://www.philanthropicservice.com

**Books**

Feudo, John and Clifford, Paul J., eds. *Alumni Clubs and Chapters* (CASE, 2002)


__________. *Special Events: Planning for Success*, 2nd ed. (CASE, 1998)


**Articles**


19 articles published in CURRENTS magazine from 2000 through 2003 chart developments and outline best professional practices in the rapidly changing field of alumni relations.

Stutler, Doug and Calvario, Dave; “In Alumni Support, Satisfaction Matters,” *Fund Raising Management* (HTML, digital, magazine online)

**Interactive CD-ROM**


“Students Today, Alumni Forever: Developing Lifelong Relationships With Our Alumni-in-Residence”; Presenter: Carin Huffman Grinch, Assistant Director, Student Programs and Athletic Events, University of Missouri Alumni Association, CD-ROM/Electronic file (CASE, 2007)
Once you have developed an alumni-centered mindset, you'll find more and more ways of connecting with alumni.

Ways to Stay in Touch

Once you have developed an alumni-centered mindset, you'll find more and more ways of connecting with alumni. Whatever you do, wherever you go, as you make your plans, think of possibilities for making contact.

Some of those contacts—especially meetings that include church services—are carefully planned and coordinated. SWAU hosts 10 or 12 annual area alumni reunions—often two on the same weekend where many former students live—one for older alumni and one for younger grads. Sometimes we meet at a local alum’s home, but we’ve also met at recommended restaurants, if we can get at least a semi-private room in which to present a computerized slide program and answer questions.

SWAU’s Website (http://www.swau.edu) features an “Alumni and Friends” button that takes the user to the main alumni page. From there, alumni can click on “Contact Alumni Office” and provide updated information. Bev responds immediately by e-mail, and to those who send birth announcements, for example, she will even send baby “onesies” or toddler t-shirts featuring SWAU’s logo and “Future Grad” printed prominently on the front.

Before we travel, Bev and I consider possible alumni contacts. Major events—General Conference sessions, Adventist-laymen’s Services and Industries (ASI) conventions, teachers’ and ministers’ conferences, and professional communication conferences—all offer opportunities to contact alumni. Upon arrival, we always check the event program for participants and exhibitors who are SWAU alumni. We seek each out, and often plan an evening out with as many as we can discover. Other out-of-town university responsibilities and even personal vacations can provide informal opportunities to stay in touch with individual alumni. Bev teaches a “getting in shape” to ski and snowboard class, and during our annual trips to Colorado, where the students take a lesson from a professional on the slopes, we’ve often skied with alumni who are there, too. During one of our area alumni reunions in Florida, we learned serendipitously that an alumnus was to be married that weekend. We were invited to attend—and were delighted.

### Some Ideas That Work to Maintain Alumni Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Develop an Alumni-Centered Focus</th>
<th>Maintain Up-to-Date Addresses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Establish a regular, systematic contact program</td>
<td>• Request “Address Service” from the post office on envelopes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Encourage and acknowledge e-mail</td>
<td>• Use the Internet (“Google,” “My Space,” etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Feature dedicated alumni pages on your Website</td>
<td>• Contact family members, classmates, friends</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Order baby and toddler “Future Grad” T-shirts</td>
<td>• Have other traveling faculty/staff watch for names</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Check church publications (bulletins, directories, yearbooks) for alumni names</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interact with class coordinators/class agents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quarterly Newsletter (especially good for individual departments)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creative and Eventful Alumni Weekend (some events can be fundraisers)</th>
<th>Annual Key Area Alumni Reunions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Make it affordable</td>
<td>• Younger alums</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Get outstanding speakers</td>
<td>• Older alums</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Homecoming banquet</td>
<td>Host Sabbath School and Church Services Off Campus</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Potluck lunch on Sabbath</td>
<td>Watch for Alumni at Major Conventions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Honor class photos</td>
<td>• Program agenda</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Department open houses</td>
<td>• List of exhibitors</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Honor class parties</td>
<td>Business or Vacation Trips</td>
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<tr>
<th>Camp Meeting</th>
<th>Watermelon feed or other special events</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Contact alumni in the areas you’ll be visiting</td>
<td>Opportunities to contact alumni and recruit students</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Meet alumni for a meal</td>
<td>Birthday Cards to Alumni</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annual Phonathon (recruit faculty as well as student callers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>On Campus (Alumni Office and Alumni Association)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Presence at Freshman Orientation (“Survivor” bags)</td>
<td>On Campus (Alumni Office and Alumni Association)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Alumni “Ice Cream Social” early in school year</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Presence at graduation (mini-diploma, reception)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Institutional museum (if not a building, at least a room)</td>
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to discover that some 18 SWAU alums were there as well. Even on vacation, Bev and I seek opportunities to share some time with alums. We’ve met alumni throughout the United States as we pass through—flying or driving—and we’ve even made contact with alums in a number of foreign countries.

Every summer, we travel to camp meetings throughout the Southwestern Union Conference, where on Sabbath afternoon the SWAU Alumni Association sponsors an outdoor watermelon feed. A university spokesperson announces the event before the morning worship service and always includes a bit of news and information about the school, and we make sure that everyone in attendance—not just alumni—know they are welcome. Bev calls the food-service director at each camp meeting to be sure the melons are ordered and kept cold for us. These events have been wildly successful over the years. Not only do we have an opportunity to interact with individual alumni during the event, but we’ve even had a prospective student’s father discover that it wasn’t too late to enroll his son at the university. The young man finished four years later as a theology graduate, and is now serving as a missionary.

Bev also makes sure that each edition of The Southwestern Spirit contains “AlumNotes,” information she receives on forms collected at area alumni reunions and through e-mail. On another page, alumni deaths, weddings, and babies are highlighted. We both scan Adventist publications from around the world regularly for SWAU alumni names, and as we travel, we look carefully for alumni who may be listed in church bulletins. Church directories and the Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook are also fine sources of information and a variety of Internet search engines also help us locate alums.

During freshman orientation each year, SWAU’s enrollment office hosts a freshman welcome night. Bev and the alumni office assist by providing alumni to speak for Saturday night worship. The speakers always include stories of how the university impacted their lives—spiritually, academically, and socially—preparing them for the challenges and opportunities they would face. At the end of the program, Bev addresses the freshmen as “alumni in residence,” distributing “Survivor” bags and snacks to each student as she welcomes them to the university.

Each commencement weekend, Bev meets the seniors at graduation practice and welcomes them officially into the SWAU Alumni Association. Along with other “send-off” gifts, each graduate receives a mini laminated copy of his or her diploma. The Alumni Association sponsors the senior reception after the commencement exercises.

SWAU is also blessed to have an entire building built and dedicated specifically as a campus museum. A gift to the university, the Hopps Museum and Welcome Center is modeled after one of the original buildings on campus. It is located across the street from an enduring campus landmark, the Mizpah Gate, a gift of the Class of 1937. Besides featuring displays of campus memorabilia, the Hopps Museum serves as a regular meeting place for our alumni board, as well as current and former teachers and students.

Over the years, few things have provided more pleasure for us than staying in touch with alumni. Even today, however, I don’t know which radio station staffer offered “relationships” as his or her one-word philosophy of life, but that single word written on that hallway blackboard has affected my life more profoundly than he or she will ever know.

Nothing is more important than relationships. Nothing.

Robert R. Mendenhall, Ph.D., is Professor of Communication and Chair of the Communication Department at Southwestern Adventist University in Keene, Texas. He has served as a dean of men and a college radio station manager. Beverly A. Mendenhall, B.S., is Alumni Relations Director at the university, where she has also taught classes in the Office Administration Department and continues to teach a class in the Physical Education Department.
Each year, colleges and universities welcome new faculty members. These individuals are often not only new to the school but also to academia. Although well trained in their respective fields, they are entering an unfamiliar culture with unique politics, policies, procedures, and role expectations. Despite their experience in academia as students, their new roles and expectations are quite different.

In my experience, new faculty members are often searching for an opportunity to partner with a trusted colleague who will help them integrate into their new responsibilities. However, university deans and department heads often assign new faculty to an experienced faculty member who may be overwhelmed with teaching, research, and service responsibilities.

**What Is the Expected Role of a Mentor?**

Fraser described a mentor as a teacher, trusted guide, sponsor, counselor, advisor, coach, trainer, colleague, and role model. However, one of the most essential attributes of a mentor is availability. Faculty mentors who are occupied with heavy teaching loads, research, and issues of promotion and tenure are not the best candidates for guiding new faculty. The primary goal of the mentoring relationship is to nurture the professional development of the new teacher. Therefore, a trusting relationship may not develop if the mentor is busy and unavailable. As a consequence, the new faculty member must navigate his or her assignments and the politics of the university without assistance.

In most cases, new faculty members are seeking a collegial partnership, not just mentoring on how best to get things done. When faculty collaboration becomes a true partnership between the new teacher and an experienced colleague, this enables the novice to learn about the school while working on shared projects.

**Collaboration**

Everyone involved must have a clear understanding of collaboration before professors can implement it successfully. Collaboration is a process that encourages people to work together in new ways. It is not an event but a process that, in turn, stimulates new collaborative ventures. Collaboration produces a wide range of results that empower people and systems to change. The opportunity and challenge of bringing people together can produce outcomes that are greater than the sum of the individual efforts.

These joint ventures require individuals to explore, from the onset, their philosophical view of collaboration. Some may view collaboration as competition that threatens their turf, while others may philosophically support collaboration without being willing to spend the time and effort to make it succeed. Ideally, participants will perceive collaboration as an opportunity to break down turf barriers, identify common goals, pool resources, and implement strategies that will achieve positive results.

**An Alternative to New Faculty Mentoring**

In my experience, stereotypes and misconceptions about faculty mentoring and academic work have been a serious barrier to faculty collaboration. Conventional stereotypes, which portray professors conducting research in the isolation of a laboratory or teaching alone in front of a classroom of passive...
students, ignore significant aspects of modern academic life. Many professors now conduct much of their work (teaching, research, and writing) in partnership with colleagues. Faculty collaboration generally occurs in two principal areas: research and teaching. Learning how to collaborate will better serve the new teacher’s future goals than being mentored on how to work alone.

**Barriers to Faculty Collaboration**

Issues of promotion and tenure can foster an environment of competition rather than collegiality. Newly hired faculty may find it difficult to partner with others, especially senior colleagues who may be working toward promotion and tenure. As a newcomer to academia, I have found a lack of collegial spirit among faculty members, which I regard as disturbing. My prior experiences working for community-based nonprofit organizations had taught me that more could be achieved through collaboration than competition. But I soon learned that the structure of the university reward system often impedes collaborative efforts among faculty.

Another institutional barrier I discovered that impedes faculty collaboration is the way courses are designed and delivered. Course content is separated into discrete subject-specific areas belonging to a particular department. This often creates a barrier to interdepartmental partnerships, and may be perceived by faculty as a hostile and competitive environment. Philosophical and personal differences among faculty can also deter collaboration. For example, in a pilot study of a collaborative teaching model involving two professors from different disciplines, Bowles found that professors often disagreed on how to approach a course, address students’ needs, and conduct collaborative teaching. Furthermore, McMillin and Berberet discovered that faculty often perceive themselves as adversaries rather than collaborators.

**Overcoming Barriers to Collaboration**

How can a university successfully overcome barriers to collaboration? I believe it is vital to focus on the benefits that can be achieved by successful faculty collaboration—both for those involved and for the university. Faculty collaboration can create connections between individuals, departments, and divisions. For example, teachers can begin to connect interdepartmentally by meeting to review and discuss the courses they teach, and jointly modifying curricula. They can thereby better utilize university resources and more adequately meet the diverse needs of their students. The not-so-obvious effects of these interdepartmental collaborative efforts are that faculty members discover and explore shared beliefs regarding teaching, research, and service. Even before teachers embrace the idea, university reward and pay structures can be adapted to encourage and reward collaboration. Senior faculty can negotiate a “we” reward system through the faculty senate and revision of university by-laws.

**Faculty Collaboration in Action**

My previous work experiences in community nonprofit organizations taught me that collaboration is a process rather than a product. A successful collaboration pays direct attention to process. Winer and Ray have proposed a collaboration process model characterized by stages: (1) choosing colleagues, (2) dividing the labor, (3) establishing work guidelines, and (4) terminating the collaboration.

Upon my arrival at the university, my belief in the power of collaboration empowered me to seek out a trusted colleague rather than waiting to be assigned a senior faculty member. After several years of working with a collaborative partner, my understanding and appreciation for life as an academic have been transformed. I’ve come to appreciate Solomon’s observation that “Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor” (Ecclesiastes 4:9, NKJV). I believe the positive work results of our collaborative partnership have been largely due to our understanding and application of Winer and Ray’s process model of collaboration. By adhering to the process model:

1. We made a conscious decision to work together as collaborative partners;
2. We sought to divide the labor;
3. Each collaborative venture was directed by jointly established work guidelines; and
4. We established realistic time frames to benchmark the beginning and end of each collaborative venture.

However, underlying the success of our collaboration was a commitment to reserve time and be accessible to each other. As Gaskin, Lumpkin, and Tennant have suggested, the development of a trusting relationship between the mentor and protégé requires that each be accessible to the other weekly. We met to discuss and review our work, problem solve, and develop plans for action. This has resulted in written grants, co-developed courses, and co-authored articles.

Both of us have made considerable gains in our academic careers since joining together as collaborators. Unlike the findings of Bowles, which suggested that faculty collaboration is difficult to achieve, we have discovered a context in which both of us can collaborate on teaching, research, and service in ways that meet our shared and individual goals.

Conclusion

Collaboration is a process that can orient and integrate faculty into the professorial life and enhance their professional development. However, historically, the development of new faculty has been framed through a mentor-protégé model. Gaskin, Lumpkin, and Tennant suggest that faculty mentoring should focus on formative activities, e.g., offering advice and providing constructive feedback. Although it’s valuable to have experienced faculty mentors available to give needed advice, new faculty members need someone who is accessible and can meet with them on a regular basis to develop and implement shared projects. Here are some suggestions for establishing such a caring collaboration:

1. Experienced faculty who are often assigned to serve as mentors have limited time to do so due to their teaching loads, scholarship, and service activities. Therefore, the new teacher should request advice from these experienced faculty members on difficult-to-solve issues that do not require a major, ongoing time commitment.

2. Collaborative endeavors are more likely to support the development of new faculty when collaborators seek out each other, rather than being assigned by administrators. Therefore, it is helpful to seek out a colleague to work with who is at approximately the same level of development as you are in his or her university career.

3. Faculty collaborators must identify common goals and cooperate in developing work plans. Therefore, you need to schedule frequent meetings with your faculty collaborator to set goals, develop work plans, and assess progress.

4. Collaborators should discuss how they will share in the responsibilities and credits associated with collaborative teaching, research, and service.

Collaboration is a workable alternative to assigning new faculty to a senior professor for mentoring. It immerses new faculty from the onset into teaching, research, and service, and provides support in their integration into campus life. By collaborating, faculty can achieve far more than they could accomplish alone.

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