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# Inter-American Division

By L. H. Fletcher

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**T**he Inter-American Division has made significant advances in achieving the objectives it set in 1980 for enhancing Adventist education in its territory, which includes Mexico, Central America, the West Indies, Puerto Rico, the Bahamas, the Virgin Islands and other Caribbean islands, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Surinam, and French Guyana.

These goals included: a greater percentage of church members' children attending our schools, Board of Regents accreditation of our sec-



Director of Education  
Inter-American Division of SDA  
Coral Gables, Florida

ondary and tertiary institutions, a broader program of graduate education, and re-evaluation of division policies affecting the educational program.

Inter-America now has 706 Adventist schools enrolling 87,713 students and employing 3,624 teachers. Twenty-three institutions have achieved Board of Regents accreditation. Teacher certification has received intense scrutiny, with the result that the majority of our college and university departments of education now produce graduates with union certification.

The division has established boards of education at primary through tertiary levels, and more comprehensive policies have been established for funding education K-12 and operating secondary boarding schools. In addition, we have implemented a new policy for classification of tertiary institutions, and have amended the operating policies of certain of these schools.

One especially exciting development in the division's education program has been establishing an umbrella institution chartered in Florida that, when

fully operational, will offer recognition for undergraduate programs in countries where this is difficult to obtain, as well as centralizing Andrews University and Loma Linda University's extension programs in religion, education, and health within the division. Approval has been granted by the state of Florida for a charter that opens the way for the division to apply to regional accrediting associations and the General Conference to establish this institution. We are optimistic about its prospects for success.

Two other encouraging developments are the increased availability of qualified teachers for K-12 schools and colleges, and the greatly improved financial condition of many of our schools, thanks to capital generated by

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the Inter-American Food Company and ADRA.

We look to the future with confidence and pray that God will continue to lead in the great work of educating our young people for success in this world and a home in the earth made new. □