
North American Division

Higher Education

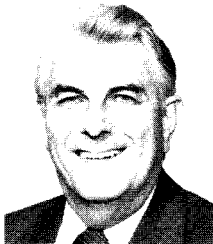
By R. L. Reynolds

The educational system of the SDA Church was created by our early leaders to provide a special education that would enhance our people's spiritual experience and also provide training for workers of the church. Our pioneers developed schools that met the special needs of the church for that day, and the church continues to need its educational system for its children today. Though specifics may have changed, the basic thrust of our educational system has remained the same—to provide each student with a Christ-centered education with every possible encouragement to accept Christ as his or her Saviour.

In recent months I have visited every one of our North American Division higher education institutions to attend their board meetings, visit with administrators and faculty, talk with students, and read reports of their activities.

One measure of the work being done on our campuses comes from observers sent to our schools by various evaluation organizations, both Adventist and non-SDA. Another source of information comes directly from reports made by the college administrators themselves.

Throughout the reports there were



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stories of baptisms, foreign and domestic missionary activities, strong commitment to common beliefs, academic achievements, and other good news.

Space will preclude extensive reports, but here are brief excerpts.

At Southwestern Adventist College (Keene, Texas), 25 percent of their students participated in off-campus soul-winning, and 24 students were baptized.

The committee examining the college's nursing program said that it "reflects the school's philosophy of nursing and nursing education. They believe man is cared for in an attempt to restore him to a state of wholeness in harmony with God."

A report on Union College (Lincoln, Nebraska) reads, "There is considerable evidence that Union College lives by the objectives it has set forth."

This school received nationwide publicity when it installed computer terminals in every dormitory room. Last year 34 Union College students served overseas in mission posts, and students at home painted houses for the elderly and handicapped.

Southern College of Seventh-day Adventists (Collegedale, Tennessee) with its new name that fully describes its denominational ties "continues to have many success stories of students who find God and are sharing His love." "Ninety-seven percent of nursing students pass their State Board Exams; over 20 percent more than the national average pass the CPA exam; nearly 100 percent of all education and theology majors are placed in jobs."

A portion of a report on Atlantic Union College (South Lancaster, Massachusetts) states, "The principles and values of the founding religious denomination remain strikingly evident . . . Thus Atlantic Union College pursues its higher educational mission with the added holistic concern that its students should become committed, thoughtful and active Christians, prepared to live useful and purposeful lives that will serve the needs in the world and in the church. . . . There is no doubt as to the institution's basic religious commitment to the Adventist faith and its implications for holistic learning."

An evaluating team commenting on Walla Walla College (College Place, Washington) wrote, "A common religious commitment expresses itself in a

**Medical student,
Loma Linda University.**

**Biology class,
Andrews University.**

common dedication to service. . . . Interviews with students revealed that they are proud of the college and their departments. Most of them felt they were getting a good education within a framework of a Christian community."

Walla Walla College also has an extensive student missionary program. A letter to the president from a student missionary gave this report: "After my regular working hours, I have been giving Bible studies to 17 individuals, and I am delighted to tell you that in the next week or so four of them will be joining God's family through baptism."

Oakwood College (Huntsville, Alabama) has grown rapidly in the past few years and continues to spread its influence throughout North America and the world. The college recently had the exciting and satisfying experience of having a visiting teacher become so impressed with her Oakwood experiences that she was baptized.

Oakwood also gained nationwide recognition when "the Association of American Medical Colleges reported that Oakwood ranks fourth among all colleges and universities in producing black applicants for medical schools and ranks eighth in the number of students accepted into medical school."

The success of Andrews University (Berrien Springs, Michigan) as an SDA Christian university was recognized by professional observers in their recent report. They said, "Students at Andrews cannot be evaluated by the normal or average standards applied in traditional colleges and universities. . . . The Adventist dimension is always present." The visitors noted that student life at Andrews was "significantly different" from that on their own campuses. They evaluated the Andrews faculty and staff as "unusually devoted," individuals who were "committed in the fullest sense of the word." Andrews students, they concluded, "came because they wanted a good education in an atmosphere in which they could develop their religious experience."

A report from Pacific Union College (Angwin, California) tells of the many indications that God's blessings are abundant there. "There is evidence of a spiritual vitality that pervades the campus. This is demonstrated by the high level of student involvement in

such activities as small, informal Sabbath schools and a variety of outreach programs both on- and off-campus. Currently the students are leading out in a revival series, and Friday evening vespers is the best attended student activity on campus. More than 27 student missionaries and taskforce volunteers are serving throughout the world field.

Canadian Union College (College Heights, Alberta), reporting through its president, spoke of the work being done. "Thanks to campus ministries organization which directs both on-campus and off-campus spiritual programs and witnessing activities, the campus is vibrant, alive, active and involved. Both the students and faculty testify of God's blessings and leadership."

"Academically Canadian Union College is offering more degree programs through affiliations with our U.S. colleges and the teaching of transfer courses from the University of Alberta on their own campus. Recent legislative action opens the door for future degree-granting programs."

Columbia Union College (Takoma Park, Maryland) continues to take advantage of its unique location to serve not only the students of the Columbia Union Conference, but also the people of its community. In keeping with church educational philosophy, its cooperative education program combines work and study in a balanced program.

A denominational evaluation team recently commended Columbia Union College for its "efforts in maintaining a distinct and unique SDA environment on campus."

The faculty at Kettering College of Medical Arts (Kettering, Ohio) are, to use one student's phrase, "People who care about me."

"They are highly motivated as individuals by the number who have sought advanced degrees. They appear to be dedicated to do whatever is necessary to meet the needs of their students. . . . It must be noted that there are few two-year colleges where 80 percent of the clinical facilities can be reached by walking a short distance from dorm and classrooms to a superb hospital facility such as at Kettering College of Medical Arts. . . . The college has clearly and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission. It is accomplishing those purposes."—North Central Official Evaluation Report.

Loma Linda University (Loma Linda, California), the largest of our institutions, has approximately 5,000 students enrolled on its two campuses and seven professional schools. Nearly 900 students represent 80 to 90 nationalities, with students from all unions of North America and every world division.

A recent accrediting team compiled this report on Loma Linda University. "Not only the commitment of Loma Linda University faculty—which is extraordinary—but its general competence deserves explicit commendation. . . . A dedicated faculty—especially one showing a similar religious belief . . . Loma Linda University students appear to be remarkably loyal to Adventist principles and supportive of their institution."

There can be little doubt that these institutions are fulfilling their God-given task of educating our students in a distinctive Adventist way. Their work is Christ-centered and committed to the teachings of the SDA Church. They are SDA colleges, united with the church in its task. There are no better places to obtain a Christian education. □

Library, Atlantic Union College.