



Growth, Outreach, and Innovation

BY STEPHEN R. GUPTILL AND GLADDEN O. FLORES

During the past quinquennium, the Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD) has continued to expand and improve the church's educational ministry in its territory. The system has grown to about 1,000 schools with more than 5,600 teachers and 100,000-plus students. The church has education programs in all of the division's 17 countries except Laos, Vietnam, Brunei, and East Timor.

Some countries have seen rapid growth in education, thanks to the vision and generosity of the McNeilus family, Maranatha, and ASI. The support of alumni and friends, as well as supporting unions and missions, has done much to build the education work in SSD.

Higher Education

The Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIIAS), a General Conference institution in the Philippines, provides graduate-level programs and continues to be a primary source of college teachers and workers throughout the division. AIIAS has also created an extensive network of distance-learning centers throughout the region.

There are nine Adventist colleges in the Philippines, including two hospital-based nursing and medical-training institutions, which are applying for church accreditation. Indonesia has three colleges, while Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Thailand have one each. Some of these schools, such as the Adventist University of the Philippines, Mission College, and

Indonesian Adventist University, are developing or already offer graduate programs. There is also a nursing college in Malaysia associated with Penang Adventist Hospital.

The division also has 96 secondary schools and 884 primary/elementary schools.

The Education Department directs the Adventist Ministry to College and University Students (AMiCUS) program for church members attending non-Adventist colleges and universities. Some of the local chapters hold annual outreach programs that result in scores of baptisms every year.

Education and Outreach

Outreach and witness are emphasized at all levels. Our colleges and secondary schools hold annual evangelistic meetings; and most of the division,

union, and mission/conference education leaders have conducted their own meetings. Many of the colleges are so active in outreach and witness that, at times, despite great transportation challenges, a third of the student body will leave campus on Sabbath morning for these programs. This outreach has produced thousands of baptisms during the past five years. The division office, together with some of the colleges, has purchased five uniquely Filipino vehicles—"Jeepneys for Jesus"—to assist in these outreach projects. Mountain View College also has a student missionary program called SULADS that sends students into tribal villages to start schools and churches.

Making Education More Adventist

Education in SSD emphasizes the "Adventist" part of the training pro-



Adventist University of the Philippines, Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

gram. Values-education resources have been developed for the primary and secondary levels, including handbooks for each subject to help teachers integrate values and faith into their lesson plans. One of the resources is REBIRTH—89 Adventist values with illustrations and teaching resources organized into value groups represented by each letter of the title. Published and posted on the World Wide Web (<http://www.ssd.org/rebirth>), this has become a major resource for the schools. The division is also working on a series of new Adventist readers for grades 1-6, which will provide values-rich stories for this region, where there are few Adventist reading choices for school-age children.

Nurturing Education Leadership

SSD has published a two-volume set entitled *Teaching the Adventist Way* to communicate and reinforce core Adventist education principles. These books assist in teacher training, provide foundational instruction for teachers who have trained outside the Adventist

system, and strengthen every teacher's vision and purpose.

The *Journal of Adventist Education* plays a vital role in nurturing teachers. An Asian edition, produced from the English edition, is circulated to 3,000 teachers and education students.

The division office of education has spearheaded a renewed effort to encourage Adventist certification for every teacher. This has created a need for college classes and expanded certification programs in the unions and at our colleges.

SSD has made a major commitment to nurturing educational leaders through the bursary and teacher scholarships. A budget is provided for each college and union secondary school for teacher upgrading to supplement each school's program of teacher development. By funding graduate education, these scholarships play a vital role in developing the "brain trust" of the educational system and the church. The Nelson Endowment Scholarship provides assistance to scores of students, primarily on the un-

dergraduate level, in the division's colleges.

Education Trends and Challenges

In the Philippines, nursing education has become a major emphasis and challenge. Between one-fourth and one-third of Adventist college students are in these programs. The increased enrollment has been a financial blessing, but has also created a huge need for qualified faculty.

Three Adventist hospitals in SSD have developed nursing and medically related programs and are now seeking church accreditation. As the college faculties grow and improve, they naturally desire to offer graduate degrees. Program quality, duplication, and saturation within the Adventist system are issues that must be carefully monitored as these programs seek approval.

In some countries, Adventist colleges are able to provide an abundant supply of trained faculty for our primary and secondary schools. In other locations, the enrollment has grown faster than



Indonesian Adventist University, Parongpong, Bandung, Java.

our church membership and qualified Adventist faculty. Some missions, therefore, rely on Adventist volunteers to staff their schools. A clear focus on the mission and long-term strategic plans of the church is needed as we plan for future growth.

The availability of Adventist textbooks from preschool through graduate level is a major concern. On the primary level, in about 65 percent of schools, we need to subsidize the purchase of Bible textbooks to loan to students whose families are unable to purchase them. On the college level, there is also an urgent need for textbook lending libraries for core Adventist classes such as life and teachings of Jesus, Spirit of Prophecy, Adventist history, Daniel, Revelation, philosophy of Christian education, Adventist health, etc. While textbooks for other subjects may be available in local bookstores at Asian prices, textbooks for these subjects are currently not avail-



Students at Mission College, Muak Lek, Saraburi Province, Thailand.

able. A united effort will be necessary to ensure availability of required textbooks, especially in religion classes. Some outside help may be needed to make this a

reality. Already, we have had some generous offers by Adventist publishing houses in the U.S. to make the materials more affordable. Most of our colleges do



Some of the faculty and students at Adventist University of the Philippines.

not have bookstores, so we will have to find other ways for students to obtain these important textbooks.

A promising new trend is the introduction of Internet courses. AIIAS has begun to offer entire programs online, and other SSD institutions have indi-

cated an interest in this new form of education. Many students in SSD are interested in taking online courses offered by institutions in other lands, but the tuition fees are often beyond their reach. SSD institutions may be able to provide distance education at economical rates

not only for Asia, but also the rest of the world.

God has greatly blessed the education work in SSD during the past five years. Adventist children are being trained in the ways of the Lord and prepared to carry the gospel to the world. Tens of thousands of non-Adventist students

have come to know God and the great Adventist truths, and many have made their decision to follow Jesus and be baptized. Please pray for the education work in the Southern Asia-Pacific Division. ✍



Stephen R. Guptill



Gladden O. Flores

Stephen R. Guptill is Director of Education for the Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SPD) in Silang, Cavite, Philippines. **Gladden O. Flores** is Associate Director of Education for SPD.



Using five unique vehicles, Jeepneys for Jesus, students spread the gospel in the Philippines.



Nursing students at Adventist University of the Philippines.