

# Passing on the Torch

**O**ne can scarcely imagine any way that the Seventh-day Adventist Church could successfully carry out its mission without the support of its worldwide network of schools, colleges, and universities. It is here that most of our leaders receive their training and where, in partnership with parents, the torch of the Adventist faith is passed to the next generation. In many countries of the world, Adventist schools serve as one of our best missionary agencies, as they reach out into non-Adventist homes with the Advent message. Our colleges, seminaries, and universities also provide the context in which Adventists do much of their collective thinking.

God has certainly blessed this cooperative enterprise, which brings together home, church, and school. According to the latest statistics, our global educational system includes 5,984 schools (from kindergarten to university), 46,400 teachers from all levels, and 857,901 students.

Conscious of the vital role of Adventist teachers and schools in our movement, educational leaders from the world divisions met recently with their counterparts at the General Conference to select the themes that we collectively intend to stress during the quinquennium 1995-2000.

These are as follows:

**1. Strengthen the religious dimension in Adventist education at all levels.** The *raison d'être* of our school system is to educate our youth for a useful life, encouraging them to commit their lives to Christ, and to support the message and mission of the church.

- Expand the cooperative publication of curricular materials integrating faith and learning, and Bible textbooks in major languages.
- Review and update the undergraduate and graduate Bible/religion curricula, providing international guidelines.
- Improve teacher selection, evaluation, and in-servicing.
- Reduce the proportion of non-Adventist teachers in Adventist schools through conversion or replacement.
- Refine the evaluation procedures of the Adventist Accrediting Association to give significant weight to the spiritual growth of our students.

**2. Foster the professional development of Adventist teachers and educational leaders.** The increasing complexity of operating our educational system requires administrators and teachers who possess keen professional skills and a thorough understanding of their role.

- Organize a sequence of seminars for academic administrators, financial managers, presidents, and student-life directors, with division education directors in attendance.
- Seek broader circulation of *THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION* in English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, and other language editions.

THE JOURNAL OF  
ADVENTIST EDUCATION

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- Develop Adventist teacher certification guidelines applicable worldwide.
- Hold regional and international seminars on the integration of faith and learning, and circulate the resulting essays.

- Strengthen the training and in-servicing of residence hall deans.

3. Promote the service and missionary outreach of all Adventist schools. As part of the Christian development of our students, they and their teachers will engage in serving human needs and extending the frontiers of the gospel.

- Seek the involvement of each secondary school and college/university in Global Mission by selecting and establishing an Adventist presence in an unentered area.

- Develop curricular materials that will make the Bible Laboratory concept applicable around the world.

- Cooperate with youth leaders in expanding the student missionary program.

4. Encourage networking and cooperation in Adventist education. Modern technology and the pooling of expertise can strengthen our system.

- Foster the organization of regional associations and consortia of Adventist colleges and universities.

- Provide information and guidance in the efficient operation of school industries.

- Promote international electronic networking among educational leaders, college/university administrators, and libraries, utilizing systems such as the Internet and CompuServe.

- Develop a directory of Adventist elementary schools to encourage mission awareness and international contacts among teachers and students.

If you are a parent, teacher, or church leader and wish to share with us your reaction to these four quinquennial themes, we invite you to send your comments to THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904 U.S.A. In the meantime, please continue to pray for Adventist educators so that we may succeed in passing on to the next generation the bright torch of a living faith.—Humberto M. Rasi.

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THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION publishes articles concerned with a variety of topics pertinent to SDA education. Opinions expressed by our writers do not necessarily represent the views of the staff or the official position of the Department of Education of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

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