

FOCUS

THE ANDREWS UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

SPRING 2026
Vol 62 No 2

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The Andrew Effect

John Wesley Taylor V, *president*

WHEN YOU THINK OF SOMEONE GOD uses powerfully, who comes to mind? A famous preacher? A bestselling author? The leader of a global ministry?

But what if some of God's greatest work is done quietly, through people whose names are barely noticed?

Meet Andrew, one of Jesus' disciples.

The "average" disciple

Andrew was as ordinary as they come. His name, Andreas, simply means "man."

He wasn't a scholar like Paul. He didn't write a Gospel like John. He didn't preach to thousands like his brother Peter. If the disciples had voted "Most Likely to Change the World," Andrew wouldn't have made the list.

And yet his legacy is enormous. Five nations call him their patron—Russia, Scotland, Greece, Romania and Ukraine. Why? Because Andrew excelled at one extraordinary thing: He brought people to Jesus.

A restless heart

Andrew grew up in the fishing village of Bethsaida and later lived in Capernaum with Peter's family. A normal life. A normal job. But his heart was restless. When he heard John the Baptist preaching about the coming Messiah, Andrew went searching.

His ordinary life is what makes the story so remarkable. He could have faded into history. But he didn't. Because he was ready when Jesus called.

Three snapshots of Andrew's heart

We glimpse Andrew only a few times in Scripture, but each moment reveals what God can do through ordinary people.

Andrew brings Peter to Jesus (John 1:35–42). The moment Andrew meets Jesus, he runs to his brother: "We have found the Messiah!" Think of the ripple effect. Peter would preach at Pentecost, lead the early church, write

Scripture. But it started with Andrew. No jealousy. Just love that refuses to keep Jesus to itself.

Andrew brings the boy with the lunch (John 6:5–9). Philip sees a crowd too large to feed. Andrew sees one boy with five loaves and two fish. Not much, but he brings it to Jesus anyway, and it feeds thousands. He offered what he had; Jesus did the rest.

Andrew brings the Greeks to Jesus (John 12:20–22). Foreigners come looking. Philip hesitates. Andrew welcomes them in. No one is too far, too different or turned away. Because the gospel is for everyone.

Five traits worth growing

Andrew's story reveals five qualities God can grow in any believer:

- A *seeking* heart, awake and ready to move
- A *sharing* heart, leading others to Jesus
- A *selfless* heart, never craving credit
- An *optimistic* heart, seeing possibilities where others see limits
- An *open* heart, drawing no boundaries around who God can reach

Why Andrew matters

A study by the Institute for American Church Growth found that 80–85% of believers come to faith through a friend or family member, not a sermon or program.

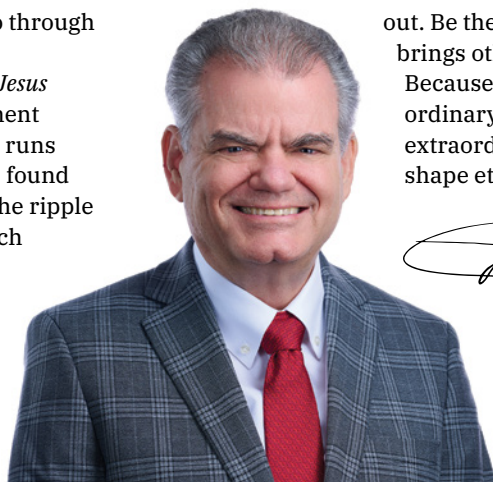
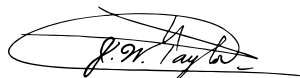
That's the Andrew effect: ordinary relationships, ordinary conversations, extraordinary impact. Andrew wasn't famous. But he was faithful.

The Andrew invitation

God isn't waiting for you to become impressive. He's simply inviting you to notice the people around you, offer what you have and bring someone closer to Jesus.

So think of one person who needs hope, community or prayer. Ask God to open a door this week—a kind word, an invitation, a conversation.

Be the one who reaches out. Be the friend who brings others to Jesus. Because God uses ordinary people with extraordinary hearts to shape eternity.



World Changers Made Here.

2—FOCUS

FOCUS

THE ANDREWS UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

Editor

Gillian Panigot (BA '06, MA '08)
focus@andrews.edu | 269-471-3348

Assistant Editor

Isabella Koh (BA '23, current staff)

Contributing Editor

Jeana Wallin (BA '04, current staff)

Designer

Justin Jeffery (BMus '04)

Photographers

Kimberly Agosto (current student)
Jeff Boyd (MBA '04, current staff)
Eben Espinosa (current student)
Darren Heslop (BFA '12, current staff)
Joshua Martin (att.)
Sidhant Multani (current student)
Esther Noonan (BFA '15)
Lydia Ruckle (current student)
Peter Tumangday (BS '26)
Maxine Umana (AA '13, BA '13, current staff)
Brian Vasquez (current student)

Writers

La Ronda Forsey (current staff)
Andrew Francis (BA '25)
Oscar Güity (current student)
Sophia Koh (att.)
Katherine Koudele (BA '79, MS '83, current faculty)
Janine Lim (BA '95, MAT '96, PhD '10, current staff)
Maxine Umana (AA '13, BA '13, current staff)
Priscilla Wiafe (current student)

Andrews University

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Wagner Kuhn (MA '94)

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Vice President for University Advancement

Donald L. Bedney II (MDiv '90, MSA '91)

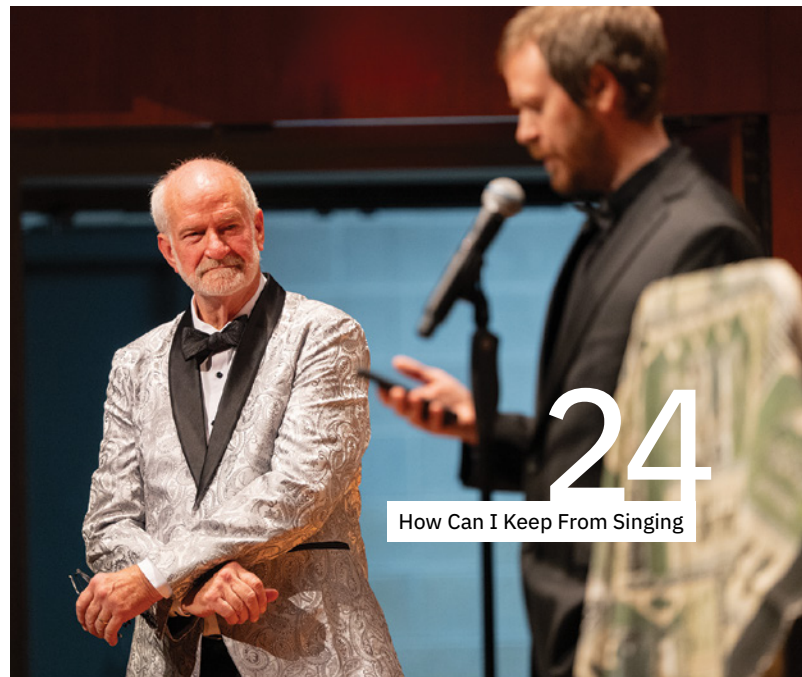
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Pilipino Cultural Night



How Can I Keep From Singing

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Andrews University employees were celebrated at a special event on March 1.

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As Stephen Zork retires, his legacy continues at Andrews University.

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An Andrews University professor and student provided international trauma training.



Standout Spiritual Retreat

Cover: Stephen Zork conducts his reunion weekend choir.
Photo credit: Darren Heslop (BFA '12, current staff)

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Letters are always welcome.

To ensure a range of viewpoints, we encourage letters of fewer than 300 words. Letters may be edited for content, style and space.

By mail:

FOCUS Editor
Andrews University
Office of University Communication
8903 Old US 31
Berrien Springs MI 49104-1000

By email:

focus@andrews.edu

Campus Update

A mission without borders

Celebrating 15 years since Griggs moved to Andrews

THIS YEAR, ANDREWS UNIVERSITY celebrates 15 years since Griggs University and Griggs International Academy moved to Andrews. The collaboration has strengthened Adventist distance education while expanding opportunities for thousands of students from over 50 countries.

"For more than a century, Griggs has served students whose circumstances make traditional education difficult or impossible," says La Ronda Forsey, principal of Griggs International Academy.

In 1909, Seventh-day Adventist education embraced an idea that was ahead of its time. Church leaders recognized that many members and workers around the world were unable to attend a traditional school for reasons including geography, work responsibilities, family obligations and distance.

In an effort to remove these barriers, the Fireside Correspondence School was founded in Maryland by Adventist educational pioneer Frederick Griggs. Lessons were delivered by mail, allowing students to study wherever they lived. The early years were marked by steady growth, and the institution became the Home Study Institute in 1931.

A significant milestone came in 1990 when the Maryland Higher Education Commission granted permission for the institution to offer degree programs. This marked the beginning of Griggs University and expanded the school's impact beyond K-12 education.

As technology advanced, Griggs continued to evolve. The K-12 division became Griggs International Academy in 2003, reflecting its commitment to serving students beyond traditional geographic boundaries.

After an extensive study by a General Conference commission on distance education, church leaders recommended that Griggs University become part of Andrews University. Griggs officially relocated from Maryland to Berrien Springs, Michigan, in 2011.

Then, in 2015, Griggs University became fully integrated into the Andrews University structure through the School of Distance Education, while Griggs International Academy continued to operate independently within the same school.

In March 2024, the Andrews University Board of Trustees voted to reorganize the School of Distance Education into the Andrews University Global Campus.

"For more than a century, Griggs has served students whose circumstances make traditional education difficult or impossible."

The new name reflects a broader vision for online learning, international partnerships and innovative educational delivery for students from kindergarten through higher education.

Janine Lim, dean of the Global Campus, says, "As Adventist education looks toward the future, new technologies will continue to reshape how education is delivered. Yet the most important elements remain unchanged: caring teachers, meaningful relationships, academic excellence and a commitment to helping students develop a deeper connection with Jesus Christ."

Photo courtesy of Global Campus



The Home Study Institute in Takoma Park, Maryland

LIFE ON CAMPUS



AU's Got Talent, Jan. 24



SILA End-of-Year Party, April 23



AUSA Worship, Jan. 24



J.N. Andrews Honors Spring Agape Feast, Feb. 6



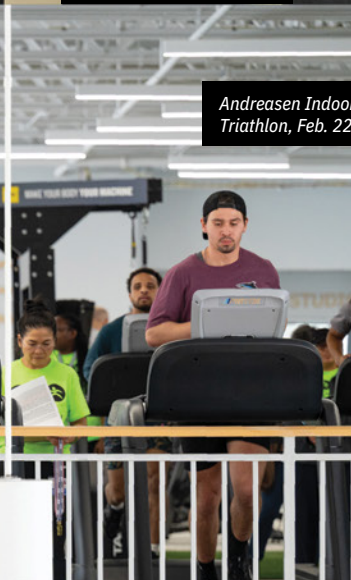
Anchor Group Ministry Year-End Celebration, April 25



Soul Shop, Jan. 22



Honors Scholars and Undergraduate Research Poster Symposium, Feb. 27



Andreasen Indoor Triathlon, Feb. 22

Spring graduation

From May 1–3, 2026

AT ANDREWS UNIVERSITY'S SPRING graduation, 256 students were awarded undergraduate degrees and 359 students were awarded graduate degrees. Overall, about 600 students received their degrees in person. The weekend's events included a Friday Commencement service and vespers service, Baccalaureate services on Sabbath morning and two additional Commencement services on Sunday morning.

On Friday, May 1, Mark Finley, assistant to the president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and president of Hope Lives Evangelistic Ministries, delivered the address "The Essence of True Greatness" at the Commencement service for the College of Education & International Services and the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. He was also recognized with an honorary Doctor of Divinity for his dedication to mentoring young people in evangelistic work and his extensive work in media.

Additionally, Ernestine Finley was recognized with an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters for her commitment to providing health education in a sustainable and accessible format for thousands of people. As an author, broadcast evangelist and teacher, she is known worldwide for her wellness ministry.

Alayne Thorpe, who most recently served as dean of the College of Education & International Services and School of Graduate Studies at Andrews and president of Griggs International, was honored at the same service with the President's Medallion.

On Saturday, May 2, Elden Ramirez, president of the Lake Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, offered the ad-



FROM TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Honorary degree candidate Ernestine Finley ■ Baccalaureate speaker Elden Ramirez ■ Commencement speaker and honorary degree candidate Mark Finley ■ Commencement speaker Zeno L. Charles-Marcel ■ Commencement speaker and honorary degree candidate Bettina Krause ■ Honorary degree candidate Patricia Gustin

dress "What Hath God Wrought Through You" for both the graduate and undergraduate Baccalaureate services.

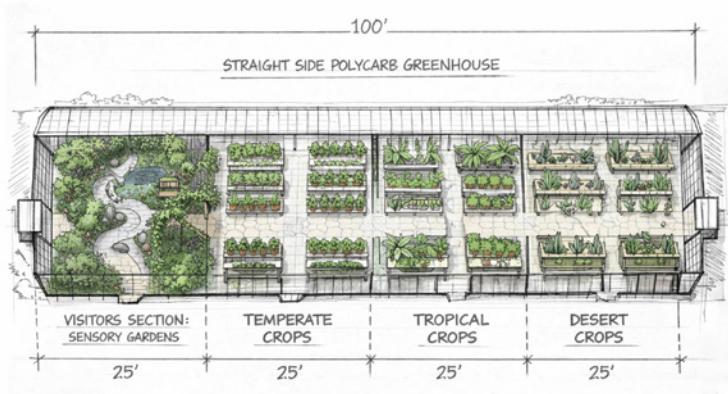
On Sunday, May 3, Zeno L. Charles-Marcel, director of Health Ministries for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, gave the Commencement address "Required or Desired" for graduates of the College of Health & Human Services and College of Professions.

Patricia Gustin was recognized during the service with an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters for her commitment to providing education and support to missionaries and their families. As former director of the Institute of World Mission,

Gustin has dedicated her life to mission work, training and expansion.

Bettina Krause, editor of Liberty magazine and associate director of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department for the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, delivered the address "Who Do You Think You Are?" at the Commencement service for graduates of the College of Arts & Sciences. She was recognized with an honorary Doctor of Laws for her dedication to sharing the role of religious liberty in both public and private spaces.

Central graduation events are available on the Andrews University YouTube channel.



Andrews plans horticulture renewal initiative

To expand experiential learning opportunities

THE DEPARTMENT OF Sustainable Agriculture at Andrews University is developing a multi-phase horticulture renewal initiative designed to expand hands-on student learning, strengthen sustainability education and create new wellness-centered green spaces on campus.

The initiative includes the renovation of an existing greenhouse into a structure designed to support crops during colder seasons, continued use of the department's smaller winter greenhouse and the planned construction of a new energy-efficient teaching greenhouse. Together, the facilities will provide a space for year-round applied

plant science education and expanded experiential learning opportunities.

The proposed teaching greenhouse will feature four climate-controlled sections, including temperate, tropical and desert growing environments, along with a visitor and sensory garden space. "Our students have gone all over the world working with agriculture and plant production," shares Katherine Koudele, chair of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture. "This greenhouse would allow them to gain experience working in different kinds of climates before they leave campus."

The facility is also intended to support interdisciplinary

collaboration and student wellness initiatives. One section of the greenhouse is planned as a conservatory-style green space, and its design incorporates sustainability-focused technology. "We're hoping this can become a place where students can come and enjoy a green environment during the darker winter season," Koudele says.

She adds that the project aims to continue strengthening Andrews University's commitment to stewardship and sustainability. "Our department motto is 'Educating Earth's Caretakers,'" she explains. "Students today are deeply interested in sustainability,

creation care and learning how to work more harmoniously with nature. We want to provide them with opportunities to do that here on campus."

The department has already begun preliminary work on portions of the project, including plans to convert the existing greenhouse and prepare the site for future construction. Faculty members are currently seeking additional donor support and partnerships to help complete the initiative. "We have the land, the facilities and the vision," Koudele says. "Now we're looking for partners to help make it possible."

Image courtesy of Katherine Koudele

Celebrating Earth Month at Andrews

Activities planned by Creation Care Council

DURING APRIL, THE CREATION Care Council engaged students in a variety of educational opportunities and worship experiences centered around Earth Month.

Throughout the month, members of the council devised a weekly short course on topics related to creation care. These included presentations on nature as medicine, marine mammals, green engineering

and more, delivered by faculty and staff from across campus.

A capstone event, Creation Care Sabbath, took place on April 25. The day began with a sermon by Roshelle Hall, adjunct professor of biology and assistant curator of the Museum of Natural History, titled "Creation Care."

In the afternoon, members of the Andrews community had



FROM TOP: Roshelle Hall, speaker
■ Worship in music, April 25

the opportunity to tour the Andrews Arboretum, participate in a birdwatching session, engage in a spring wildflower walk, learn how to listen to nature, and identify trees and flowers on Lemon Creek Trail.

Katherine Koudele, chair of the Department of Sustainable Agriculture, shares, "The weather on Sabbath afternoon was a perfect late spring day, and the groups included up to 20 participants each. It was soul-refreshing to interact with God's creation in such an intentional manner and helped prepare the students for the final exam week that was soon to begin."

23rd annual Teaching and Learning Conference

Explores human flourishing

THE 23RD ANNUAL ANDREWS UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND Learning Conference (AUTLC), hosted by the School of Education on April 2, centered on the theme, “Beyond Test Scores: Cultivating Human Flourishing in Educational Communities.”

Michael Gayle, interim chair of the School of Education and co-chair of the conference, notes that AUTLC allows educators from a variety of settings to share research, best practices and innovative approaches. “We’re all people,” Gayle says. “It’s looking beyond the test scores.”

One of the conference highlights was a panel discussion that brought together different educators to reflect on what flourishing looks like in practice. Audience members submitted questions through a live survey, generating more responses than could be addressed during the session.



Panel discussion

The conference also provided meaningful opportunities for Andrews students to participate through research presentations, conference logistics and professional insights. Breakout sessions addressed topics such as faith and learning, arts in education and the impact of emerging technologies. Presenters explored issues ranging from trauma-informed teaching practices to the role of artificial intelligence in education.

For Charity Garcia, associate professor of curriculum and instruction and conference co-chair, the conference’s emphasis on flourishing reflects a commitment to seeing students as whole people rather than simply academic performers. “We love our students,” Garcia says. “We’re looking at how we can create experiences where the whole person can show up, be supported, learn and grow together.”

As conference leaders plan next year’s event, scheduled for March 25, 2027, they hope to continue expanding opportunities for collaboration while maintaining AUTLC’s longstanding commitment to accessibility.

Inaugural global student research conference

Themed “From Research to Mission”

OVER 700 STUDENTS, FACULTY and administrators from more than 18 Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions—including Andrews University and universities across East, Central, and West Africa and the Philippines—participated in the first annual Global Institute for Research and Community Advancement (GIRCA) Student Conference.

The event was themed “From Research to Mission: Solutions that Make a Difference” and took place April 19–21 in a hybrid format. The structure created space for interdisciplinary collaboration, scholarly exchange and mission-driven research.

Jenica Joseph, associate professor in the School of Communication Sciences & Disorders at Andrews University, notes that the conference helped build “a shared scholarly identity across institutions” and allowed students to experience the integration of faith and research in practical ways.

The conference opened each morning with a devotional from Michael W. Campbell, director of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists Department of Archives, Statistics & Research. Plenary speakers included Colin Bruce, founder

and CEO of ChronicDx, Inc.; David Trim, director of the Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists; and Martha Cameron, executive board member of the International Community of Women Living with HIV North America.

The event provided an opportunity for both established and emerging researchers to present their work in a professional, international setting. Nathan Mathieu, Andrews Doctor of Physical Therapy student, shares that the experience helped him see the broader purpose of research, emphasizing the importance of using knowledge to “build each other up” across communities and countries.

“Research is in good hands!” says Carlisle Sutton, program coordinator and sponsored research officer at Andrews. “The success of the conference reflected God’s guidance and blessings, as well as the collective commitment, collaboration, and shared vision of institutions, faculty, staff and students across the global network.”

GIRCA plans to make the conference an annual event, opening it to more institutions of higher education in April 2027.

Photo courtesy of Carlisle Sutton



Conference participants from Andrews



Andrews hosts Innovation Conference x HYVE X 2026

Themed “Innovation with Purpose”

FROM MARCH 27–29, THE Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship at Andrews University hosted the Andrews Innovation Conference x HYVE X 2026, a weekend gathering that brought together students, entrepreneurs, ministry leaders and industry professionals.

The conference opened with a session led by Solomon Kim, technical staff at the Thinking Machines Lab and Andrews alumnus. This was followed by a branding workshop led by Licci Zemleduch, founder and director of the Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center at Southwestern Adventist University.

Student Celeste Velinova shares, “The conference and everything leading up to it was a good experience to connect with like-minded people who want to not just be consumers but create solutions and be part of making the world a better place in one way or another.”

At the annual Pitch Competition, seven presenters pitched their ventures for a total of \$30,000 in prizes. Later that afternoon, Kim delivered the address “Driven in Purpose” and joined Zemleduch and Natasha Richards, director of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary Chaplaincy Study Center and associate professor of chaplaincy, for a

roundtable discussion. In the evening, Michael E. Cafferky, author, speaker and writing coach, presented on the connection between faith and business.



Tachica Mc Coy, speech language pathology student, shares, “I learned the importance of balancing what we love, what we are good at, what we are paid for and what the world needs. It allows for more fulfillment.”

A new event, Demo Night, took place on Saturday evening, highlighting student and professional-led solutions to challenges in technology, ministry and community development. The day closed with a vespers service led by Richards.

Matías Soto, director of Innovation & Entrepreneurship, shares, “The theme of ‘Innovation with Purpose’ for this conference sought to bring our ideas and minds toward being intentional in the way we conduct business to align with our values and with the purpose to change the world.”

Students and faculty win awards at MBAA conference

For research, posters and student management

GRADUATE STUDENTS AND A FACULTY MEMBER IN THE Andrews University School of Business Administration (SBA) won five awards and presented 17 papers at the Midwest Business Administration Association (MBAA) International Conference. The multidisciplinary gathering brings together more than 6,000 academics and professionals annually in Chicago.

Edna Kim and Frank Gondwe, Master of Business Administration students at Andrews, were awarded in the Best Conference Research Paper category. Jerry Chi, professor of management and SBA graduate program director, also won two awards for Best Student Management. He explains, “These awards demonstrate the School of Business Administration’s commitment to high academic rigor, impactful real-world application, and the development of both faculty and student research.”

Gondwe, whose paper was titled “The Relationship Between Faith-Based Resilience and Academic Persistence Among Graduate Business Students,” shares, “I chose this topic because I have personally experienced how faith sustains perseverance.” Gondwe also won a Distinguished Research Poster Award for a project

titled “Global GDP Growth, Economic Development, and Regional Disparities: A Three-Way Multivariate Analysis.”

Kim’s paper was titled “Impact of Economic Size and Pandemic Period on Economic Performance: A 3×2 Factorial Design Across Five Years.”



Jerry Chi and Edna Kim

She explains, “Understanding how size shapes recovery can help leaders design smarter, more targeted support for economies of different sizes during any future global crisis.”

Chi, who coordinated the Andrews cohort at the conference, notes, “Student and faculty research is critical because it bridges the gap between theoretical learning and real-world application. It actively solves pressing global challenges and directly trains the next generation of critical thinkers.”

Photo courtesy of Jerry Chi



Black History Month

Honors the past and strengthens connections

THROUGHOUT THE MONTH OF February, Andrews University students, faculty and staff came together to celebrate Black History Month through worship services, educational programming and heritage events designed to promote cultural awareness and foster meaningful conversations about faith, identity and leadership.

Highlights included undergraduate Chapel services featuring David R. Williams and Michaela Lawrence Jeffery, as well as a graduate chapel presentation by Carlton Byrd. New Life Fellowship also hosted several worship services celebrating African American, Caribbean, Afro-Latino and African cultures. Speakers included Williams, John and April Nixon, Jonathan Aguiñaga and Dennis Akawobsa, each bringing unique perspectives and messages of faith to the campus community.

The Black Student Christian Forum (BSCF) played a central role throughout the month by organizing cultural programming that encouraged student engagement and learning. Activities included African American, Caribbean and

Afro-Latino cocurricular programs, residence hall events and Impact Vespers services. Students also participated in Spirit Week, which featured themed activities such as Decades Day, Twin Day and Culture Day.

In addition to worship and cultural events, the University encouraged reflection on Black Adventist history. Esther Knott, interim assistant to the president for Mission & Culture and diversity officer, highlighted the contributions of influential Black Seventh-day Adventist leaders through a campus-wide historical quiz inspired by Calvin B. Rock's book, "Protest and Progress: Black Seventh-day Adventist Leadership and the Push for Parity."

The month-long celebration reflected Andrews University's commitment to creating opportunities for cultural learning and engagement. Through worship, education and social events, Black History Month provided meaningful opportunities to honor the past, celebrate diversity and strengthen connections across the campus community.



L-R: Carlton Byrd
■ April and John
Nixon ■ Michaela
Lawrence Jeffery

Pilipino Cultural Night

Presents "Halo-Halo" variety show

MORE THAN 300 STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF, alumni and community members gathered at the Howard Performing Arts Center on Feb. 28 for the annual Andrews Filipino International Association (AFIA) Pilipino Cultural Night (PCN), a celebration of history and heritage.

This year's program, titled "Halo-Halo" or "mix-mix," took inspiration from the name of a popular Filipino dessert. Reflecting the theme, AFIA presented a variety-show format featuring cultural dances, musical performances and comedic skits.

Among the evening's highlights was the skit "Overly Friendly Customer Service," which humorously portrayed the warmth and hospitality often associated with Filipino culture. Audience members also enjoyed the choir's performance of "Kalesa," named after the traditional horse-drawn carriage that remains an important symbol of Filipino heritage.

One of the most anticipated performances was Sayaw sa Bangko, a traditional folk dance requiring performers to move skillfully across benches without losing their balance. Demonstrations of Filipino Martial Arts, Tinikling and the Candle Dance further showcased student talent and culture.

"PCN is an annual event that AFIA puts on in order to celebrate the Filipino culture," says Fares Magesa, AFIA co-sponsor and director of Student Financial Services. "By providing students, both Filipino and not, the opportunity to be involved in or attend this experience, our community is able to grow and build stronger relationships."





Standout Spiritual Retreat

Themed “Gifted on Purpose”

FAITH, FRIENDSHIP AND PURPOSE CAME together at Andrews University’s Standout event from Feb. 20–22. Sixty-three high school students from public school and homeschool backgrounds attended the free spiritual retreat, hosted by the University’s Center for Faith Engagement, Discipleship Center, and Division of Marketing & Enrollment Management. The weekend provided opportunities for worship, leadership development and spiritual growth while introducing participants and their families to life within a Christ-centered university community.

Centered on the theme “Gifted on Purpose,” the retreat encouraged students to recognize that God has intentionally given each person unique gifts to serve others and reflect His character. Through worship services, interactive discussions and Sabbath activities, attendees were challenged to deepen their relationship with God while building meaningful friendships with peers who share their faith.

Keynote speaker Jermaine Gayle, senior pastor of the Kalamazoo Seventh-day Adventist Church, opened the retreat on Friday evening. He encouraged students to surrender their lives to God and allow Him to work through them. Gayle empha-

sized that when individuals use their gifts to serve others, they become living testimonies that point people back to Christ.

After the presentation, student leaders from Andrews’ Anchor small groups facilitated discussions that allowed participants to connect and reflect on the message. The evening concluded with singing, prayer and fellowship as students welcomed the Sabbath together.

Sabbath programming continued to build on the retreat’s theme with additional messages from Gayle focused on faith, purpose and spiritual growth. Guided discussion groups for both students and parents created opportunities for families to process the messages together and connect with others navigating similar faith journeys.

Participants also enjoyed a variety of activities, including Scripture coloring, bookmark design and faith-based music activities. Before the last message was delivered, students gathered in small groups one final time to reflect on what they had learned throughout the weekend.

According to organizers, many attendees identified the reflective discussions as some of the most meaningful aspects of the retreat. Several parents expressed appreciation for the opportunity to con-



Keynote speaker
Jermaine Gayle

nect with other families and discuss the challenges and blessings of raising young people in faith-centered homes.

Standout also offered participants a firsthand look at life at Andrews University as they explored campus, interacted with current Andrews students, and learned more about the University’s mission of integrating faith, learning and service. Complimentary lodging and meals allowed guests from across the country to participate in the experience fully.

Alanna Rodriguez Merlos, director of the Discipleship Center, emphasizes the importance of creating Christ-centered communities. “The friends young people choose have a direct influence on their long-term choices,” she says. “For this reason, the Standout weekend is designed to grow students’ love for Christ in community with each other.”

Participants left campus with new friendships, spiritual encouragement and a renewed sense of purpose. One parent summarized the weekend’s impact by remarking, “Andrews needs to package this and take it to every Adventist academy.”

By bringing together students from across the country in a supportive Christian environment, Standout 2026 furthered Andrews University’s commitment to nurturing faith, fostering community and inspiring the next generation of Christian leaders.

“The friends young people choose have a direct influence on their long-term choices. For this reason, the Standout weekend is designed to grow students’ love for Christ in community with each other.”



From Top, L-R: Sunday Music Series: Aleksandra Kemble, Jan. 25 ■ Andrews University Symphony Orchestra (AUSO) & Young Artist Competition Winner Concert, Feb. 7 ■ Music & Worship Conference Concert, Feb. 14 ■ An Acoustic Evening With Sidewalk Prophets, Feb. 15 ■ Andrews University Choirs Chasing Away the Blues, Feb. 21 ■ Sunday Music Series: Carla Trynchuk & Elena Braslavsky, Feb. 22 ■ Andrews University Wind Symphony Vespers Concert, March 6 ■ Music Festival Finale Concert, March 7 ■ Sunday Music Series: Andrews University Composers, March 8 ■ Howard Center Presents: K-Anthony, March 29 ■ Andrews University Choirs Spring Concert, April 4 ■ Howard Center Presents: The Collingsworth Family, April 8 ■ AUSO & WAUS Thank You Concert, April 9 ■ Watchmen Reimagined, April 11 ■ Andrews University Wind Symphony Spring Concert, April 19 ■ Howard Center Presents: Chi Yong Yun & Charles Reid, April 25





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Lim receives Hall of Fame award

From USDLA

THIS YEAR, JANINE LIM received the 2026 Hall of Fame Higher Education award from the United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA). USDLA awards acknowledge organizations and individuals who have demonstrated extraordinary achievements using online learning techniques, innovation and video technologies. The Hall of Fame award requires participation in USDLA and significant contributions to global distance learning.

Throughout her career, Lim has been deeply engaged in developing and promoting distance education. In 2008, she won the USDLA Outstanding Leadership Award and soon after began to serve on the USDLA board. “I loved doing it, because I learned so much

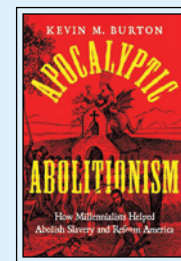
from other institutions and what they’re doing. [USDLA] is a really interesting group because they have K–12, higher education, corporate, government and health care distance education.”

Lim earned her BA in communication, MAT and PhD in leadership from Andrews University. Previously, she worked at the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency, taught courses for the Adventist Virtual Learning Network and oversaw a video conferencing system across local public school districts.

In 2011, she began serving at Andrews as associate dean for online higher education, before becoming dean of the Global Campus on July 1, 2026. Lim shares, “I feel that working at Andrews in distance education is something that God created and knit me together to do. He gave me the experience, and I am committed to Andrews because I know God wants me here. ... For me, this award is a confirmation that God is leading, and He needs me to do something more besides what I’ve done so far.”



Professor publishes new book



On apocalyptic faith and social reform

KEVIN BURTON, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR ADVENTIST Research and assistant professor of church history, has published a new book through New York University Press. “Apocalyptic Abolitionism: How Millennialists Helped Abolish Slavery and Reform America” examines the relationship between apocalyptic faith and social reform in nineteenth-century America.

The book challenges a long-standing assumption among historians that people who strongly emphasized the soon return of Christ tended to withdraw from social and political engagement. “Apocalypticism can actually fuel social reform,” Burton says. “It can make people more active for social justice causes rather than make them withdraw.”

Burton spent nearly a decade researching thousands of historical figures and sources across more than 90 archives and numerous digital collections. His work reveals previously overlooked connections between Adventist pioneers and key abolitionist efforts, including campaigns that helped shape national conversations about slavery before the American Civil War.

“This is the first detailed history of Adventism in the anti-slavery movement,” Burton shares. “The Millerites were not simply involved in the anti-slavery movement in America, but they shaped the entire thing.”

Burton adds that the project also offers an opportunity for reflection. “If we just have great beliefs in theology, that really doesn’t matter that much,” he says. “If it doesn’t change our actions and make us better people in the here and now, then we’re not really preparing to meet God.”

Burton hopes the book will inspire readers to see how deeply faith and action were connected in early Adventism—and how that legacy continues to challenge believers today.





President's Medallion recipient

Alayne Thorpe recognized

DURING THE SPRING 2026 GRADUATION WEEKEND, Alayne Thorpe was honored with the President's Medallion at the Commencement service for the College of Education & International Services and Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.

Thorpe completed her BA in English in 1977 and MA in English in 1980 at the University of Maryland. She went on to complete a fellowship on Anglo-Irish poetry at the University of Cambridge before receiving her PhD in modern British literature from the University of Maryland in 1987.

She began her career as a teacher at Montgomery Blair High School, then went on to work for Home Study International. Beginning in 1986, she became an advisory teacher and curriculum committee member at Takoma Academy, and from 1988–2010, she simultaneously taught as an adjunct professor for Columbia Union College (now Washington Adventist University) and the University of Maryland.

Thorpe joined Griggs University/Griggs International Academy in 1989, where she served as senior vice president for education for 22 years. In 2011, she became president of Griggs International Academy and dean of the School of Distance Education & International Partnerships at Andrews University.

In 2017, Thorpe took on the additional role of dean, and later associate provost, of the School of Graduate Studies. After a reorganization within the University's schools and colleges, she also became dean of the newly formed College of Education & International Services in 2019.

Thorpe has committed her career to improving the educational experiences of students around the world. Her legacy of innovation, mentorship and wisdom exemplifies a deep commitment to education that transcends borders.

Employees recognized for mentorship

At the student Recognition & Awards Ceremony

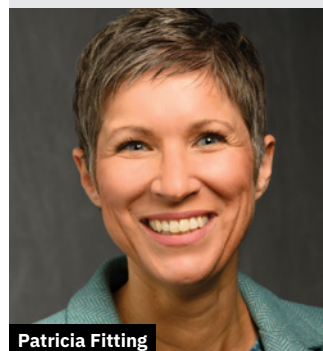
THE ANNUAL RECOGNITION & AWARDS CEREMONY TOOK place on Thursday, April 23. The event recognized student scholarship and honors as well as exemplary leadership in student employment and extracurricular activities. The program also included two awards that celebrate faculty and staff for their mentorship and impact on student learning.

The Teacher of the Year Award, selected through a poll of the undergraduate student body by the Andrews University Student Association (AUSA), recognizes an individual

who goes beyond the classroom, serving as a mentor and leaving a lasting impact on students' lives. This year's recipient, Patricia Fitting, was honored for her service within the Division of Campus & Student Life as AUSA Senate mentor, Title IX deputy coordinator and assistant dean for cocurricular education.

Alyssa Caruthers, outgoing AUSA president, noted Fitting's "great joy and efficiency" in her work and said, "I personally am grateful to have served in AUSA positions under her mentorship. Though she will be moving away from Andrews to new opportunities, the impact she has had on Student Life will last long after she is gone."

The Undergraduate Research Mentor Award was given to Jay Johnson, professor of physics and engineering. Established by the College of Arts & Scienc-



Patricia Fitting



Jay Johnson

es and the Office of Research & Creative Scholarship, the award recognizes faculty mentors for their excellence in mentoring undergraduate research students.

Johnson works with multiple students each year on space weather research projects funded by the National Science Foundation and National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Over the past five years, his student research team has produced five co-authored journal articles and 70 scientific presentations. Students described his high standards and patience, noting his ability to make complex concepts understandable while encouraging independent research and critical thinking. One student shared that Johnson's guidance led them to present research at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, an opportunity they "never would have dreamed of reaching" on their own.

A life of service

Anna Piskozub retires after nearly 31 years at Andrews

ANNA PISKOZUB BEGAN HER JOURNEY at Andrews University on May 30, 1995, in the School of Education. She came to Andrews from Chicago, Illinois, where she spent many years working at two large law firms.

Her first role at Andrews was as executive secretary for graduate programs under the leadership of Jerome Thayer. With his guidance,

Over the years, Anna pursued undergraduate coursework at Andrews University and completed her remaining studies at Atlantic Union College, earning a bachelor's degree in business administration in 2008. Later, following a change in direction that reflected her growing interest in health and well-being, she completed a master's degree in nutrition and wellness from Andrews in 2013.

Much of Anna's professional life was devoted to supporting graduate students. She worked behind the scenes to track academic progress, build systems to help students stay on course, and collaborate closely with faculty and administrators. Her attention to detail, organizational skill and genuine care for students allowed her to grow into roles of increasing responsibility, including graduate programs service coordinator in the School of Education and, later, accreditation, assessment and graduate record officer in the College of Education & International Services.

"I quickly learned about how strong systems, careful processes and thoughtful support are essential in helping students succeed."

Anna was introduced to the complex and meaningful world of graduate education. "I quickly learned about how strong systems, careful processes and thoughtful support are essential in helping students succeed," she shares. "It was also during this time that I realized I wanted to continue growing personally and professionally, so I became a student myself."

Some of the highlights of Anna's career were her involvement in major institutional initiatives, including the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation process. She took great pride in contributing to work that strengthened programs and ensured excellence in graduate education. "Equally meaningful to me were the relationships I built along

the way—with colleagues who shared my dedication and with students whose success made every challenge worthwhile," she says.

Anna also shared her commitment to healthy living with the campus. She served as a fitness instructor and mat Pilates instructor in the Lamson Health Club from 2000–2018. In 2017, she began work as an adjunct professor to teach Pilates for the School of Population Health, Nutrition & Wellness, a role she continues presently in addition to teaching the 6 a.m. classes for the Andreassen Center for Wellness.

In May 2024, Anna transitioned to the Global Leadership Institute, serving as operations program coordinator. Although the role came with a steep learning curve, it proved to be a joyful and meaningful final chapter in her career. Working in a mission-centered environment focused on developing church leaders allowed her to combine her professional skills with her deep faith. "I am especially grateful for the mentorship, encouragement and support I received during that time," she reflects.

Throughout her career, Anna has been guided by her faith as a committed Seventh-day Adventist Christian. She shares, "I firmly believe that God placed me in each role not only to challenge me but also to keep Him at the center of my work and encourage me to serve others with compassion, humility and integrity."

As Anna retires, she does so with a full and grateful heart. She reflects with deep appreciation on the love, respect and support she received from faculty, students, graduate assistants and colleagues over the years. "Andrews University has been far more than a workplace—it has been a community, a ministry and a home," she says. "The friendships formed here and the lives touched will remain with me always."



Transforming Adventist education

Alayne Thorpe retires after 15 years of service at Andrews

IN 2011, A MERGER BETWEEN GRIGGS University/Griggs International Academy and Andrews University brought Alayne Thorpe to Berrien Springs, Michigan. It was the beginning of an impactful career at Andrews that allowed her to touch lives around the world.

Alayne first served at Andrews University as founding dean of the School of Distance Education & International Partnerships. Later, she also took on the role of dean of the School of Graduate Studies. Then, when the School of Distance Education & International Partnerships and the School of Education were merged into the College of Education & International Services (CEIS), she was named dean of CEIS and served as associate provost of the School of Graduate Studies.

Prior to her time at Andrews, Alayne worked as the academic head/chief academic officer of Griggs University and Griggs International Academy. She enjoyed the work, though she had never previously envisioned herself as a proponent of distance education. She says, “I began life as a classroom teacher in a public school and thought that the classroom was the only place where education could occur.”

However, when she began work in Seventh-day Adventist education, her perspective started to change. “I realized two things,” Alayne shares. “The first was that the most spiritually transformative experiences that people could have were happening in Adventist classrooms throughout the world. The second was that there were many people not able to benefit from an Adventist classroom.”

She recognized that because many students lack access to a local Adventist school, the only way to provide them with a transformative Adventist education was to make it portable—and her roles at Andrews allowed numerous opportunities to further that work.

Alayne has found it rewarding to watch Andrews—with its supportive

faculty, staff and administrators—expand its reach to students in Berrien Springs and beyond. She looks forward to even more growth with the recent launch of the Global Campus and is confident that its leaders will continue their important work.

She has also treasured her time with graduate programs. “We have truly dedicated graduate students who have made great sacrifices to attend Andrews University. I am humbled by their enthusiasm, by their commitment to helping build a better Church, a better school, a better health care system,” she notes.

Alayne’s favorite passage of Scripture is John 21:15–17, in which Jesus shows Peter not only that He forgives him but that He trusts Peter with the highest responsibility a follower of Jesus can have: to feed His sheep. She says, “That is what we do every day at Andrews University. We feed Jesus’ flock—the precious people He has brought to our campus, whether physical or virtual.”

“That is what we do every day at Andrews University. We feed Jesus’ flock—the precious people He has brought to our campus, whether physical or virtual.”

In retirement, Alayne will be working part-time for the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, advocating for higher education, and aims to continue finding ways to support Andrews University. She affirms, “I have spent my career trying to make transformative experiences available to as many people as possible. It has been a pleasure to work collaboratively across the Andrews University campus to expand the University’s reach around the world.”



Building lifetime relationships

Elynda Bedney retires after more than 38 years of service at Andrews

WHEN ELYNDA BEDNEY ARRIVED AT Andrews University in July 1987, she expected to support students through their financial journeys. What she did not anticipate was the profound impact those students—and the Andrews community—would have on her own life.

Elynda began her Andrews career as an account supervisor in Student Finance after moving to Michigan with her husband, Donald, who had enrolled at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.

Just over two years later, Elynda was promoted to associate director of Student Finance, a position she held from 1989 to 2005. During that time, she earned a Master of Science in Administration from the Andrews School of Business. Taking one class per quarter over five years, she completed her degree in 1998.

That same year, Elynda helped lead the merger of Student Finance and Financial Aid into Student Financial Services (SFS). She later played an important role in guiding the department through the University's move from the quarter system to the semester system and the shift from paper registration to electronic financial clearance.

In 2005, Elynda was named director of SFS, serving for 12 years. In 2017, she was appointed assistant vice president of SFS, a position she held until her retirement.

Looking back, Elynda says one of the most rewarding aspects of her career was the Christian environment at Andrews. "Andrews was what you made it to be," she reflects. "Whatever you were looking for here, you could find it—God, education, multicultural experiences, friends, lots of churches to choose from, and more."

Over the decades, her focus remained constant: helping students. "What I appreciated the most was working with students and being able to help find solutions for their problems regarding finances, life issues and spiritual challenges," she says. Elynda particularly valued learning about students' diverse cultures and made it a point to correctly learn their names—a gesture reflecting



"Working at Andrews taught me to pray more and ask God for what I wanted, big or small."

her belief that every student deserves to be seen, known and respected.

Relationships were equally important among colleagues. "I was able to develop a relationship with each faculty and staff member in my circle of influence and discuss diplomatically many issues that impacted our work here at Andrews," she explains. "I am still connected with a lot of these colleagues."

A commitment to excellence has guided Elynda throughout her life. "My parents always taught me that there was nothing I could not do," she says. "I took that literally and applied it to my daily work." This mindset was strengthened by her faith and a favorite Bible verse, Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Elynda says, "Working at Andrews taught me to pray more and ask God for what I wanted, big or small. I also learned there are more ways to accomplish what needs to be done than the traditional way. There is room for creativity."

Her contributions earned significant recognition over the years, including the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Michigan Student Financial Aid Association annual conference. She also received a commendation from former Andrews President Andrea Luxton recognizing the accomplishments of SFS under Elynda's leadership.

Elynda continues to serve Andrews University on a part-time basis in Financial Administration while looking forward to spending winters in Florida and a more flexible schedule.

Reflecting on nearly four decades of service, Elynda says, "It has been a pleasure working here for the majority of my career, and I have no regrets. I would like to thank all the administrators that I worked with over the years, and I have appreciated being able to build lifetime relationships here at Andrews University."

A focus on health and connection

Deborah Andvik retires after 25 years at Andrews

THROUGHOUT HER CAREER, DEBORAH “Deby” Andvik has been guided by two core biblical messages: “And whatever your task, do it heartily, as serving the Lord and not men” (Colossians 3:23) and “Therefore, whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Deby first came to Andrews in the fall of 1975 as a student, transferring from Kalamazoo College for her junior year after adopting the Seventh-day Adventist faith. During her senior year she met Alf Andvik, a student from Norway studying in the School of Technology. Deby and Alf were married in 1978—one week after Deby graduated with a Bachelor of Science in elementary education—and moved to Norway, where they lived for 22 years.

During that time, Deby worked as an office assistant for her parents-in-law’s physical therapy clinics and later as an elementary school teacher at two Adventist schools. Additionally, both Deby and Alf worked with The Heartgood Foundation, a self-supporting lifestyle center and medical ministry organization.

In 2000, when it was time for their children, Marlana and Jeffrey, to attend college, the Andviks decided to move back to Berrien Springs, reflecting that they both “had been so blessed and impacted by studying at Andrews.”

With a heart for education, Deby applied to work at Andrews and was hired as the administrative assistant for the nursing department. After nine months, she became assistant to the dean in the College of Arts & Sciences. Eventually, when the School of Health Professions—later the College of Health & Human Services (CHHS)—became its own entity, she moved with it. The experience expanded her professional skills while further strengthening her belief in Adventism and its health message.



“I became an Adventist because I was looking for a denomination that emphasized the importance of letting Christ be Lord of every area of our life—including health.”

“I became an Adventist because I was looking for a denomination that emphasized the importance of letting Christ be Lord of every area of our life—including health,” Deby says. “Since becoming an Adventist, our health message has been an integral part of my life, so this transition to support the health professions was a natural fit for me.”

In her roles, Deby fostered meaningful connections across the University. She enjoyed working on campus-wide planning committees and engaged in an expanding network of responsibilities over the years. In particular, she enjoyed helping create the PULSE magazine, which showcased the projects, achievements and testimonies of CHHS students, faculty and alumni. She was also honored to serve on the Caring Connection Committee, helping employees in need during challenging times.

Some highlights of her time at Andrews included involvement in international study tours, office and staff worships, and the European and Nordic student clubs. She appreciated the worldwide nature of the church represented at Andrews and the opportunities to provide support to students on their academic journeys, re-

lating especially to international students adjusting to life in a new nation.

“Over the years, I was able to help assist students needing extra resources,” she shares. “Often, they would be so appreciative and bring cards or gifts to express how much it meant to them. This really warmed my heart knowing that I’d made a difference.”

In retirement, Deby plans to continue living in Berrien Springs, dedicating more of her time to gardening and connecting with friends. She will also serve as volunteer coordinator at FARM STEW, an international Christian ministry that trains and equips families with the skills they need to overcome hunger, disease and poverty so they can experience hope and abundant life offered by Jesus (John 10:10).

Deby has always been motivated to “be a positive witness for the Lord; work to improve processes and efficiency; and lead by example—servant leadership,” and affirms, “I’m just changing from one mission field to another.”



Photo courtesy of Deborah Andvik

FROM TOP: Homecoming Parade
■ Alf and Deby in Norway



EMPLOYEE AWARDS CELEBRATION

One Mission. Many Roles. One Impact.

On Sunday, March 1, 2026, the Employee Awards Celebration took place in the Howard Performing Arts Center.

Hosts Anthony Bosman, chair and associate professor in the Department of Mathematics, and Simona Mills-Pitcher, assistant chaplain in the Center for Faith Engagement, served as “secret agents” on a mission to recognize the dedication, achievements and impact of Andrews faculty and staff.

University employees were honored for their years of service as well as excellence in faith engagement, wellness, research and creative scholarship, teaching, and service.

During closing remarks, President John Wesley Taylor V

said, “Andrews University is a place of light because of so many shining lights all across our campus and beyond. ... Here at Andrews the lights that shine are lights of commitment, lights of excellence, but most of all they are lights because they reflect His light. And so thank you—thank you for letting Jesus shine through each of you. We are grateful.”

Artur Stele, chair of the Andrews University Board of Trustees, thanked Andrews employees for their dedicated service and ended the program with a prayer of blessing.

For written tributes and images for all award recipients, visit andrews.edu/services/hr/employeeawards.

FROM TOP: Simona Mills-Pitcher
■ Anthony Bosman ■ Artur Stele
■ John Wesley Taylor V



YEARS OF SERVICE

One

5

L-R: Stacie L. Hatfield, Rebekah Gordan
Not Pictured: Marcus Carter, Kylene Cave, Gerson De Leon, Fitzroy Duncan, Eliezer Fajardo, Maria Silvestre, Letrisha Stallard, Jess Swackhamer, Rhonda Tomenko

10

Back Row, L-R: Elizabeth B. Muhlenbeck, Gina Meekma, Davide Sciarabba, Bordes Henry Saturné, L. Scottie Baker
Front Row, L-R: Evelyn Savory, Tamara N. Karr, Maxine Umana, Monica Desir
Not Pictured: Erica Bradfield, Janine Carlos, Sherri T. Isaak, Sozina Katuli, Millie Mfune, Samantha Mills, Melissa Poua, Trisha Robertson, Tammy Shilling, Ademir D. Soares, Launa P. Thompson, Ivan Sierra-Rivera, Cedric E. Vine

25

L-R: Rodrick D. Snow, Trevor E. O'Reggio, Deborah M. Andvik, June A. Grzybowski, S. Joseph Kidder
Not Pictured: Vida J. Giddings, Joon Hyuk Kang

30

L-R: Josip M. Horonic, Anna T. Piskozub, Lester D. Birney, Katherine Koudele, Rhonda J. Peak
Not Pictured: Bryan T. Clayton, Timothy P. Trine

AWARDS & RECOGNITION



Faith Engagement Awards (from top, L-R): Sharon Moore, Rogelio Paquini, Mike Harrington, posthumously, accepted by (L-R) Thomas G. Straman, Regina Mack, Allen Wellborn, Kevin Wein, Timothy Straman



Wellness Champion Award: Kimberly W. Coleman-Ferreira



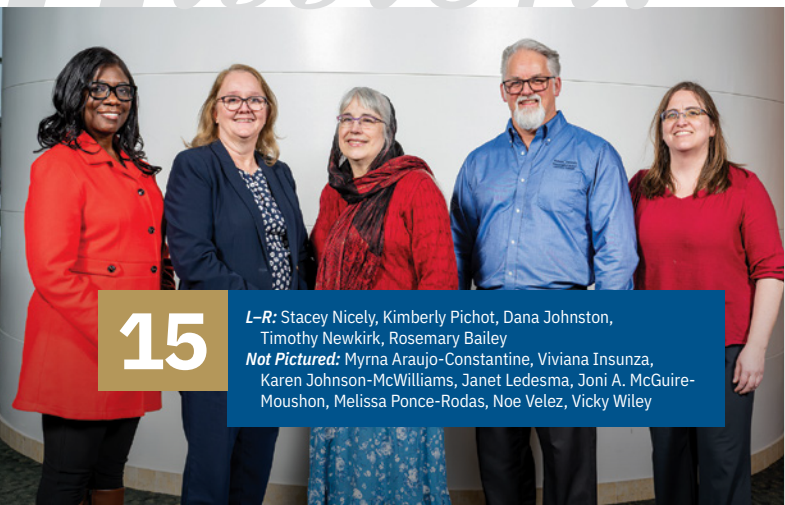
Siegfried H. Horn Excellence in Research & Creative Scholarship Awards (left and right) and Daniel A. Augsburg Excellence in Teaching Award (center) (L-R):

Ingrid A. Slikkers, Nadia E. Nosworthy, Denis Kaiser



Mission.

EMPLOYEE AWARDS CELEBRATION



15

L-R: Stacey Nicely, Kimberly Pichot, Dana Johnston, Timothy Newkirk, Rosemary Bailey
Not Pictured: Myrna Araujo-Constantine, Viviana Insunza, Karen Johnson-McWilliams, Janet Ledesma, Joni A. McGuire-Moushon, Melissa Ponce-Rodas, Noe Velez, Vicky Wiley



20

Back Row, L-R: Glenn Meekma, Graciela Gaytan, Hyun J. Kwon, Richard Wright
Front Row, L-R: Felipe Tan, Wilfredo Diaz, Aimee Vitangcol-Regoso
Not Pictured: Camille Clayton, Stephanie Elkins-Bates, Randall Lonto, Armand G. Poblete



35

L-R: Thomas G. Straman, Ronald A. Knott
Not Pictured: John J. Markovic, Socorro C. Terrero



40

L-R: Frances M. Faehner, Randall W. Younker, Lorena L. Bidwell



45

Rhonda G. Root

Many Roles.



Adjunct Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award:
 Elizabeth A. Helm



Staff Excellence in Service Awards (L-R):
 Janine K. Carlos, Rachel A. Keele, Raquel Illingworth

Congratulations to the runners-up in the Excellence in Service category: Stacey Nicely, Jahaira Silie, Sharyn Smoot, Rodrick Snow, Noe Velez and Kelly Youngberg



J.N. Andrews Service Award: Ana Flores

One Impact.

A photograph of an older man with white hair and a beard, wearing a black tuxedo with a bow tie. He is shown in profile, facing right, with his mouth open as if singing. His arms are outstretched, with his hands open and palms facing up. He is standing in front of a dark, textured wall. A large, circular, light-colored object, possibly a clock or a large plate, is visible behind him. A music stand with sheet music is positioned to his right. The overall lighting is dramatic, with the man's face and hands highlighted.

how
can I
keep
from
singing



From April 24–25, 2026, over 350 Andrews University alumni returned to campus for a special reunion weekend honoring Stephen Zork, director of choral studies, as he prepared to retire after nearly 35 years of dedicated service.

“Singing together is a natural, convictional, cathartic, vulnerable and unifying enterprise that creates blessed and meaningful bonds,” says Stephen. “And it produces greater dividends than would otherwise result. This was true of my experience each year in teaching and conducting choirs. And it culminated in the most precious and meaningful of ways when my former students/singers planned and administered the most amazing gift for my retirement—in returning to sing once again, together with each other and with me.”

STEPHEN’S ENJOYMENT

of singing with friends and improvising harmonies began as a child. He recalls that in sixth grade, as a student at Andrews Elementary School, he and his classmates made the trek across campus to what is now Hamel Hall. It was Stephen’s first-ever choir festival.

“I’ll never forget the pleasure I experienced,” he says. “I loved the disciplined approach of conductor Bjorn Keyn of the Andrews music department and how he inspired us to sing with intentionality and meaning. That experience influenced my approach to music-making for the rest of my life.”

Stephen completed his secondary education at Helderberg College Academy, South Africa, and also advanced through level 8 at the Royal Academy of Music, Zimbabwe.

He continued formal music studies in the United States, where he earned a Bachelor of Music Education from Atlantic Union College. It was there that Stephen and his wife Susan met, fittingly, as first-year music theory students and choir members.

Stephen went on to complete a Master of Music in choral conducting from Pacific Lutheran University.

STEPHEN BEGAN HIS

professional career in 1977, first teaching at Maplewood Academy and later at Auburn Adventist Academy, Shenandoah Valley Academy and Walla Walla College (now University). After two years at Walla Walla, he received a call to join the Department of Music at Andrews University in 1991.

It was when Stephen returned to Andrews as the director of choirs that he more deeply understood the value of his passion for choral pedagogy. “I began developing and codifying teaching methods that monitored the balance between goal-oriented and

method-oriented teaching, with the goal of finding satisfaction in both approaches,” he says.

Stephen started as an assistant professor and eventually attained full professor status. In 1996, he took on additional responsibilities as director of choral studies, overseeing the Master of Music degree in choral conducting. For the majority of his years in the Department of Music, he maintained a voice studio, and throughout his tenure he taught orchestration, composition, singer’s diction, conducting, methods courses in vocal pedagogy, choral pedagogy and choral literature, and the University’s general education class Enjoyment of Music. In his last year at Andrews, he also served as visiting professor and director of the Notre Dame Chorale at the University of Notre Dame.

Stephen’s accomplishments in performance, scholarship and education were recognized with several honors, including the Siegfried H. Horn Excellence in Research & Creative Scholarship Award and the Teacher of the Year Award from Andrews University as well as multiple awards from the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA).

Naturally, a significant part of Stephen’s time involved performances with the Andrews choirs—regular concerts on campus, special selections for church services, and tours locally, nationally and internationally.

He led the University Singers, the select choir from the Department of Music, at four ACDA conferences and on highly acclaimed concert tours throughout England, Scotland, Iceland, Norway, Brazil, Zimbabwe, Chile, The Bahamas, Bermuda and Puerto Rico. Under Stephen’s direction, the Singers performed with noted musical artists and ensembles such as Bobby McFerrin and The King’s Singers. They



1,978

Pieces listed in programs
during tenure from
1991–2026

FROM TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Reunion
choir rehearsal on Friday ■ Stephen
and Susan Zork with alumni and
students ■ Reunion choir at PMC

Top 5 composers/origins:

- 97 Traditional African
American Spiritual
- 55 Johann
Sebastian Bach
- 45 John
Rutter
- 40 Z. Randall
Stroope
- 38 Traditional
South African

Most programmed hymn:

*“Precious Lord,
Take My Hand”*

58

Master’s students
mentored in choral
conducting

Modeled Christ’s love
and shared faith with:

7,000+ students

participated in frequent choral collaborations with the Andrews University Symphony Orchestra and in numerous master classes. The Singers also recorded seven albums, some of which included early Seventh-day Adventist hymns.

Stephen continually looked forward to new experiences and interactions. “The next adventure, the next musical challenge, the next student and their unique gifts and potentiality ... these are the things that have always motivated me.”

He shares, “I believe pedagogy is at the core of achieving transformative and artistic expression—inspiring people to use the skills and technical tools they innately possess to help them experience accomplishment and artistry that transcends individuality for the collaborative common good.”

IT IS FITTING THAT

Stephen’s favorite part about working at Andrews was, first and foremost, the students—their talents, curiosity, intellect, dedication, and desire to learn and excel.

He says, “So many students possessed such devotion and sacrificed so much for the sake of genuine learning and advancing their education.”

Those students have gone on to make an impact around the world. Some teach music and direct choirs in the largest high schools in the United States and abroad. Others have gone on to earn doctoral degrees and teach in colleges and universities, including Pacific Union College, Southwestern Adventist University, Washington Adventist University, and international institutions in the Philippines, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Colombia and Egypt.

Students remember Stephen and their choral experience as a favorite part of Andrews, too. When the opportunity came to celebrate Stephen over the reunion weekend in April, they responded enthusiastically, traveling long distances to attend.

In preparation for the performances, returning alumni submitted choral music that they hoped to sing once again.

The long initial list was narrowed down by a student-led planning committee.

Stephen then had to select 12 pieces from that list for the concert on Friday evening and the service in Pioneer Memorial Church (PMC) the next morning. “It was a difficult task,” he recalls, “as every song was a marvelous piece with many ‘votes’ and beautiful melodies and precious messages. My wife, Susan, and I spent a day discussing, reviewing, doing quite a bit of crying and then determining which songs would be included.”

The weekend’s full choir consisted of approximately 300 combined alumni and current students. On Friday evening, Stephen was honored by the Department of Music for his leadership and service. He was also surprised with the performance of an original choral piece, “When God Sings,” commissioned by his graduate and conducting students and composed by one of Stephen’s former students, James Lee III. On Sabbath morning, PMC recognized Stephen and Susan’s



ministry partnership with a special presentation, as well.

“It was so meaningful to be given the mantle of leadership for 24 hours,” says Stephen, “and to be regarded as the first amongst equals who gathered together in like-minded expectation, intentionality, purpose, musicality, artistry and vulnerability.”

He adds, “The unexpected and overwhelming expression of love and affection people had for each other and expressed for me and my wife was deeply humbling and something we will cherish for the rest of our lives.”

AS HE RETIRES, STEPHEN WILL MISS the people at Andrews—both his colleagues across campus and especially, of course, his students.

“I will miss teaching the students and hearing them sing every day,” he reflects. “I will miss working toward thoughtful performances that highlight the progress of the student’s learning, their sound and their interpretation that give opportunity to bless and educate the audiences, too. I will miss the choirs telling the love of Jesus as it relates to His impact on the human race and the world.”

Andrews stood out to Stephen because of the diversity of cultures and the opportunities to make a greater

impact for God’s Kingdom. He says, “Andrews has been a wonderful place to work and bring up our family. I learned to be thankful for what God gives you and allows you to do; to look for and help develop the potential in all people.”

In retirement, Stephen plans to maintain his connection to music through a light schedule of guest-conducting workshops, choral clinics and choir festivals. He and Susan will remain living in Eau Claire, Michigan, and will take time to travel to see their children and grandchildren. They also will make an extended visit to Stephen’s place of birth in Cape Town, South Africa, along with visits to Mozambique and Zimbabwe. They look forward to more camping, hiking and enjoying a simple, leisurely pace of life.

STEPHEN’S LEGACY WILL CONTINUE on at Andrews University. To honor him and the impact he has made on thousands of lives, Andrews has created the Stephen Zork Endowed Chair of Choral Music with the goal of securing transformative music education for future generations. \$1.56 million of the \$2 million goal has been raised toward establishing a permanent position for a choral conductor and faculty member in the Department of Music.

Charles Reid, associate professor of music, affirms, “Stephen Zork has fostered numerous leaders that serve throughout the world in Adventist academies and congregations. Choral music is a meeting point, but the welcoming hospitality and the trusting ear of the Zorks has been a cherished cornerstone for the Andrews student body.”

The Stephen Zork Endowed Chair of Choral Music will be the first permanent chair in the music department. “It will guarantee that there is always someone that is the choral conductor here. It solidifies the program,” shares Max Keller, chair of the Department of Music. “It is a huge statement for the University to put that kind of effort into the choral program. For it to be named after Stephen Zork—it’s a huge legacy honor for him. His impact is going to be felt for as long as this institution is here.”

For Stephen, the establishment of an endowed chair is deeply meaningful and an affirmation of Andrews’ commitment

In Stephen’s Words

It is easy, in one sense, to claim one’s fundamental hope in Jesus—to plant it squarely at the center of your life and surely as the motivating direction of one’s career within the church and specifically through teaching at an Adventist institution. And it is accurate.

But, if I were truly honest, I would admit that this is a complex reality that teeters between my own personal growth and faith and the intended and overt task of openly sharing and proclaiming the gospel, in all its varying manifestations, to students and through students to the world in which we live.

And this human believer’s dilemma and reality is understood in three fundamental, biblical concepts for me—firstly, my own shortcomings and unworthiness, yet Jesus’ willing and sufficient grace freely applied toward me: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9, NIV). These words have always undergirded my faith and allowed me to dare to teach at any Christian institution.

Secondly is the biblical concept of the universal priesthood of all believers. “You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5, NIV). Clearly, we are all called to the work of Jesus.

And thirdly, God’s faithfulness to see it through; even in me. “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13, NKJV). This is my spiritual foundation, personally and professionally, and how I have always approached my career in teaching.

to the longevity of the Department of Music and its programs. “Music education is interdisciplinary and cross-generational,” he says. “And it brings contrasting cultures, social groups and emotional temperaments together in an environment where they can be secure while experiencing the art of vulnerability through disciplined expression.”

He adds, “I believe Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions, especially Andrews University, must be at the forefront of this discipline. The mission of Jesus Christ must continue to be eloquently proclaimed through choral music education from the elementary to the post-graduate levels.”

Visit andrews.edu/give/zork for more information on the Stephen Zork Endowed Chair of Choral Music.



Project RENEW

*Trauma training on the border
of Thailand and Myanmar*

by Andrew Francis

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY'S INTERNATIONAL Center for Trauma Education & Care, which is run by the University's School of Social Work, extends its trauma training and education services to professionals, churches, communities and families across the globe. Most recently, an Andrews professor and student delivered an in-person training, titled Project RENEW, to 77 Seventh-day Adventist pastors and teachers on the border of Thailand and Myanmar from March 15–18.

Julia O'Carey, Master of Social Work student, was part of the team that provided the trauma awareness training. O'Carey, who graduated from Andrews in 1997 and 2003 with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and master's degree in education, respectively, started her social work studies after decid-

“The basic approach was to help them understand what the impact of trauma is on their brains and their bodies and what can be done about it.”

FROM TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Julia O'Carey with program participants ■ Charity Garcia and Julia O'Carey present a certificate of completion to Jasmine Lin ■ Julia O'Carey with local students from Sunshine Orchard in Thailand

ing to pivot toward focusing on clinical counseling for children and adolescents. Through personal experience living in Thailand for nearly 10 years, as well as her work with ASAP Ministries in Berrien Springs, Michigan, O'Carey recognized that many of the teachers and pastors in Southeast Asia could benefit from the center's programs.

“I grew up in Thailand and my parents worked in refugee camps,” she explains. “So I observed a lot of trauma and when I came back to the U.S. in high school, my heart was still with the people there.”

O'Carey, with help from Ingrid Slikkers, executive director of the International Center for Trauma Education & Care, and Charity Garcia, director of K-12 initiatives for the center and associate professor of curriculum and instruction in the School of Education, was able to launch a pilot program



centered on bringing culturally sensitive care to those living near the Thailand-Myanmar border. To prepare for the training, O'Carey designed and developed workbooks and other materials before field testing them in Thailand in December 2025.

“I was able to really encourage one of the teachers and spend some quality time with her,” O'Carey shares of her field-testing experience. “I wish I could have done much more because there's so much need there.”

Many in the region have been affected by the Myanmar civil war that has been ongoing since 1948, occasionally involving Thailand and other nations. This led to participants attending the training in March from a variety of countries, including Myanmar, some having to travel several days to the event location.

“The basic approach was to help them understand what the impact of trauma is on their brains and their bodies and what can be done about it,” says Garcia, who accompanied O'Carey in Thailand. “We did that by doing an activity called the ‘Brain Architecture’ game with them, where they literally used pipe cleaners and straws to build a brain and see the impact of positive, toxic and tolerable stress on brain development.”

They also led attendees through activities focused on nature and spirituality that helped develop and inform both “trauma awareness and trauma responsiveness,” as Garcia puts it. The Stevens Foundation contributed the majority of the funds needed for the services, which included materials for the entire program as well as Week of Prayer resources for participants to use moving forward.



The curriculum included what O'Carey describes as “culturally appropriate” and Bible-based materials for understanding trauma, its impacts specific to cultural context, and responses. The instructors discussed the types of traumas participants face as they perform their ministries in the church and in the classroom. Special prayer sessions were also integral to the program.

The International Center for Trauma Education & Care team hopes this pilot program can be developed further and provide even more robust training and care for those in other developing nations and countries impacted by war.

“It was, honestly, one of the most rewarding experiences of my life, because to have this dream and then see how God opened the doors and how supportive the International Center for Trauma Education & Care was to do this was a mighty blessing,” says O'Carey. “I really hope to stay involved with the center. I'd be happy to help facilitate more trainings and adapt this curriculum or empower others to do it.”

Regional Events

FROM ORLANDO, FLORIDA, AND Chattanooga, Tennessee, to Dallas, Texas, Loma Linda, California, and Asheville, North Carolina, this spring, regional events gave us the opportunity to reconnect with alumni and friends across the country. Some gatherings marked our annual return to a community, while we visited others for the first time.

Members of the University Advancement team welcomed alumni and friends to the regional events and shared conversation and fellowship. One of the highlights of each event was having Andrews University President John Wesley Taylor V attend and share campus updates. Alumni appreciated the opportunity to learn about what was happening at Andrews and ask questions.

As alumni enjoyed a meal together, a slideshow featuring photos from the past year highlighted memorable moments on campus. Each event concluded with a fun

trivia game based on those photos, giving alumni the opportunity to test their Andrews knowledge and win prizes. Another favorite tradition was recognizing the youngest, or most recent, Andrews graduate in attendance with a special prize.

The gatherings were warmly received, and we were grateful for the many conversations shared throughout the spring. Dallas was especially encouraging, with a strong turnout of young alumni joining graduates from across generations. Throughout the events, alumni also shared their favorite Andrews memories and words of encouragement for today's students. Many of those memories and messages were later posted on the Office of Alumni Services' social media.

Thank you to everyone who joined us this spring. We look forward to seeing more alumni and friends at future regional events.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit andrews.edu/alumni/events to access up-to-date information and to register for future regional events. To be sure you are connected to Andrews and can receive direct invitations, please update your contact information by emailing alumni@andrews.edu or calling the Office of Alumni Services at 269-471-3591.

Who are alumni?

If you've graduated, attended, worked or taught at Andrews University, we consider you alumni! And if you're a parent or a potential student considering Andrews, you're invited to be our honored guest.



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CHATTANOOGA



DALLAS





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Getting involved is a great way to make a difference!



José Rodolfo Thomas-Richards (BA '66) died on June 14, 2026. He was born July 28, 1941, in Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela.

He was a graduate of Caribbean Union College, Kingsway College, Andrews University and Kansas City University, where he graduated in 1970 with a degree in osteopathic medicine. He completed an orthopaedic residency at the University of Missouri—Kansas City School of Medicine in 1977 and a fellowship in hand surgery at St. Vincent's Hospital, Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1978. He is also a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

José was a solo practitioner in Kansas City, Missouri, from 1978 to 1994 and continued his solo practice in Florida until retiring from practice in 2012. He was chief of the Department of Surgery at Highlands Regional Medical Center, Sebring, Florida, from 2005 to 2008.

In 2003, Colonel José R. Thomas-Richards received the Bronze Star for his military activities while serving as an active-duty commander of the 948th Forward Surgical Team in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Throughout his lifetime, he received numerous other honors, including a presidential recognition/citation from President George W. Bush; the Legion of Merit (eighth medal below the Medal of Honor); and letters of appreciation for his military service from President Barack Obama.

Of José's 26 years of military service, 24 years were spent in the position of commander and the last two years as senior advisor to the United States Army Reserve Medical Corps. He retired from the Army in 2008.

José returned home to the Kansas City area in 2025 after residing in Jupiter, Florida, for 31 years, where he was an active member of the Jupiter Seventh-day Adventist Church.

He is survived by his wife of 33 years, Suzanne Irene Thomas, son, José Romero Marciano Thomas (Paola), and grandsons Gabriel and Nathaniel; son, Raoul Rodolfo Thomas (Nicole), and former wife, Lynette Hinds-Thomas; and sister, Henrietta Brumble (Anthony); in addition to loving nieces, nephews, friends, colleagues and military service members within the U.S., Trinidad and Venezuela.

Kenneth LeRoy Franz (att., former faculty), 89, of Berrien Springs, Michigan, passed away Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at Corewell Health Lakeland Hospital in St. Joseph.

Kenneth was born on Oct. 4, 1936, in Ellendale, North Dakota, to Bennie and Irene (Sprouse) Franz. He earned his bachelor's degree from Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, and later received his master's degree from the University of Michigan.

On July 26, 1959, he married Norma Arvidson in Madison, South Dakota. Kenneth dedicated his career to education, serving as a mathematics professor at Andrews University, where he was known for his patience and commitment to helping students understand and appreciate mathematics. In addition to teaching, he was a skilled mason who worked extensively with stone, brick and concrete.

Kenneth enjoyed tending his vegetable garden, photographing the world around him, reading and continually expanding his knowledge. He had a lifelong fascination with history and could often be

found watching documentaries or immersed in a good book. He also enjoyed spending time outdoors, especially during the summertime, including keeping a watchful eye on the gophers around his property.

Kenneth was preceded in death by his parents; son, Dean Franz; brother, Timothy Franz; and sister, JoAnn Hall.

Kenneth is survived by his wife, Norma Franz; daughter, Julene Jackson; grandsons, Mason Bortz and **Derek** (March '14) (Christina) **Franz**; great-grandsons, Owen and Alex; brother, Jim (Robyn) Franz; sister, Lois Smith; and daughter-in-law, Debe Franz.



Ione Markel Richardson (BS '57), 95, died on April 2, 2026, in College Place, Washington, adored by her family.

Ione was born March 30, 1931, in Elizabethville, Pennsylvania, to Gideon and Erlena (Weaver) Markel. As a teenager, she converted to the Seventh-day Adventist Church and graduated from Shenandoah Valley Academy, Virginia, in 1948. She taught elementary grades fall, winter and spring, in one-room schools, to earn money to attend summer school at Emmanuel Missionary College in Michigan, where she earned a BS in elementary education in 1957.

She met **Gwynne Richardson** (MA '65) from California, attending Potomac University in Maryland, who became the love of her life and ministry partner on May 31, 1959. For 11 years, the Richardsons were Adventist teachers at the elementary-secondary level across the United States. In 1970, they

transitioned into pastoring as a couple in 15 congregations over 46 years in the Oregon Conference, where she was also a women's ministry assistant director and relief chaplain at Adventist Health Portland in the 1980s and 1990s.

Ione was preceded in death by her husband; parents; brother, Paul; and sister, Grace.

Ione is survived by her son, Paul (Teri), and daughter, Kari (Eric) Olson in Walla Walla, Washington, and grandchildren, David in California and Kristen in Australia.



Jennifer (Christian) Newton (AS '79, BS '82), wife of **Bradford Newton** (BA '80, MDiv '83, DMin '95) for 44 years, passed away suddenly on March 18, 2026.

After graduating from Andrews University with a Bachelor of Science and earning an MBA in project management from Jones International University, Jennifer served in various roles as an assistant vice president and regional audit manager for General Motors Commercial Finance, a Certified Faith-based Meeting Professional, and a self-employed consultant and speaker at Christian financial seminars.

She most recently and faithfully served as the Pacific Union Conference associate ministerial secretary, supporting pastoral spouses and families through event planning.

Jennifer came from generations of faithful Seventh-day Adventists. Her grandfather, Percy Christian, and her father, John Christian, passionately built a legacy of racial equality across Adventist institutions. Jennifer established the Percy & John

Christian Civil Rights Conference Center in their names to further strengthen Adventist education.

She is survived by her husband, Bradford Newton; daughter, Amanda Newton; son, Tyler Newton; daughter-in-law, Kristin Blalock Newton; granddaughters, Macy and Chloe Newton; and mother, Shirley Christian.



Louis Eugene Wildman (BA '60) died Dec. 21, 2025, in Salem, Oregon, at the age of 88 years and nine months.

He was born March 6, 1937, in Madison, Wisconsin, the fifth of seven children born to Grace and Durward Wildman Sr.

Lou attended Emmanuel Missionary College and one year at Southern Missionary College. He earned a BA in theology and education in 1960 and was among the first students to graduate from Andrews University.

At age 26, Lou became principal of a junior academy in West Virginia. A year later, he transitioned to a boys' dean position at Maplewood Academy. The following summer he and his bride Linda Lair joined an evangelistic team in Texas. In the fall, he became principal of Grand Junction Junior Academy.

Lou studied orthotics and prostheses and was hired by the University of Washington, where he taught orthotics and prostheses for two years. He then became head of the Orthotics and Prostheses Research Department at the University of Chicago. He also became conductor of the Greater Chicago Adventist Choir. He and Linda divorced during that time.

After studying medicine in

Mexico and the Dominican Republic, Lou moved to Glenwood, California, where he worked as a junior doctor and met and married Margaret Macia. While preparing to write his Medical Board Exams, he suffered a heart attack and underwent open-heart surgery at age 41. He moved to Idyllwild, California, and continued working as a junior doctor. He and Margaret divorced shortly after.

Lou and his friend **Dr. David Bee** (BA '61) entered the real estate business together in Los Angeles, California, and Salem, Oregon. Lou managed their apartment complex and became owner/operator of Tailgator Trailers in Hillsdale, Oregon.

Lou and a friend formed the Salem Adventist Men's Chorus, which grew into the Oregon Adventist Men's Chorus. Lou was the artistic director for 20 years.

On Jan. 24, 2016, Lou and Reinette Boshoff were married in Portland, Oregon.

Lou is survived by his two younger siblings, **Janet Schlunt** (BS '62) and **Gordon Wildman** (BMus '72); wife, Reinette; and stepson, **Kris de Bruin** (MDiv '20).



Jeff Cinquemani (BA '80), 67, passed away on May 27, 2025, after bravely battling cancer. Jeff served as a youth pastor and senior pastor in the Lake Union Conference as well as chaplain at AdventHealth University, family life pastor at Forest Lake Church, and associate pastor at WholeLife (formerly Florida Hospital) Church in the Florida Conference. Jeff was also a Licensed Mental Health Counselor.

Jeff was an avid sports enthusiast, especially enjoying waterskiing, racquetball, gymnastics and football. He was a lover of travel, discovering new foods and the Green Bay Packers. His favorite pastime, however, was being with family and creating "Papa" adventures for his grandchildren.

Jeff is survived by his wife, Tami (Zelms); daughter, Brittny Woods; son, **JT Cinquemani** (BSA '13, MArch '13); son-in-law, **Joshua Woods** (MDiv '11); and daughter-in-law, Alyssa (Cotter) Cinquemani. Jeff's greatest joy was his grandchildren: Adelyn and Eden Woods and Nora and Leo Cinquemani.

Jeff was blessed with the love of his sisters and brothers-in-law: **Barbara** (BSD '79) (**John** (MDiv '84, DMin '98)) **Kurlinski**, **Bonnie** (BS '81) (**Greg** (BA '81, MDiv '87)) **Schaller** and Theresa Clark.

Many other family and friends were also very dear to Jeff. It was the love of so many that helped Jeff and Tami navigate the fragility of life during this time.



Gary Earnest Edwards (BA '69) died May 17, 2025. He was born Sept. 21, 1947, in Monroe, Michigan, to Earnest and Margaret Edwards.

A first-generation college student, Gary graduated from Andrews University with a BA in theology in 1969. He obtained an MA from Yale and a JD from Georgetown, with additional graduate work at Princeton and Johns Hopkins.

A true visionary, he pioneered the case for business ethics at the Ethics Resource Center (ERC) in Washington,

D.C., in the 1980s and 1990s. Under Gary's leadership, the ERC helped top defense firms, corporations and governments develop robust ethics programs. His weekly radio broadcast "Ethics at Work" explored themes ranging from character education to public trust and corporate leadership.

Later, he taught ethics at American University and University of Maryland. He cared deeply about the United States and people's collective and individual responsibility to make a difference.

Married from 1983–2003 to Karen Kosiba Edwards, and in a more recent partnership with Lisa Ambrose, he was a devoted father who delighted in helping his daughters develop their respective passions and talents. Their childhood was enhanced by the extensive collection of pets Gary acquired, from gerbils, cats and dogs to fancy fish and geckos. Whether springing Rachel from school to attend a Red Hot Chili Peppers concert in another state or editing Natalie's college term papers, he kept current with their interests and showed up at every important event.

A voracious reader, Gary was never without a copy of T.S. Eliot's "Four Quartets." He was a gifted writer, persuasive speaker, and poetry, music and film lover. His friends and family remember him as a deep thinker with a lightning-quick sense of humor and can only try to re-create his Hunan chicken and lemon pasta.

A Celebration of Life was held at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church in Bethesda, Maryland, on Monday, June 9, 2025.

Gary is survived by his daughters, Rachel Edwards and Natalie (Orfeo) Cellura, both of New York City; sister, Peggy (David) Vaughn; nephew, David Vaughn; niece, Missie Myers; and their children.

Musical pursuits

Mailyn Iribar Corpas, BMus '26

by Andrew Francis

MAILYN IRIBAR CORPAS BEGAN HER BACHELOR'S DEGREE in music performance in the fall of 2022 and completed her studies in spring 2026. Leaving her native Cuba to come to Berrien Springs, she quickly established herself as a talented performer and pupil. She shares that the collaboration and support she received from the Department of Music helped her grow academically and as a performer.

"I'm so grateful for everything that I learned and the support that I got from all the professors," Iribar Corpas says. "I got opportunities to play with the orchestra three times while being at Andrews and that was a highlight for me because you don't get to play a lot with the orchestra during your bachelor's."

These opportunities encouraged Iribar Corpas to participate in the Musicians Club of Women Instrumental Competition on March 7 in Chicago, Illinois, where she

received the first prize Nerenberg Award and Farwell Trust Award in the Senior Instrumental Division. She also applied for the Ruthmere Museum's inaugural string competition.

"I actually applied to the Ruthmere competition without having any expectations," she says. "You do this kind of stuff to try to put yourself out there and try to push yourself to grow. ... It helped and I'm so grateful." Iribar Corpas went on to win the Ruthmere competition and gave a solo concert performance on April 23 at the museum.

Along with these important competitions, Iribar Corpas faced a busy final semester, balancing a full class load, research assignment and several performances. On April 10, she presented her senior recital, titled "Reflections." During the concert, she played works by composers Richard Strauss, Paul Schoenfield, Jessie Montgomery, Amy Beach and more. The evening also featured the first movement of late Andrews Professor Blythe Owen's violin sonata, which Iribar Corpas helped research.

In her work on Owen's sonata, Iribar Corpas worked with Marianne Kordas, associate professor and director of the Music Materials Center, who has been studying the composer's letters and documents for the past decade. Owen taught, composed and performed throughout the last half of the 20th century, leaving an indelible mark on the Andrews University Department of Music and its students. The sonata was only recently rediscovered and had not been played since the composer's death in 2000.

"You do this kind of stuff to try to put yourself out there and try to push yourself to grow. ... It helped and I'm so grateful."

Two annual scholarships have been established in Owen's memory. These help students like Iribar Corpas—whose enrollment largely relied on scholarships—giving them the opportunity to attend Andrews University and make similar impacts through their music.

Building on her undergraduate experiences at Andrews, Iribar Corpas plans to continue pursuing music academically and professionally by joining DePaul University's graduate music program. She later hopes to pursue orchestral and solo performance and competition opportunities.



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