Headlines

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May 06, 2015 | Silver Spring, Maryland, USA | ANN Staff

Two Seventh-day Adventist physicians were awarded the denomination’s Health Ministries Medal of Distinction for their decades of extraordinary service to the Church and in the communities they have served.
Dr. E. Albert Reece, distinguished professor and dean of the University of Maryland School of Medicine, and Dr. Harold Lowell Meister, Jr., were awarded during Spring Meeting, an annual meeting of executive officers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church last month.

Reece, dean of Maryland’s School of Medicine, serves as a professor at the university’s departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Medicine, and Biochemistry & Molecular Biology. He is also member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences.

In October 2014, Reece was appointed as an honorary associate Health Ministries director for the Seventh-day Adventist world church. In his role as honorary associate director, he consults for the department on chronic diseases. The key, he said, is to focus on breaking the chain of inter-generational rates of obesity and diabetes among mothers and their children.

A native of Jamaica, Reece has had an impressive academic career in research, teaching and administration. He received postgraduate training at Columbia University and Yale University. At his home church, he enjoys participating in Sabbath School, and co-chairing the health ministries outreach.

Dr. Harold Lowell Meister, Jr. is a retired physician with decades of optometry expertise.

In 1959, Meister and his wife, Dellene, moved to Nowata Oklahoma, where he started a practice that served the community for 54 years. He was also a member of the Nowata Chamber of Commerce, where he served as president for one year. He also served the Nowata community as a member of the Nowata School Board.

For more than 50 years, Meister served the denomination through various roles, including his time on the Oklahoma Conference Committee and Southwestern Union Conference Committee.

Meister also served as the assistant director of visual affairs of the Health Ministries Department for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As Assistant Director of Visual Affairs, he visited eye clinics in 6 African countries where he acted as an advisor to eye care professionals who operated the facilities.

Meister attended Southern Missionary College near Chattanooga Tennessee. He also attended Southern College of Optometry in Memphis Tennessee where he graduated with a bachelor’s degree in optical science and a doctor of optometry.

Both of the honorees were surprised to be presented with the award. Their highest service and vigorous energy remains dedicated to the God they love, and to the Church they cherish.

Former leader of the Adventist Church in South America dies at 75
Leader remembered for having a "clear focus on mission and appreciation of people"

May 05, 2015 | Brasilia, Brazil | Felipe Lemos, ASN and ANN Staff

Ruy Nagel, former president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South America, died on May 1 at the age of 75, in Porto-Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

Nagel was born September 27, 1939 in the southern city of Jaguari, Brazil and was son to Arthur and Ida Heinrich Nagel. He was married on December 19, 1961 to Evelin, a former women’s ministries director for the South American Division. The couple did not have any children.

Nagel graduated in 1961 from the Cruzeiro do Sul Adventist Institute (IACS), located in Taquara, in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, and studied Theology in the former Adventist Institute of Ensino (IAE). He began his ministry in 1962 as a district pastor in the territory now known as South Rio Grande Conference. He was ordained to the ministry on January 18, 1967.

Nagel worked mainly as a treasurer in the South Rio Grande Conference (Rio Grande do Sul), Central Brazil Conference (Goiás and DF), North Brazil Union, Silvestre Adventist Hospital (Rio de Janeiro) and, in June of 1980, he became the Treasurer of the South American Division, headquartered in Brasilia, Brazil.

Between 1980 and 1995 he served in the area of treasurer of the church in South America. In August 1995 he was elected President of the South American Division. He was followed in service by the current president of the Division, pastor Erton Köhler, who assumed the role in 2006.

Retired pastor Marino de Oliveira, a former treasurer for the South American Division, commented that Nagel was a dedicated leader and that he lived intensely for the administration of the Adventist Church. "He had a very clear focus on mission and appreciation of people. Rather, the right people in the right places," he remembered.

The current treasurer of the South American Division, pastor Marlon Lopes, affirmed that Nagel was a great counselor, a loyal person and led people with precision. Lopes remembered how Nagel led the Church during a period of great economic instability in the South American Division and how despite this, the denomination continued satisfactory growth during that period. Before the stabilization of currency in 1994, Brazil experienced intense price inflation and financial mishandling, "Pastor Nagel was not afraid of making even unpopular decisions to keep the Church on solid ground," highlighted the treasurer.

Division Vice President Almir Marroni, who also worked with Nagel for many years, added that the former president was firm in his convictions, but at the same time, demonstrated a fraternal spirit.

Pastor Erton Köhler, who replaced Nagel as president said, "there are many memories that remain. This is why I'm sure that even as he is resting in the Lord, his works and life example will remain alive and influence those who continue with the mission. He completed faithfully and worthy the mission that he received from the Lord. Today I have the privilege of building on the
foundation that he left and the vision of seriousness and commitment for mission that he so persistently reinforced. His work was so strong that it will continue long beyond his days."

Additional reporting from Andréia Silva.