Inter-America: Largest Pathfinder Camporee concludes; next camporee announced

Posted: 25 Apr 2011 09:00 PM PDT

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Inter-America concluded its 3rd Pathfinder Camporee on a high note during a huge closing ceremony Saturday night. The camporee proved to be the largest territory-wide youth event in the history of the Inter-American Div
The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Inter-America concluded its 3rd Pathfinder Camporee on a high note during a huge closing ceremony Saturday night. The camporee proved to be the largest territory-wide youth event in the history of the Inter-American Division (IAD), as more than 20,000 Pathfinders, leaders and chaperones from all 21 regions of the church participated in the five-day event.

The camporee took place in the Ciudad Deportiva in Mexico City and featured many activities such as community outreach projects, marches, relay races, swim meets, bike races, honor classes, musical presentations, a bible bowl competition, and more. The climax of each evening program saw one drama performance in a five-part series on the biblical King David. The plays paralleled the theme of the camporee, which was Conquering Giants.

Saturday night's three-hour-long closing ceremony took place under a clear sky and was punctuated by shouts of joy and bursts of energy.

"Pathfinders, you must have the message very clear by now," said Pastor Benjamin Carballo, youth ministries director for the church in Inter-America and top organizer of the event at the close of the program. "There were five basic messages we wanted to share during this camporee," he added.

Pastor Carballo outlined again the five basic messages emphasized during the camporee, which were to remain faithful and obedient in the most simple of tasks, that God would anoint each one for His special plan at just the right moment, that God calls us to be available to serve, that we must wear the armor of God to fight our giants, and that victory is certain when we depend on Jesus and not ourselves. Each point was illustrated during the five-part King David play, which ended with David's victory against Goliath.

Past IAD youth leaders were also honored during the closing ceremony. Pastor Israel Leito, current IAD president, was recognized for his service during the 1980s, during which the first territory-wide camporee was held. Pastor Alfredo Garcia-Marenko, who served from 1986-1998 and organized the 2nd Pathfinder Camporee in 1998, was also honored. Finally, Pastor Eliezer Melendez, who pioneered IAD youth ministries from 1998-2001, and Pastor Bernardo Rodriguez, who served from 2001-2010 and envisioned and planned the 3rd Pathfinder camporee, also received tributes.

In addition, Hilda Matar-Montero was recognized for her years of service in the IAD youth ministries department under all four past youth leaders.

Other honorees included Gilbert R. Cangy, youth director for the Adventist World Church, Jonatan Tejel, associate youth director for the Adventist World Church, Baraka Muganda, former youth ministries director of the Adventist World Church, and Jose V. Rojas, director of volunteer ministries of North America.

As the program concluded with over 1,000 investitures, a parade of nations, prayer revival sessions, a folkloric performance, fireworks and baptisms which summed more than 260. Pastor