IAD News

**Denomination’s former treasurer appointed ADRA acting president**

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**Jamaica: Northern Caribbean University installs its 23rd president**

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Former Seventh-day Adventist world church Treasurer Robert L. Rawson was appointed Tuesday to serve as acting president of Adventist Development and Relief Agency International until a permanent successor is found.

The move follows the June 25 board action to remove Rudi Meier, who served as president since 2010.

"Elder Rawson is a leader who is widely respected and accomplished with experience at various levels of administrative leadership," said Geoffrey Mbwana, chair of the ADRA International Board of Directors. "We have every confidence in him to lead ADRA during this time of transition and until a new president is appointed and is in place."

A seven-member search committee - comprised of current ADRA International staff, ADRA network employees and board members - is conducting an international search and will provide names of qualified candidates to the board from which the next president will be selected.

Rawson is expected to begin his duties Monday, July 9.

An ordained minister, Rawson, 75, was treasurer of the Adventist world church from 1995 until his retirement in 2002. He served the denomination in finance-related positions for more than 40 years, with posts in the North Pacific Union Conference, Southeastern California Conference, Iowa Conference, and vice president for finance for the Adventist Media Center in Newbury Park, California. Rawson also brings experience gained while working in the Philippines, Japan and Singapore.

"I recognize the importance of this assignment and am humbled by the task ahead," Rawson said. "My main objective is to do my very best in building a foundation from which the new president can create and strengthen. ADRA has always been one of my favorite organizations and very close to my heart. I believe that through ADRA we are doing God's work in the way that Jesus did when He was on Earth - heal the sick, feed the hungry, comfort the suffering."

After attending Emmanuel Missionary College (now Andrews University) for three years, Elder Rawson transferred to, and subsequently graduated from, La Sierra University in 1960 with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

He and his wife, Carolyn, have three adult sons and six grandchildren.

Current residents of Surprise, Arizona, the Rawsons will temporarily relocate to Maryland.
Jamaica: Northern Caribbean University installs its 23rd president

Libna Stevens
Jul 5, 2012

Not even rain could hinder the attendance of hundreds of government officials, local and overseas guests, family, faculty and staff, students and well-wishers to the historical ceremony of the installation ceremony of Dr. Trevor George Gardner as the 23rd president of Northern Caribbean University (NCU) on June 25, 2012. The ceremony, which climaxed seven days of special activities, was held at the university's gymnatorium in Mandeville, Jamaica.

Dr. Gardner, who has served in academia for more than forty years, takes the reins of NCU at a time when Jamaica celebrates its fiftieth year of independence and is facing deep economic hardship. However, in his inaugural response, Dr. Gardner, undaunted by the challenges, pledged to take the university to new heights of excellence as he leads the 105 year-old institution deeper into the 21st century.

"As I assume the helm we are justly right in expecting changes," said Dr. Gardner. "This is not my father's church. The Church has changed since he became a Seventh-day Adventist. The music is different, the sermons are different, the dreams and aspirations of the congregations are different. The institution is no more, the college on the hill as previous generations knew it is not so, it ought not to be. Changes are inevitable."

Among the plans Dr. Gardner has for the university is to increase its enrollment from the current 5,600 students across its four campuses, to 10,000 during the next five years with 20% being overseas students.

In addition, he does not plan to raise tuition more than twice in the next four years.

"We cannot continue to increase tuition every year," Gardner said to loud applause. "The real goal we are looking for is for one increase or none at all."

Dr. Gardner's statement came on the heels of an announcement on June 23 by Dr. Daniel Fider, then vice president for Facilities and Information Systems, that NCU, in keeping with the overall plan, will offer fifty percent scholarship to 105 Adventist students effective January 2013. The other fifty percent is to be shared between the conference from which the student comes and his/her family on a fifty-fifty (25 percent each) basis. To this end the university raised approximately twenty-eight million Jamaican dollars in contributions at its June 24 Endowment Banquet.

A call for the private sector to support research and the need for government to support the transformation of Mandeville into a 'university town' were also made by Gardner during his presentation.

Solemn Installation
The act of installation, performed by Pastor Everett Brown, chairman of the Board of Governors of NCU and president of the church in Jamaica, began with the reading of a statement of
commitment.

Dr. Gardner received the President's Medallion, which was presented to him by his predecessor Dr. Herbert Thompson who retired after twenty years as president. Dr. Gardner also accepted the University's Mace and the Holy Bible, the former symbolizing the power of education to permeate the barriers of ignorance and prejudice while the latter depicts the university's foundation as a Christian institution.

After a prayer of dedication by Dr. Leslie Pollard, president of Oakwood University, Pastor Leonard Johnson, vice chairman of NCU Board of Governors and president of the church in Atlantic Caribbean Union presented Dr. Gardner to the audience as the new president of NCU and invited his response.

**NCU a model for Education and Economic Development**

Guest speaker Dr. E. Albert Reece, vice president for Medical Affairs at the University of Maryland, said the university's best days are yet ahead and that fortune favors the well prepared.

"I am confident that under President Gardner's leadership NCU can become a model for both education and economic development for Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean," said Dr. Reece. "The secret of success is this institution's holistic approach in focusing on the trilogy of mind, body and the spirit -- each intertwined with the other and each is indispensable of the other."

In bringing greetings on behalf of the Inter-American Division (IAD), Vice President Pastor Leon Wellington said "this institution is ready for a new cycle of growth and development. As rich and colorful as the past has been, it is history. This institution will only retain its relevance in the future as we produce graduates with high moral standards and the required skills relevant to the needs of a rapidly changing society and growing Church."

"Yours, Mr. President," continued Wellington "is the challenge to lead this great institution into the future. In this journey you can be assured that we at the Division stand ready to support you as we have done in the past."

NCU is co-owned and co-operated by the Jamaica Union Conference and the Atlantic Caribbean Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists, both of which came out of the reorganization of the former West Indies Union in 2010.