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Inter-America: ASI Convention focuses to reach communities further
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An evangelistic campaign in the South Pacific nation of Papua New Guinea has baptized between 4,500 and 5,000 people. Almost all of these are new to the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Attendance on the final night of the series in Port Moresby was well in excess of 100,000 people. The high turnout may have amounted to nearly half the population of the city.

Organizers say this is the largest community audience to listen to an English-language Adventist evangelistic meeting in history. The preacher was veteran Adventist evangelist John Carter. It was by far the largest audience he has addressed in his 50-year career as a public evangelist. The crowd was so large they couldn't all fit in the giant Sir John Guise Stadium, a soccer (football) venue. Fortunately, the public address system was so powerful that many thousands were able to listen while sitting in their cars or standing outside.

A large group sat on the grass listening in the dark at another soccer field down the road. On the only night the people at this second football field were counted, there were 5,000 sitting there. The local conference hastily erected a giant screen so those at the second field could see the pictures that those inside could see. This effectively meant the program ran at two venues simultaneously. When altar calls were made, people ran from the second football field to the main stadium to make a commitment.

It was difficult to find enough pastors to baptize all these new converts. Ordained Adventist ministers who didn't work for the local conference were called in to help. Fifty pastors stood in a line in waist-deep water about 200 feet off-shore at a shallow South Pacific beach. Then lines of baptismal candidates dressed in white walked out toward them. About 5,000 people stood in the water together.

Just as it was difficult to know how many were at the meetings, it was difficult to know how many were actually baptized. Pastors who reported so far say they baptized 100 people each. That suggests a figure of 5,000 when all reports are in.

The final program in the Carter Report series was held six hours after this baptism. At that meeting another 3,000 people requested baptism, and will be baptized later.

On August 18 the Seventh-day Adventist churches of Port Moresby could barely contain the crowds as new members attended their first Sabbath services, reports indicate. "We had a wonderful, blessed Sabbath," said Cameron Wari, coordinator of follow-up activities. "All the newly baptized members were welcomed by the churches as part of a big family."

He added, "Most of the church leaders realized that there was not going to be enough room in their churches to accommodate the influx."

The new members were given their baptismal certificates and the gift of a Bible.

-with information from the Carter Report ministry
Seventh-day Adventist Pastor John Carter preaches to mammoth crowds in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

http://www.interamerica.org/users/index.php?type=news&id=2138&lan...
A rapidly growing Seventh-day Adventist college in the state of Florida is the country's latest church institution of higher learning to become a university, reflecting its increasing number of graduate program offerings.

A maintenance worker finishes installing a sign with the new name of the university on Tuesday, September 4.

ADU had a 55 percent enrollment growth between 2006 and 2010, which made it the fastest growing Adventist institution of higher learning in the United States during that time period, according to records from the most recent Adventist world church statistical report. Both Southern Adventist University in Tennessee and Kettering College of Medical Arts in Ohio experienced a roughly 28 percent increase during the same period.

ADU's name change follows similar moves by other Adventist campuses in the U.S. In 2009, Columbia Union College in Maryland became Washington Adventist University, and in 2007, Walla Walla College in Washington state became Walla Walla University.

Education leaders say the name change to "university" reflects an institution's growing graduate degree options. ADU officials recently added a second graduate degree and anticipate developing four more over the next few years.

The school offered its first graduate degree, in nurse anesthesia, in 2008. It began a master's of occupational therapy last year. Next year, the university will launch a master's degree in healthcare administration, followed by a doctorate of nurse anesthesia practice in 2014.

A university executive said officials are also developing a doctorate in physical therapy and a physician's assistant master's degree. Later, the school will likely add a doctorate in pharmacy.

University officials said they also added the word "Adventist" to enhance the school's reputation as one with a Christian mission.

"We're known here in Florida and in the Adventist Church, but as we grow it helps to make our spiritual mission better known to the community that we are a faith-based institution," said Don Williams, vice president for academic administration.

Florida Hospital, a network of eight hospitals in Orlando and 13 across the state, is the largest healthcare provider in the state of Florida. It was prominently featured for its use of new technology and holistic care in the 2010 film "The Adventists," an independent documentary about Adventist healthcare in the U.S.

Florida Hospital is part of the Winter Park, Florida-based Adventist Health System, the largest Protestant healthcare provider in the nation.

About 65 percent of ADU faculty is Adventist Church members, and about 35 percent of on-campus students are church members, Williams said.

He said he views the institution as a "mission-school" model.

"We work not only with the Adventist community but bring in the community and see if we can have a positive influence on their lives," Williams said.

He added that the president interviews every new hire for "mission fit," from faculty and administration to housekeeping staff.
Much of the university's enrollment growth came from the school's increase in distance learning capabilities, including a site at Porter Adventist Hospital in the state of Colorado.

An Adventist Education official called the ADU one of the church's "premium online distributors."

"It's been innovative in finding ways to use technology to deliver education to academies and other places outside of their local community," said Larry Blackmer, vice president for Education in the church's North American Division. "I value the technology that they showcase and mentor to the rest of the Adventist educational system."

Blackmer also affirmed school officials for adding the word "Adventist," noting the church's long commitment to healthful living and preventive care.

"They have a quality program and they've tied that quality program back to the Adventist name," he said.

For more information see the school's website at [adu.edu](http://www.adu.edu).
Inter-America's 12th Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries (ASI) concluded its annual conference in Antigua, Guatemala, on Aug. 18, during which Adventist professionals and leaders renewed their commitment of uniting businesses with the church in reaching communities with the gospel of salvation.

More than 200 attended the four-day conference which brought together Adventist business professionals for seminars, exhibitions, ministries, presentations and musical performances.

"The world is dying not merely because of physical hunger but from spiritual hunger,' said Dr. Marston Thomas, president of ASI Inter-America, as he spoke to this year's delegation. "I call you to take conscience of the needs of this world and empower other ASI professional delegates so that the world may know that Jesus in the business scope."

The convention was themed after the third phase of revival and reformation initiative promoted throughout Inter-America: That the World May Know-an initiative which hits at the heart of ASI and its purpose, said Thomas.

Although ASI has always been about sharing Christ in the work place, in partnership with the church in spreading the gospel, said Thomas, "Our aim was to motivate ASIers to go back to their world and let them know."

The convention was highlighted by special daily prayer and testimonial sessions among the delegates.

Participants at this year's convention gathered to network, sat in on professional development and business management seminars, strengthened on-going projects and new projects to benefit the community, and more.

Pastor Israel Leito, president of the church in Inter-America, spoke during the event. He reminded delegates to ensure God is part of their business endeavors.

"You are here because you have reached success or are looking to be more successful," said Pastor Leito. "No one can have success alone. The spiritual success is not because of my own efforts but it will be because of the strength of the Lord Jesus, and so the business success is not yours either, because Christ helps you," added Pastor Leito as he challenged the delegation to make Christ the center of their lives.

The keynote speaker included Pastor Robert S. Folkenberg, former president of the Adventist world church and associate director of ShareHim ministries. Pastor Folkenberg spoke on the need to confess Jesus in the commercial field.

"There are churches that pretend to be saved but confessing God to a dying world is something optional," said Folkenberg. "The role of ASI is to be part of a spiritual heating system to mobilize all our friends around us, so they can confess the truth that Christ is coming soon and it is time for us to urgently prepare for that," he concluded.

Speakers included Dr. Bertram Melbourne from Howard University, in Washington D.C., Dr. Baltazar Quiej, BM Computación in Guatemala, Dr. Ivor English, entrepreneur and faculty of Southern Caribbean University, in Trinidad, among others.

A special offering was collected during the convention to go towards evangelistic efforts among Chinese communities in the Caribbean region and towards the purchase of satellite antennas and receivers so that Hope Channel/Esperanza TV-the official channel of the Adventist church-can be viewed by 14 million viewers through the 512 cable companies in Guatemala.

"ASI leaders continue to work towards increasing the number of ASI chapters in Inter-America," said Pastor Leon B. Wellington, vice president for the church in Inter-America and secretary of ASI-IA. "The goal has always been to have one chapter organized in each of the 22 church regions throughout the territory."

ASI currently has 11 chapters, and creating more chapters will continue to be a priority, said
Pastor Wellington.

The next ASI Inter-America Convention is scheduled to be held in San Jose, Costa Rica, in August 2013.

ASI is an organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church members who work in the private sector. Accordingly, they believe that vocations can be and should be a ministry to aid in the advancement of the great gospel commission. ASI is committed to supporting the Seventh-day Adventist church and its various outreach programs, which include health, education, evangelism, community services, family concerns and special projects.

Gustavo Menendez contributed to this article

To view a photo gallery of this year's ASI-IA Convention, click here

For information on ASI-Inter-America, visit http://asi.interamerica.org

image by Abel Marquez/IAD

Pastor Robert S. Folkenberg of ShareHim speaks to ASI delegates during Inter-America’s annual convention held in Antigua, Guatemala, Agu. 15-18, 2012.