

## NOTEWORTHY



# A NEW PRESIDENT FOR AIIAS

## *Reflections on Roles for Women in Asia*

BY GILBERT VALENTINE AND KENDRA HALOVIK VALENTINE

Ceremony and symbolism featured prominently at the November 2019 installation of Dr. Ginger Ketting-Weller as the eighth president of the Adventist International Institute for Advanced Studies (AIIAS) in the Philippines. The installation service was the centerpiece of a three-day program that began on Thursday evening with a consecration service homily given by seminary dean, Dr. Ricardo González, and concluded on Sabbath with Professor Ketting-Weller giving the sermon for the Sabbath-morning worship service. Planning for the special services was carefully scheduled in coordination with the institution's twenty-second annual theology conference attended this year by 530 off-campus participants. The installation ceremony attracted particular attention because Professor Ketting-Weller is the first woman to be appointed to the leadership of this important General Conference institution. AIIAS is one of four institutions of higher education operated directly by the General Conference and focuses exclusively on graduate studies for its approximately 650-member international student body, which in the first quarter this year represented sixty-two different countries.

Held on Friday afternoon, November 15, in the large Siew Huy Auditorium which doubles as the church for the AIIAS campus, the formal, impressively colorful, yet deeply spiritual installation ceremony was attended by AIIAS faculty, staff and students, local civic officials, institutional representatives from both the wider Adventist higher education and health care communities, and by numerous General Conference and regional church representatives. The event constituted an important historic milestone for AIIAS which General Conference

president Ted N. C. Wilson noted but was unable to personally attend. He sent greetings, exhortations, and congratulations by way of a video message. For anyone familiar with current issues and debates in Adventism, the powerful symbolism of the installation ceremony carried deep and far-reaching meaning about what is slowly occurring in the church even if attention was not overtly drawn to the significance of what was taking place.

Presiding over the ceremony, which celebrated the formal (and legal) transfer of presidential leadership responsibilities from retiring president, Stephen Guptill, to Professor Ketting-Weller, was Dr. Ella Simmons, vice-president of the General Conference and chair of the AIIAS Board of Trustees. One of only five commissioned women ministers currently employed by the General Conference, Dr. Simmons is the first woman to serve the world church as a vice president. Associated with her in the ceremony and offering the prayer of dedication, Dr. Lisa Beardsley-Hardy is the first woman to serve as director of Education at the

General Conference. As Dr. Simmons noted in her introduction, the three women had become acquainted with each other when they had previously served in senior academic leadership of important Adventist institutions in the United States.

In her homily Dr. Simmons began by speaking of the unique challenges facing the modern university president. She cited retired Admiral William H. McRaven's recent assessment of the task upon his early retirement as chancellor of the University of Texas. An academic institution presidency, he opined, "is the toughest job in the nation." There is "no analogue" for the role "in modern

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LEFT: Held on November 15, 2019, the deeply spiritual installation ceremony was attended by AIIAS faculty, staff and students, local civic officials, and church and institutional representatives. RIGHT: AUP president, Professor Francisco D. Gayoba, conveys greetings to Dr Ketting-Weller.

business.”<sup>1</sup> But AIIAS is much more than a business or an ordinary educational enterprise. AIIAS was founded on spiritual values and Simmons outlined the distinctive spiritual leadership training mission that AIIAS had been called to fulfill for the church. Implementing this mission was the foremost task of the president.

Following her address, Simmons explained the meaning of the symbols of institutional authority and of the presidential office (the presidential medallion, the specially carved institutional mace, and the institute’s seal) and then presided over the passing over of the custody of the symbols from Dr. Guptill to Dr. Ketting-Weller. Of significance was the entrusting to the new president the safe keeping of the institute’s founding legal document, “Presidential Decree 2021,” signed by President Ferdinand Marcos on January 31, 1986, and gazette, signed a few weeks later, just hours before he left office. The granting of the decree allowing for the accreditation of AIIAS is viewed by church leaders as a clear testimony to providence leading in the establishment of this institution.

In the prelude to her formal charge to the new president, Dr. Simmons reflected on the biblical figure of the judge-prophetess Deborah, noting that what qualifies a person for leadership “is not gender but one’s relation-

ship to God.” She then spoke directly on behalf of the AIIAS board in charging Dr. Ketting-Weller to follow the example of Deborah and “to embrace God’s call to be a woman of power and influence, faithful in the fulfillment of your presidential duties.” The new president was called to be, however, “not just a woman who has authority” but a “woman living under the authority of God.” “I charge you to be “a modern-day Deborah,” she concluded.

It was clear. AIIAS is not just an academic institution with high standards, a superbly qualified faculty, and an international reach.<sup>2</sup> It is a theological seminary entrusted with the training of pastoral leadership as well the education of other church leaders through its graduate school. Spiritual concerns lie at the core of everything. The institution’s logo, designed in the late 1980s by theologian John Jones, prominently features stylized Greek letters alpha and omega as symbols of the divine and of eternity. Now, as the new custodian of that logo and the intentionally spiritual corporate culture, the new president was above all to be a spiritual leader. For her prayer of consecration Dr. Lisa Beardsley-Hardy invited the officials of the platform party including General Conference officials and the two constituent division presidents to gather around Dr. Ketting-Weller and her husband in order to affirm her as

Keeping a vibrant spirituality at the heart of AIIAS, she believes, is an important part of her leadership. During the Friday night service of consecration for the new president, by special request of Ketting-Weller, the AUP Indonesian Chorale sang the American Shaker hymn “I Will Be a Child of Peace,” composed by Elaine Hagenberg. Not only did the music provide a bridging of Dr. Ginger’s worlds of education and service—Asia and America—the lyrics summed up her spiritual commitment. The verse “O Holy Father I will be, a child of peace and purity; for well I know thy hand will bless, the seeker after righteousness” is repeated four times with key changes and growing musical intensity. To the careful observer, the performance and the lyrics of the piece resonated deeply with Dr. Ketting-Weller, clearly echoing her commitment to be such a child of peace in our world.

she was “set apart” for her spiritual leadership role. “As we lay our hands upon her,” prayed Beardsley-Hardy, “we ask You [Lord] to lay Your hand upon her to lead her as she leads the way into a bright future.” General Conference officers and division presidents participated in the distinctive, deeply spiritual moment and laid their hands on her, “setting apart” the new president for her spiritual leadership task.<sup>3</sup> There was no discomfort, no resistance to the fact that this woman was being set apart to have authority over the men who served on her administrative team and taught theology in her classrooms. There was no thought that headship was somehow being inverted here. If some in the congregation wondered why the spiritual leadership of a seminary might be qualitatively different to the spiritual leadership of a local conference, they could perhaps be excused for doing so.

The ceremony concluded with short speeches of greeting and blessing from regional health care leaders from Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines, and from presidents of other institutions of learning. Dr. Francisco Gayoba, president of the nearby Adventist University of the Philippines was the first to convey congratulations. Then came greetings from further afield. Dr. Delbert Baker, vice chancellor of the new General Conference graduate school, the Adventist University of Africa in Nairobi, Kenya, who had offered the invocation, conveyed official and personal greetings. Dr. Andrea Luxton, president of Andrews University (Michigan, USA) and Dr. Richard Hart of Loma Linda University Health (California, USA) both conveyed official written greetings. Steven G. Rose, the financial vice president of Walla Walla University (Washington, USA)

presented an award from the Walla Walla University Board of Trustees who were delighted at the accomplishments of their distinguished alumna. (Dr. Ketting-Weller had served for a decade as vice president for academic administration at the institution.) La Sierra University faculty, Gil Valentine and Kendra Haloviak Valentine, also attended the ceremony and conveyed official congratulations from their newly appointed university president, Dr. Joy Fehr, and her faculty and staff. (Dr. Fehr is the first woman president of La Sierra University.)

The next day as the AIIAS church family and many visitors gathered for Sabbath worship, Dr. Ketting-Weller exercised her newly authorized spiritual leadership in preaching a deeply thoughtful exposition on Psalm 145:4: “One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.” Her theme emphasized the challenge to pass on the heritage of faith to each new generation and the task of leadership in this. Recounting the experience of her mother, Dr. Effie, who had been repeatedly disappointed in her goal of achieving an Ob-Gyn residency and, refusing to give up, had eventually succeeded. During her career she had gone on to deliver more than 17,000 babies. The mentoring provided Dr. Ginger by her mother through this perseverance had a lifelong impact and shaped the next generation. The young biblical Timothy, nurtured by a Christian mother and by the elders, was also a powerful scriptural example. There is much to be learned for leadership when the new generation enters into conversation with the elders and the elders listen to the young. Such conversation is critical for effective leadership, she emphasized.





## Who Is the New AIAS President?

In an interview with the authors a day prior to her installation, Dr. Ketting-Weller observed that being called to serve at AIAS was “almost like a home-coming.” For the first eighteen years of her life she had lived in Southeast Asia, the

daughter of medical missionary parents. The experience of these growing up years had developed in her “a deep love for Asia” and “a deep love for my church and mission.” She believes that her “childhood shaped her” for her new task in the Philippines and gave her a familiarity “with the way the church works in this part of the world.”

Dr. Ginger was born in Bangkok where her parents, Drs. Sam and Effie Ketting, served at the Bangkok “Mission Hospital” on Phitsanulok Road near the city’s exotic and world-famous royal palaces. Her Dutch father had emigrated to Australia after World War II where he had become an Adventist and then moved on to the United States to study pre-med at Walla Walla College. It was at Loma Linda that her parents met and married. Ketting-Weller thus has the distinction of having three birth certificates: one from the Netherlands, one from Thailand, and one from the United States. In Bangkok, a younger brother, Case, enlarged the family.

When she was two and a half years old her parents transferred south to Phuket where her father served as physician and general surgeon at the mission clinic and was soon entrusted with drawing up the architectural plans for a new Phuket hospital building, opened in February, 1965.<sup>4</sup> Her mother specialized both in pathology and in obstetrics and gynecology and her skills helped to build local trust in the Adventist medical work.

Ketting-Weller’s family moved to Penang when she was five years old, her parents taking appointments at Penang Adventist Hospital. Her father first served as general surgeon and then for ten years in the added role of medical director. Ketting-Weller attended a one-room school on campus and put down deep roots, developing school and church friendships among both national and expatriate families that have lasted through life. The current president of the Penang Adventist Hospital, Ronald Koh Wah Heng, for example, a friend of Ketting-Weller



Dr. Ginger Ketting-Weller, third from left in the front row, with other Walla Walla University faculty. (SOURCE: <https://archives.wallawalla.edu/westwind/fall01/fall01other/faculty.html>)

since their teen years, participated in the installation ceremony, presenting the new president with some Malaysian flags and bringing greetings from a wide circle of acquaintances. Ketting-Weller observed that this rich background had been a blessing, making it “surprisingly easy” to fit into her new environment where she needed to “interact with many cultures.” She found that she had been able to “quickly come to love the people around me.”

Four years at Far Eastern Academy (FEA) in Singapore in her mid-teens further extended her circle of friendships and helped develop a life-shaping spirit of service under memorable teachers such as Bible teachers Richard Cadabaro and Gordon Shumate. FEA also gave her the opportunity to pursue her interest in developing piano and church organ performance skills and gave her a first “sink or swim” teaching experience when she was asked to teach music to elementary school students. She preached her first sermon at age eighteen as part of a Bible class outreach program in Singapore.

Planning on going to Newbold for her college years, she encountered Malcolm Maxwell visiting FEA as a recruiter from Walla Walla College. He assured her that the College had eight pipe organs available for student use. This promptly persuaded her to change course and take her degree at Walla Walla, majoring in elementary education with a minor in music teaching (organ). During her junior year she maintained her interest in missions by becoming the student director of the college’s student missionary program and then, at the end of the year, decided to give ten months of student missionary service herself as an assistant residence dean at Toivolina Junior College

in Finland. Though the experience gave her the worst culture shock she had yet encountered, it also gave her even wider experience and provided a context and an occasion for further important spiritual development. During a period of discouragement and disappointment she found valued help in Phillip Yancey's *Disappointed with God*, and now looks back on the experience with gratitude. She graduated from Walla Walla with general studies honors in 1985.

Following graduation, two years of elementary teaching at the Adventist church school in Lincoln City, Oregon gave Ketting-Weller solid practical experience in pedagogy and classroom management. Upon the encouragement of her church pastor in Lincoln City she undertook her MA in educational administration and leadership through the school of Education on the La Sierra Campus when it was part of Loma Linda University. This led to a six-year stint teaching and serving as vice principal at Redlands Academy. Here she noticed that she enjoyed mentoring student teachers and she enrolled in a doctoral program at Claremont Graduate University. By 1994, Pacific Union College had called her to join their education department. Two years later she successfully defended her dissertation which had particular appeal to her and provided valued insights for church leaders. Her topic was an inquiry into identity development in adolescents who had moved cross-culturally and included an analysis of data from immigrants and the children of missionaries.

After seven years in Angwin, Ketting-Weller married Jim Weller who was then serving as principal of Rogers Elementary School in College Place, Washington. She

accepted an invitation to go back to her alma mater, Walla Walla College, to serve as associate vice president for academic administration under Dr. John Brunt. After a year of mentoring by Brunt, when he took a call to the senior pastorate of Azure Hills Church in California, Ketting-Weller was appointed to replace him as vice president for academic administration, the first woman to occupy this senior position at Walla Walla. She recalls a valuable early lesson learned at Walla Walla when leading the institution during a temporary absence of her president, Dr. Jon Dybdahl. Conscious of trying to emulate his style and relate to decisions as she thought he would do she was encouraged by Dybdahl upon his return to just "lead in your own skin." This piece of advice "was

one of the most freeing things a boss had ever said to me," she recalled. "It has been a precious gift." She began to recognize, reflect on, and strengthen her own approach and at this time felt privileged to be chosen and sponsored by the Milton Murray Foundation for specialized leadership training at Harvard University. "My style is to be a connector, to build and grow the people I work with," she observed when asked to reflect on her own approach

to leadership. The questions she asks herself in relationship to her associates and colleagues are, "How can I help you develop? How can I help you grow? What tools and experiences do you need?" She is resolved "to never stop learning and gaining new insights." Seeing other people flourish in the development of their capabilities as leaders gives her a deep sense of fulfillment.

After eleven years at Walla Walla, in 2012 Ketting-Weller accepted an appointment at La Sierra Uni-



Dr. Ginger Ketting-Weller in a recent picture with her husband Jim, who heads the K-12 ALLAS Academy. (SOURCE: <https://www.allas.edu/en/news/644-allas-welcomes-institution-s-eighth-president>)

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Dr. Ginger Ketting-Weller, sixth from left in the back row, helps break ground for the AIIAS Academy building. (SOURCE: <https://www.aiias.edu/en/news/662-breaking-the-ground-for-the-aiias-academy-building>)

versity as dean of the School of Education. This had the advantage of enabling her to be close to her grandchildren and to access excellent care for her parents at Loma Linda in their declining years. During her seven-year tenure at La Sierra she successfully oversaw the launch of a new PhD program in leadership, while her husband Jim finished his own doctoral studies through Andrews University and served as junior high principal at Loma Linda Academy. Ginger's parents passed away nine months apart in 2017 and 2018, bringing to a close a precious time of her care for them in their last years.

The invitation to leadership at AIIAS came at a timely juncture for both Ginger and Jim, when the AIIAS board, convinced that their skill sets were an excellent fit for two open positions, placed a call for their services. A strong conviction that the hand of providence was leading persuaded them that this was a need they should respond to and they took up their duties on August 1, 2019. Jim heads up the K-12 AIIAS Academy which has just launched a challenging new building program to cope with an expanding scope and enrollment. The unique challenges and opportunities AIIAS faces as this distinctive Adventist institution proceeds through its fourth decade excite them both. Ketting-Weller believes that her new charge, with

its unusual acronym for a name, remains one of the best-kept secrets in the church and that it deserves to be much better known. While it is certainly more widely known outside of the United States, there is still room for greater awareness. Besides, “where else could you find graduate tuition rates for a semester unit for only \$115.00?” she asks, smiling.

### AIIAS and the Future

Located on its tropical forty-nine acre compound in Silang, Cavite province, thirty miles south of Central Manila, the capital of the Philippines, AIIAS is a peaceful and delightfully picturesque, well-appointed campus home to its 170 resident students and their families and its

thirty-nine teaching faculty. Most student families reside in one of eight home units in each of the seventeen four-story apartment buildings on campus. The balance of its approximately 650 students, scattered through the various countries of Asia, undertake their studies in very modern educational fashion through AIIAS's distance learning centers (DLCs) or in online mode. Recently, the DLCs have also stretched from Eastern Europe to Africa and the Middle East and on to South America.<sup>6</sup> Some student groups come to campus for month-long



A sculpture welcomes visitors at the AIIAS main gate.



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intensive periods as cohort groups. But the journey to where the forward- and outward-looking institution is today has not been easy nor without some intense birthing pains.

Adventist education began in the Philippines in June 1917, just six years after the 1911 establishment of the first Adventist church in Manila.<sup>7</sup> Within a decade the training school on its five-acre plot of land in Manila had become a junior college and had outgrown its overcrowded facilities caring for students from all over the scattered island territory. It was one of the largest training schools outside of North America, and according to mission historian Donald Warren, “more than any other factor” it was the centrally located college that “binds together our work in all parts of the islands.”<sup>8</sup> In 1931 the school moved to a larger site on the outskirts of Manila. By 1936 the Union College, fed by a number of regional academies, became the first institution outside North America to achieve senior college status and offer four-year degrees.<sup>9</sup> That year

the Far Eastern Division secretary, W. P. Bradley, boasted that Philippines Union College (PUC) was the largest church college outside the USA and General Conference Education secretary, W. E. Nelson, noted an intention to make the college *the* “training center for advanced work for all countries in the Far Eastern Division.”<sup>10</sup> Implementing this role was to eventually prove problematic.

With approval from the General Conference, PUC graduated its first Master of Education students in 1959. Graduates from an MA in Religion followed five years later in 1964. The college formally organized a theological seminary in 1972 and a year later the Association of Theological Schools in South East Asia approved its programs. In 1978, PUC, with its thriving graduate programs, moved to a more spacious campus in Silang, an hour south of Manila. At this juncture, however, a decision was taken to separate the theological seminary, although it was located on the same new campus, and fund it independently as an institution of the Far Eastern Division but with funds



The Allas website appeals to potential students with its “exotic location” (shown here from a bird’s eye view): coral reefs, tropical beaches, a world-famous volcano, and rapids are all a short distance from the campus. (SOURCE: <https://www.aiias.edu/en/91-aiias/quick-links/academic-resources/125-why-choose-aiias>)





ABOVE: The seminary building on the AIIAS campus

LEFT: AIIAS students (SOURCE: <https://www.aaias.edu/en/91-aaias/quick-links/academic-resources/125-why-choose-aaias>)

flowing through the internal administrative structures of the Union College. The costs of water, electricity and other services were shared. Renamed as Asia Adventist Theological Seminary, the new entity's catchment area, as Adventist historian Floyd Greenleaf recounts, was "extended far beyond the boundaries of the Philippines to serve all of Asia."<sup>11</sup> The seminary flourished in its new location with its more generous and independent source of funding, its international reach, and the addition of further study programs.

Under the arrangement it was inevitable that jealousies and friction would develop. A Loma Linda affiliated public health degree (beyond the strict boundaries of theology), arranged before the separation but birthed during the awkward separation phase, led to misunderstanding over to whom it rightly belonged. Soon other tensions and further friction developed between the two entities as the need to more adequately meet the particular needs of in-

ternational students and faculty became more acute.<sup>12</sup> The securing of a separate legislative framework and different government educational regulations under the terms of President Marcos' decree also aggravated relations. The new regulatory terms establishing AIIAS as an international institution gave more flexibility concerning international faculty appointments than the regulations applying to national institutions. Although President Corazin Aquino's incoming administration reviewed and confirmed the Marcos decree as being in the best interests of the Philippines, PUC personnel continued to protest the separation as illegal and suspicions and ill-feeling remained among Filipino staff and students.<sup>13</sup> As Greenleaf explains, "the impracticability of operating two institutions on a single campus was becoming obvious." The daily smarting experienced by PUC at the loss of funding for its graduate programs and the graduate programs themselves infected relations. "When friction and misunderstandings be-

came too serious to pass off as incidental,” it seemed to seminary and division administration that “moving the seminary away from the college appeared to be the best resolution.”<sup>14</sup>

In 1988, under Dean Werner Vyhmeister, a new campus was found fifteen miles away from PUC and a special presidential decree was obtained for the establishment of an international institution under a more flexible legislative and regulatory framework concerning faculty appointments than that which applied to national institutions. In 1991, AIIAS, with its greatly expanded range of programs (thirteen master’s degrees in six disciplines and three doctoral programs), moved to its new campus. As Greenleaf notes, the transition was exceedingly “painful” as PUC was obliged to revert to the “unpalatable” status of providing only undergraduate programs.<sup>15</sup> Lawsuits, threats of deportation, and the sad loss of highly respected PUC leadership through stress-induced illness and death cast dark clouds over the separation.<sup>16</sup> Would the skies ever brighten? Then, in 1996 when the Far Eastern Division separated into two new divisions (Northern Asia-Pacific and Southern Asia-Pacific), AIIAS became a General Conference institution with a mandate to serve both entities.

In an endeavor to recover its reputation and “preserve its traditions,” soon after the break, PUC began to seek university status and develop new graduate programs for its national student body. With government and church approval in 1996 it changed its name to Adventist University of the Philippines (AUP) and again offered graduate studies in education, religion, biology, nursing, and business. Doctoral programs followed. A dental school was opened in 2012 and the church’s first medical school in Asia was opened on the AUP campus and admitted its first class two years later in 2014. While there is overlap with AIIAS in a number of the graduate programs and the campuses are not far apart, which may seem an inefficient way to offer higher education, it is argued that both the student catchments and the sourcing of faculty are quite distinct. Furthermore, AIIAS’s student intake is limited by its charter to a maximum of 30% from the Philippines. AUP’s parent entity, the Northern Philippine Union, became a conference only in 2012 and now has almost 400,000 members but it supports two other senior colleges and a university (Northern Luzon University)

offering graduate studies.<sup>17</sup> Church accreditors observe that the financial resources available to AUP will eventually demonstrate whether its ambitions are sustainable.<sup>18</sup> While there are no formal cooperative or collaborative institutional academic links between AUP and AIIAS, nevertheless, on the personal level there is collegial amity and AIIAS faculty report no awareness of lingering resentment among church members. The highly respected AUP choral group, the Philippine Meistersingers, and the AUP president, Professor Francisco D. Gayoba, participated prominently in the installation ceremony and brought warm congratulatory greetings.

Dr. Ketting-Weller sees the present task of AIIAS as focused on developing thoughtful broad-vision leadership primarily for the two division constituencies but also for other places. When pressed, in an interview with associate *Review* editor, Gerald Klingbeil, to articulate what she sees as challenges to be faced in the near future she acknowledges that problems encountered in America associated with over-provision of higher education, with proliferation and duplication of programs, and tuition competition, may be replicated in the Asia region. The need for exercising courage in making difficult decisions when unplanned higher education growth occurs should be anticipated, she notes.<sup>19</sup> Among the “greatest strengths” of AIIAS, Ketting-Weller observes, is the diversity represented in the faculty providing “a multicultural set of perspectives” for students. That diversity involves the perspectives of women teachers.

Many of the countries in the region around AIIAS have already experienced women leaders in national political life. Furthermore, the Philippines is widely recognized as being, in essence, a matriarchal society with a long history of women having a greater share in social equality than in other countries. Against that background, Ketting-Weller observes, “I don’t think of myself as a female administrator. I just think of myself as an administrator.” She simply wants to do her job well and from her experience thus far she senses that the faculty, staff, and students of AIIAS, regardless of the continent they come from, are very accepting and appreciative. The Filipinos seemed to be the most enthusiastically affirming of her arrival as “our first woman president” when she first came to campus, she recalled. She values the gift of the special hand-painted Filipino shawl with



which she was embraced on arrival. While there is significant diversity at AIIAS, she notes, there is a special connection to Filipino life and values. “We operate ‘in the Filipino Shawl’ here at AIIAS,” she explained to Klingbeil. Leaders in the church have observed that within the region there is also a natural, deeply rooted respect for people in positions of authority regardless of gender or race. Ketting-Weller is aware, however, from what numerous AIIAS women students have told her personally, that they see her as a model in leadership and they are intentionally learning from her. She is encouraged if somewhat daunted and humbled by this.

Women in Adventist ministry and church leadership are scattered sparsely throughout the division, often in departmental or chaplaincy roles, but they serve in a more concentrated way in congregational roles in China and Mongolia. According to the AIIAS registrar, 58% of the graduate-school students resident on campus in the current semester are women. And while only 10% of the ninety-six students studying in the Seminary are women from a variety of national backgrounds, they are encouraged to participate in leadership in local congregational worship. On campus at the time of Ketting-Weller’s installation there was also a special cohort of twenty-five ministers from China, fifteen of whom were women already involved in various pastoral leadership roles in congregations in China. Bringing the ministers to AIIAS for training is much less politically complicated than teaching the group at a distance-learning center in their home country. Courses are taught with translation by respected Chinese leaders and with the use of specially prepared materials. The issue of what titles they are given as pastor when terms are translated out of English is not a problem, reported one of the students. At home they are simply “set apart” to lead churches or to help in the ministry of their local church and, as a student explained, they are simply focused on

the great opportunities for reaching out to the multitudes around them.

The current discussion of the ordination of women in the world church does not seem to trouble the

waters at AIIAS or in the surrounding division territories, although propaganda produced by some agencies, according to one woman faculty member, has created the impression that the North American division is deep in apostasy. Another professor from Asia observed that the culture of the Philippines is not in any way averse to women in pastoral or any other leadership role, but it is respectful of authority. “If the General Conference simply tells us that it is OK to ordain women, we will do it,” he said. There is no issue. It is to be hoped that the new wave of women in leader-

ship of such places as AIIAS will model to other places how the spirit gives gifts to whomsoever the spirit gives without regard to ethnicity, gender, or social status—and the church of God will be blessed.

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## Endnotes

1. A recording of the installation ceremony is accessible at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_bGBQyV-NhE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_bGBQyV-NhE). See 27:55. Andy Thomason, “Is College President, ‘toughest job in the nation?’” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 1, 2018. <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Is-College-President-the/243289>. Accessed December 4, 2019. Before heading up the University of Texas system, McRaven commanded the raid that captured Bin Laden.
2. Of the thirty-nine faculty listed on the AIIAS webpage, thirty-seven have doctorates and the other two academic librarians have terminal master’s degrees. <https://www.aiias.edu/en/academics/faculty> Accessed December 4, 2019.
3. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_bGBQyV-NhE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_bGBQyV-NhE). See 1:34:45.
4. “Bhuket Mission Hospital Opens in Thailand,” *Adventist Review*, June 24, 1965: 14.
5. Gil and Kendra Valentine, Interview with G. Ketting-Weller, November 14, 2019.
6. Centers have been operated in Estonia, Kenya, Guyana, Dubai, Mongolia, and Chile.
7. L. Donald Warren, *Isles of Opportunity*, (Washington, DC:



The authors, Gilbert Valentine and Kendra Haloviak Valentine, interviewed Dr. Ketting-Weller a day prior to her installation.

Review and Herald, 1928), 180–183, 214–224, has a helpful account of the beginnings.

8. Ibid., 221, 223.

9. Floyd Greenleaf, *In Passion for the World: A History of Seventh-day Adventist Education* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2005), 169, 257.

10. Ibid., 257, 381.

11. Ibid., 382.

12. John Jones, who was teaching at the Theological Seminary at the time, recalls an anti-colonial sentiment on the part of some staff, understandable given the recent political past. Unfortunately, this sentiment at times impeded relating effectively to visa and academic processes for international students and faculty and complicated communication with regional church leaders who were involved with the graduate-student sponsorships. Interview with authors, Redlands, July 14, 2019.

13. Nancy Vyhmeister recounts the remarkable events which led to the obtaining of the decree in Chapter 10 of her unpublished biographical manuscript.

14. Greenleaf, *In Passion*, 382.

15. Ibid., 384.

16. Nancy Vyhmeister, Chapter 10, 2.

17. The Northern Philippine Union is comprised of six local missions and two local conference organizations. <https://adventist.ph/information/local-regions/>. See also <http://www.adventistdirectory.org/ViewAdmFieldSubEntities.aspx?AdmFieldID=NPUM&EntityType=E&ShowContained=-1&Offset=0>. Accessed December 4, 2019.

18. Greenleaf, *In Passion*, 385.

19. Gerald Klingbeil, “Preparing Thoughtful, Careful, Broad-Vision Leaders: A Conversation with Ginger Ketting-Weller,” *Adventist Review*, December 3, 2019. <https://www.adventistreview.org/church-news/story14278-preparing-thoughtful-careful-broad-vision-leaders> Accessed December 4, 2019.



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