

NOTEWORTHY

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Erton Kohler and Paul Douglas

CHOSEN AS GC OFFICERS

BY BONNIE DWYER

The General Conference Executive Committee elected two top General Conference officers on Wednesday, April 14: Erton Kohler as secretary and Paul H. Douglas as treasurer/chief financial officer.

Kohler is presently the president of the South American Division. When he was elected to that position in 2006, he was, at 36 years of age, the youngest regional president. During his fifteen years of leadership, the division has grown significantly and today has 2,542,834 members and 14,382 churches. He will begin his new duties as secretary for the General Conference on June 1, 2021.

“Expect Excellence!” has been Paul H. Douglas’s admonition to the auditors he oversees in his position as chief executive of the General Conference Auditing



Erton Kohler



Paul H. Douglas

Services, a position he has held since 2007. He began working at GCAS in 1986 as an audit manager. He will transition to the treasurer’s position on August 1, 2021.

Both Kohler and Douglas have continued to pursue additional educational goals while working full-time. Kohler is currently in the Doctor of Ministry program at

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GT Ng



Juan Prestol-Puesán

Andrews University. He earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in theology and pastoral theology from Brazilian Adventist University. Douglas expects to complete his PhD dissertation this year. He holds a bachelor’s degree and an MBA in accounting, as well as a professional certificate in strategic management and leadership. In 2020, he developed a “Roadmap to Resilience” to help church leaders “be prepared to sustain mission in times of crisis and provide an agile response to rapidly emerging realities.”

The current secretary and treasurer, GT Ng and Juan Prestol-Puesán, respectively, announced their retirements in the days leading up to the Spring Meeting. A nominating committee of sixty met on Wednesday, before the day’s business session, to consider whose names should be put forward for selection. GC President Ted Wilson said that four names were considered for the secretary’s position and six names for treasurer.

A native of Singapore, GT Ng’s “journeys with God,” as he calls his career, began after college when he and his wife Ivy went to Phnom Penh, Cambodia as missionaries in 1973. They were evacuated in 1975 when the Khmer Rouge took over the country. Additional missionary service

in Thailand and Malaysia followed, then work as a hospital chaplain, union conference youth leader, theology professor, and division secretary, before he was called to the General Conference to be an associate secretary. He was elected secretary of the General Conference in 2010.

Prestol-Puesán was elected GC treasurer/chief financial officer at the 2015 General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas. His denominational service began in 1969, when he worked as an accountant in the Dominican Conference, located in his hometown of Santo Domingo. He became treasurer of the North Dominican Mission in 1972, then left to attend Andrews University, graduating with his MBA in 1980. He then went on to serve as treasurer of the Greater New York Conference, Atlantic Union Conference, Euro-Asian Division, and North American Division, before joining the General Conference as undertreasurer in 2007.



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