Sligo Members Provide Healthcare to Neighbors

When the invitation came asking them to provide healthcare services, Potomac Conference’s Sligo church community in Takoma Park, Md., was ready. “We knew that this is where we should be—in the community so … we gladly responded,” said Rebecca Brillhart, associate pastor. The invitation came from CASA de Maryland, a community organization responding to the needs of the thousands of mainly Central Americans arriving in the Washington, D.C.-area after fleeing wars and strife in their countries of origin.

Under the theme “To Your Health!” or “A Tu Salud!” the health fair for the local underserved, intercultural community brought together several Seventh-day Adventist partners—Washington Adventist Hospital, Washington Adventist University and members of the Sligo church. Nearly 300 visitors, including Pedro Ventura, (pictured) received health attention, information and assessments, with the help of 120 volunteers turning the “neighbors meeting neighbors” community event into a day to remember.—Rajmund Dabrowski

READ MORE
ASI Attendees Give $2 Million for Mission

The annual international gathering of Adventist-laymen’s Services & Industries (ASI) last week drew a large attendance of generous participants who reached deep into their pockets to surpass the organization’s fundraising goal. More than 3,100 people packed into the Sacramento Convention Center (Calif.) on Sabbath morning, August 6, the final day of the 2011 convention. They worshiped with sacred orchestral music, listened to member and ministry testimonies and shouted “amens” during Seventh-day Adventist world church President Ted N.C. Wilson’s sermon. Wilson lauded the program’s theme, “Inspired to Finish Strong!”

The audience was clearly inspired to give. More than $2 million was collected in the special offering to fund 47 mission projects—surpassing the organization’s $1.5 million goal. “I think people realize the times we’re living in,” said Donna McNeilus, ASI general vice president, beaming at the conclusion of the four-day convention. “And even though the economic situation is extremely volatile, people really are serious about wanting to give their all for Jesus, and it showed here.” —Edwin Manuel García/ANN

READ MORE AT ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK

Economist Predicts New Adventist Hospital Will Bring Billions to Region

A leading economist is predicting that the proposed relocation of the Washington Adventist Hospital to White Oak, Md., and its continued use of the hospital’s current Takoma Park, Md.-campus, will spur billions of dollars in jobs, housing and private investment in the region.

In a newly released study of the economic impacts of the project, Stephen S. Fuller, PhD, director of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University in Arlington, Va., says the hospital’s importance as a catalyst for further economic development within the science corridor can
generate significant and continuing economic benefits to the local and state economies.—Story by Diana McFadden

READ MORE

Mountain View to Host Hispanic Camp Meeting This Weekend

With its work among Spanish-speaking members growing, Mountain View Conference leaders are hosting their second Hispanic camp meeting August 12-14 at Valley Vista Adventist Center in Huttonsville, W.Va. Reflecting on the theme “Jesus is Coming,” Walter Cardenas, Hispanic Ministries coordinator for the conference, says, “Now more than ever we have to live ready to receive our Savior and King. This is the reason why the main focus for this camp meeting is sharing how to live ready to receive our soon returning King.”

Main speaker Pastor Andres Reyes has been serving the Lord in the Dominican Republic for 15 years. Alabanza Pura (pictured), the official worship team of the Potomac Conference Hispanic Ministries, will lead in the song service. They will also perform a concert on Sabbath afternoon.

The weekend will include programs for kids, family-focused seminars and social events on Saturday night and Sunday afternoon. For more information, contact Cardenas at (703) 297-2294.

Noticias: La Conferencia de Mountain View realizará su campamento hispano este fin de semana

En vista a un ministerio hispano en creciendo, los líderes de la Conferencia de
Mountain View han planeado su segundo campamento hispano desde el 12 al 14 de abril en el Centro Adventista de Valley Vista, Huttonsville, WV. Considerando el tema central “Jesús Viene,” Walter Cárdenas, coordinador hispano de la conferencia, dice, “Ahora más que nunca tenemos que vivir preparados para recibir nuestro Salvador y Rey. Por eso decidimos que el enfoque de este campamento debería ser como vivir preparados esperando la venida del Señor.”

El orador principal será el Pastor Andrés Reyes (foto). El ha estado sirviendo a Dios en la Republica Dominicana por 15 años. Alabanza Pura, el grupo oficial de música del Ministerio Hispano de la Conferencia de Potomac, estará dirigiendo los servicios de alabanzas. También tendrán un concierto el sábado de tarde.

Durante el fin de semana habrá programas para niños, seminarios para la familia y eventos sociales. Estos se realizarán el sábado por la noche y el domingo por la tarde. Si desea más información, contacte al Pr. Cárdenas al (703) 297-2294.

College Colporteurs Canvass New Jersey, Maryland

They are devout fishers of men. As members of ANEW, a network of Seventh-day Adventist students and young professionals who are actively involved in campus ministries on secular universities in the mid-Atlantic region, these students are not afraid to declare their faith out loud. For several weeks this summer, nine of them worked with Allegheny East Conference churches as colporteurs canvassing in parking lots, at businesses, homes and apartments around Maryland and New Jersey.

Grace Lee, who recently graduated from the University of North Carolina with her master’s degree in Social Work, says, “This summer has definitely been helping me learn that God is a loving and personal Savior whose love is so much greater than I can imagine.”

ANEW will be hosting a fall conference at Camp Hebron in Halifax, Pa., October 14-16. To learn more about ANEW, visit anew-web.org.—Jacqueline E. Rivera

READ MORE
Chesapeake Summer Camps Foster Fun, Faith

Nearly 1,000 kids attended a Chesapeake Conference camp this summer. Mount Aetna Camp in Hagerstown, Md., capped enrollment at 560 residential campers due to staffing constraints, but several churches and schools offered day camps to serve their constituents and communities.

“Our goal is for every Chesapeake church that can afford it to offer FLAG Camp (Fun Learning About God) each summer,” says Carl Rodriguez, conference Youth Ministries director. “If we get 20 churches and schools to do it, and they each get 100 kids, then we’re reaching 2,000 kids!”

This year four Maryland churches—Baltimore First, Baltimore White Marsh, Frederick and Park (Salisbury) offered day camp; and two Delaware churches—Dover and West Wilmington; and Atholton Adventist Academy in Columbia, Md., launched their first summer day program.—Randy Myaing

Photo by Randy Myaing

Liberty’s VBS Teaches Kids About God’s Love

Four-year old Joash gave his mother important advice one afternoon as she searched for a lost item: “Mommy, pray. God is listening.” Where did he learn this? At Vacation Bible School (VBS) at Allegheny East Conference’s Liberty church in Randallstown, Md. For four weeks this summer, the church ran a VBS mini-camp using the theme “Pandamania—Where God is Wild About You.”

Forty children, 10 of whom were visitors from the church’s community, participated in Bible stories, crafts and games that emphasized the messages that God loves us no matter what and is
always listening. Bible stories ranged from creation week to Elijah on Mount Carmel to Jonah in the belly of a fish.

“I really liked the field trips, and I especially liked the people,” said Kianu Carcamo, 11, one of the first-time participants from the community. She and her siblings enjoyed VBS so much that they all want to come back next year.— Barbara Crawford

New Jersey Selects New Youth Director

Pastor Paulo Macena (pictured left) is the new Youth Ministries director for the New Jersey Conference. He replaces Pastor Laffit Cortés (pictured second from left) who went on to serve as chaplain at Pacific Union College (Calif.). Macena previously pastored the Luzo-Brazilian church in Newark and churches in the Waldwick and Wayne district while serving as the Children’s Ministries director for the conference. Macena is transitioning to the conference office where he will serve as the full-time director for Youth and Children’s ministries. His wife, Cristiana (pictured right), will continue to provide support to the Children’s Ministries program.

“We are pleased to have such an excellent and energetic leader,” José H. Cortés, conference president, said of Macena. “I know that he will continue a good strong youth ministry program in our conference.”

Williamsport Students Join Adults to Preach

Caleb Holt, Kayla Pryor and Taylor Fulmer, three Mountain View Christian School (MVCS) students, recently got a taste of ministry when they preached in a ShareHim series that took place at Pennsylvania Conference’s Williamsport church.
The series spanned the first three weekends and included 11 meetings. Fulmer (fifth-grade), Pryor (sixth-grade) and Holt (seventh-grade) each preached one sermon. The topics the three students covered include Sabbath, salvation and the state of the dead. Various students from MVCS presented special music each night. Approximately 20 people attended each meeting and MVCS parents who are not Adventist have since shown interest in what the Adventist Church teaches.

“I was so impressed that these students decided to be used by God to preach His Word,” said Thomas Grove, pastor of Williamsport church.—Ashley Richards

Campus Ministries Takes Off in Ohio

Last fall the Ohio Conference sponsored Campus Ministries programs at Ohio University (OU) in Athens, The Ohio State University in Columbus and Wright State University in Dayton. How did the Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) chaplains fare during their first year? Here are their stories:

A little daunted by the task of attempting to reach a student body of 21,303 students, Ohio University ACF chaplains Darrin and Beamy Thurber started the school year with a prayer walk through the campus. Then the Thurbers hosted a back-to-school barbecue for students and community members. The 2010-11 school year marked the beginning of ACF as a recognized student group on campus, the start of a weekly campus Bible study, a weekly campus prayer time and other social and spiritual events.—Heidi Shoemaker

READ MORE AND SEE PHOTOS

Meet Devante Stephenson, Short-Term Missionary

Meet Devante Stephenson (pictured right), a member of Allegheny East Conference’s Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Ashton, Md. As a short-term missionary with Global Vessels this summer, he traveled with 22 others to serve at the Havilah Village Orphanage in Tanzania.

Upon reflecting on his trip, this recent high
school graduate said: “When I arrived at the orphanage, I immediately fell in love with the kids. That they have lost so much in their lives already, but wake up every day with a smile, is a testimony in itself. While I was there, we went into the village and remodeled a house. You should have seen the joy in the homeowners’ faces after we finished the house. It was as if they won the lottery.

“Despite their many struggles, the people had a spirit of gratitude! They live day-to-day but still thank God!” Learn more about the orphanage at globalvessels.org.

Washington Adventist Sophomore Heads to Tanzania

This summer 35 Washington Adventist University students went overseas for short-term mission trips. However, Kellie Dehm, a sophomore nursing major at the Takoma Park, Md.-based school, will be the university’s first long-term missionary in over six years. Dehm will head to Arusha, Tanzania, on August 23. She will be spending one year as a student missionary working at the Havilah Village Orphanage. Global Vessels, which was founded by Emmanuel-Brinklow church members in Ashton, Md., operates the orphanage.

“I decided to go to Africa because I wanted to step out on faith and do what I felt God was impressing me to do,” Dehm shared. “I know that while I am there, I will be God’s vessel as He touches lives through me.”

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Stay Connected:
Sligo Community Lives Out Health Expertise With Neighbors

When the invitation came asking them to provide healthcare services, something that Seventh-day Adventists are known for, Potomac Conference’s Sligo church community in Takoma Park, Md., was ready. “We knew that this is where we should be—in the community so … we gladly responded,” said Rebecca Brillhart, associate pastor. The invitation came from CASA de Maryland, a community organization responding to the needs of the thousands of mainly Central Americans arriving in the Washington, D.C.-area after fleeing wars and strife in their countries of origin.

On Sabbath, August 6, Adventists in the area, including those from Washington Adventist Hospital, Washington Adventist University and members of the Sligo church provided a community health fair themed “To Your Health!” or “A Tu Salud!” They gathered at the McCormick-Goodhart Mansion, which is the headquarters of the CASA de Maryland Multicultural Center in Langley Park, a stone’s throw away from Takoma Park.

The center facilitates, among other activities educational programs, language classes and legal services to what it calls the “ethnically diverse drastically underserved communities of Langley Park.”

Taking the summer heat in stride, nearly 300 visitors came seeking health attention, information and assessments, and 120 volunteers turned a “neighbors meeting neighbors” community event into a day to remember.

The doctors, nurses, dentists and their assistants were joined by social workers, community activists, puppeteers, face-painters, site guides, volunteers serving watermelon slices and other fresh fruit or pretzels and the steel band from Sligo church.

Add the CASA de Maryland partners whose personnel were more than busy seeing a full four-hours of hustle and bustle, and happy faces of those who came and received health screenings and medical assistance.

For Gustavo Torres, executive director of CASA de Maryland, the partnership with the Adventist community spoke of a response to a real and acute need in this multicultural community. A partnership, which he termed as “extraordinary,” was “very essential, because 80 percent of the Latino and immigrant communities … have no access to healthcare, and now they are going to have an opportunity to receive it.”

High Sabbath

The organizers were eager to explain to volunteers that the Langley Park event was “not just Sligo’s event. It is ‘owned’ and shared by our community.” Volunteers were also cautioned that because they were on other people’s turf they are guests, and this is a time to listen, observe and realize that Sabbath-keeping may not be on people’s radar.

Yet, Charles Tapp, Sligo church’s senior pastor, was plain in explaining his attitude toward this “high Sabbath,” as he called it. “We [have taken] the ministry of health to our Langley Park neighbors in the form of a health fair. I am of the opinion that the fact that Jesus’ healing miracles were performed on the Sabbath was not by accident, but I believe that Christ wanted to show the relationship between the Sabbath and the healing of one’s mind and body.”

“In essence Jesus wanted to show … that the Sabbath was a day to set men free. Now that’s what I call a ‘high’ Sabbath,” Tapp concluded.
Annual ASI convention sees $2 million donated for mission

'Good News' TV, boat for Brazilian villages among 47 projects

8 Aug 2011, Sacramento, California, United States
Edwin Manuel Garcia/ANN

The annual international gathering of Adventist-laymen's Services & Industries last week drew a large attendance of generous participants who reached deep into their pockets to surpass the organization's fundraising goal.

More than 3,100 people packed into the Sacramento Convention Center on Sabbath morning, August 6, the final day of the 2011 ASI International Convention. They worshiped with sacred orchestral music, listened to member and ministry testimonies, and shouted amens during a sermon by Seventh-day Adventist world church President Ted N.C. Wilson, who lauded the program's theme, "Inspired to Finish Strong!"

The audience was clearly inspired to give: More than $2 million was collected in the special offering to fund 47 mission projects -- surpassing the goal of $1.5 million. "The crowd and the offering exceeded our expectations," said ASI General Vice President Donna McNeillus, beaming at the conclusion of the four-day convention. "I think people realize the times we're living in, and even though the economic situation is extremely volatile, people really are serious about wanting to give their all for Jesus, and it showed here."

ASI, which traces its roots back to 1947, is an organization of lay ministries, professionals, business leaders and other laypeople committed to actively participating in the worldwide mission of the Adventist Church.

The convention featured general sessions led by numerous speakers, including Ivor Myers, David Kulakov, Doug Batchelor, Lyndi Schwartz and Matt Parra.

Myers, director of Power of the Lamb Ministries and church pastor in the Central California Conference, kept the Friday evening audience gripped by moving through all major five tracks: evangelism, spiritual growth, health, nonprofit and business, and "Finishing Strong."

Adventist doctrines and Biblical prophecies in a rapid-fire 40 minutes.

Upwards of 2,000 people registered for the convention, and many attended some of the 20 seminars in five tracks: evangelism, spiritual growth, health, nonprofit and business, and "Finishing Strong."

At a Friday health seminar, Diana Fleming, co-author of The Full Plate Diet, explained the top reason why people fail to lose weight. "They don't know how," said Fleming, whose book promotes weight loss by eating more natural fiber-rich foods.

Children and youth participated in daylong, age-appropriate programming that included community service and evangelism in the local region.

At the exhibit hall, some 340 organizations from around the world -- a wide variety of independent and church-sponsored ministries ranging from 1000 Missionary Movement North America to Your Story Hour -- showed their wares, promoted their programs and offered their services.

Jewish-Adventist Ministries shared information on how to reach Jewish friends and neighbors. Orphans International Helpline sought $25 monthly sponsors to support children in Haiti. Kids in Discipleship offered training on ministering to children.

Hope for Bangkok encouraged convention goers to "invest in eternity." Fountainview Academy of British Columbia, Canada, sold recordings of its student musicians who performed at the convention. Changing People's Lives International Ministry invited Adventists to take mission trips to communist countries.

The exhibit hall at ASI conventions is well known for connecting laypeople with ministries, which provides opportunities for unique and otherwise unlikely collaborations.

That's what Paul Karmy of suburban Dallas, Texas, experienced.

Karmy, president of Liquid-Stone Concrete, attended his first ASI convention in 2004, when he visited the Adventist World Aviation booth. A pilot himself, he joined the group and helped raise money for a mission plane, and eventually served on the organization's board of directors.

At another ASI convention, while staffing the Adventist World Aviation booth, Karmy became interested in learning more about a television ministry being promoted from a nearby exhibit. That interest led to his...
Janet Claymore-Ross, principal of Holbrook Indian School in Holbrook, Arizona, visits with guests at the school's booth. About 340 organizations were featured at the exhibit hall at the Sacramento Convention Center. [photo: Gerry Chudleigh]

A major highlight of the convention was the Sabbath offering designated for 47 projects from around the world that were vetted by ASI and promoted in the convention magazine and from the stage.

About half the projects are in the United States, and one is in South America, a medical mission called Amazon Lifesavers Ministry, which needs a faster boat to travel to remote fishing villages in Brazil.

The ministry was started by Tennessee nurse practitioner Brad Mills and his wife, Lina, a registered nurse, and Brazilian locals. Mills had dreamed of becoming a missionary and doctor since age 3. He was further inspired by three mission trips with Maranatha Volunteers International while attending Madison Academy near Nashville.

In 2007, the couple felt called by God to provide health services, lectures, evangelism and church construction in remote areas along the Amazon River.

ASI is helping to expand their mission field.

The $20,000 ASI offering will allow the ministry to build an aluminum boat with outboard motor that can transport volunteer doctors to faraway destinations in one day, as opposed to the three days it now takes on slower boats.

"I am very excited by the donation," Mills said. "We truly are thankful to everyone who made this possible, and to God, who is still working in miraculous ways to financially provide for His work to advance."

Because convention donors met the $1.5 million offering goal, every project was fully funded, and then some. As was previously arranged, three ministries will divide the "overflow" offering, which is more than $400,000. The beneficiaries are: The Ellen G. White Estate; New Beginnings, a DVD evangelism training project; and The One-Day Structure Project, a joint effort between Maranatha and ASI.

In a separate gift, Adventist Development and Relief Agency President Rudi Maier presented Maranatha President Don Noble with a $1 million check for One-Day Schools.

Next year's ASI international convention will be August 8-11 in Dallas, Texas.
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2 Comments

Everything is fantastic! Good to see many companies that help others learn more about Jesus.

connor | August 9, 2011 7:15 AM | Reply

I have never heard a sermon like the one preach by Pastor Mayers, do you think you could send me a copy. I need to listen to it a second time.Iam an adventist but I have never heard the the Sanctuary Service preach and line up to fit all of heaven and earth. Don't get me wrong I have studied the Sanctuary Service.

Also I the children and the youth that that take part in spreading the Gospel, raise my hope because,Gd is raising a body of young people to finish the work. I was glad sabbath when I found ASI on 3ABN. What a joy it was tosee the young people reporting their experance,we are in a warfare for our children, let us pray for them.

All my blessing in Jesus name

Maslyn Bertrand 650 Belle Grove Dr, Jonesboro GA30238

Maslyn Bertrand | August 11, 2011 12:34 AM | Reply

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Report Predicts New Washington Adventist Hospital Will Be Economic Boon for Region

Story by Diana McFadden
Published 8/4/2011

A leading economist is predicting that the proposed relocation of the Washington Adventist Hospital to White Oak, Md. and its continued use of the hospital's nearby Takoma Park, Md. campus, will be a catalyst for helping the region meet its full economic potential.

In a newly released study of the economic impacts of the project, Stephen S. Fuller, PhD, director of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University in Arlington, Va., says the hospital's importance as a catalyst for further economic development within the Science Corridor can generate significant and continuing economic benefits to the local and state economies.

Some of the economic impacts associated with construction and operation of the White Oak site, and related spending at the Takoma Park campus include:

• Contributing $553.2 million to the state's economy during construction;
• Construction will generate $115.5 million in new personal earnings to workers residing within Montgomery County and Prince George's County;
• Post-construction operation would contribute $630.8 million to the state's economy in 2015;
• Post-construction economic activity related to Washington Adventist would support about 4,700 statewide jobs.

The proposed new medical campus is on 48 acres at Plum Orchard Drive and Cherry Hill Road near White Oak, along the border of Montgomery County and Prince George's County. All major traffic and land-use approvals are already in place for the site, which is near the headquarters of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

According to the report, Washington Adventist Hospital is the critical next component in creating the necessary conditions within the Science Corridor to achieve its full economic potential. Its position in this development sequence is unique because Washington Adventist Hospital will:

• Help extend the FDA's economic benefits into the local economy;
• Be a major economic generator that will strengthen the surrounding markets for supporting land uses;
• Generate investors' confidence within the Science Corridor;
• Enhance the Corridor's name and business reputation;
• Stimulate significant new investment on adjacent properties.

"A relocated Washington Adventist Hospital at White Oak presents a unique strategic opportunity that can help strengthen the region's competitive position and economic outlook over its long-run future," Fuller said. "The White Oak location, adjacent to the East County Center for Science and Technology and the LifeSci Village, will establish a major employment center as well as a major economic magnet at the north edge of the Science Corridor."

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the hospital and the FDA that lays the groundwork for health research and medical innovation is an important step in achieving the synergies that can be focused within the Science Corridor. This in turn will have a positive economic benefit for the local economy.

"As the linkages between the FDA and Washington Adventist become regularized, as employees of both institutions opt to live closer to their place of employment, and as the retail and business base in the surrounding area grows in quality, organizations doing business with the FDA and with each other will find co-locating in proximity to the FDA campus will become increasingly attractive in comparison to more distant locations in the Washington area and nationally," Fuller writes.

The report goes on to conclude that the location of Washington Adventist Hospital in White Oak has the potential to start a development process that ultimately will represent new private investments totaling more than $5 billion, providing work space for more than 8,000 workers beyond those employed on the FDA campus laying the foundation for a live-work community housing 7,500 residents and enhancing the economic base and quality of life for residents and businesses in an area that has long underperformed its growth potential.

"We are thrilled that Dr. Fuller’s professional assessment brings to light what we and the thousands of our supporters have recognized for years—that this project presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," said Joyce Portela, president of Washington Adventist Hospital. "The relocated Washington Adventist Hospital and the continued use of our Takoma Park campus will continue to keep the hospital viable, keep the region’s healthcare infrastructure strong and improve the health of the economy."
College Colporteurs Canvass New Jersey, Maryland

Story by Jacqueline E. Rivera
Published 8/10/2011

They are devout fishers of men. As members of ANEW, a network of Seventh-day Adventist students and young professionals who are actively involved in campus ministries on secular universities in the Mid-Atlantic region, these students are not afraid to declare their faith out loud. For several weeks this summer, nine of them worked with Allegheny East Conference churches canvassing in parking lots, at businesses, homes and apartments around Maryland and New Jersey. While in the Fort Washington and Clinton, Md., areas, they worked with the Breath of Life church to help distributing fliers for the church’s “iRead” revival series.

The students also spent some time in Camden, which is one of the poorest and most dangerous cities in the U.S. There they worked with the Mt. Olivet church and were able to gain many Bible study contacts for the church. The students also canvassed for one day in small-town Salem, N.J., where they gathered a great number of Bible studies interests. The students are currently working with the Sharon church to canvass the Baltimore-area. This is their last week canvassing, and they are sure that God will bless their efforts even down to the last minute.

Grace Lee, who recently graduated from the University of North Carolina with her Master’s degree in Social Work, distinctly remembers meeting Mrs. Smith. She shares: “Mrs. Smith’s marriage was falling apart and her husband had just left her and her children the day before. She was lying in bed crying out to God asking Him to send her a sign that He still cared, when she heard the doorbell ring. I was on the other side of the door, with no knowledge of what she was experiencing. Upon opening the door and I began talking with her about the book Peace Above the Storm (Steps to Christ). She immediately invited me into her home and ended up purchasing four books. We were able to talk and pray together.”

“This summer has definitely been helping me learn that God is a loving and personal Savior whose love is so much greater than I can imagine,” Lee said. “So many times I selfishly ask God to answer my prayers, but forget that He also wants to use me to answer the prayers of others.”

ANEW will be hosting a fall conference at Camp Hebron in Halifax, Pa., October 14-16. To learn more about ANEW, visit anew-web.org.
Campus Ministries Takes Off in Ohio
Story by Heidi Shoemaker
Published 8/9/2011

Last fall the Ohio Conference sponsored Campus Ministries programs at Ohio University (OU) in Athens, The Ohio State University in Columbus and Wright State University in Dayton. How did the Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) chaplains fare during their first year? Here are their stories:

Thurbers Offer “Christian Spirit” at OU
A little daunted by the task of attempting to reach a student body of 21,303 students, Ohio University ACF chaplains Darrin and Beamy Thurber started the school year with a prayer walk through the campus. Then the Thurbers hosted a back-to-school barbecue for students and community members. The 2010-11 school year marked the beginning of ACF as a recognized student group on campus, the start of a weekly campus Bible study, a weekly campus prayer time and other social and spiritual events.

One of ACF’s non-Christian international student members remarked that he is thankful he became involved with ACF as he “had a lot to learn from the Christian spirit of love and service.” One of the university’s student leaders also commented, “Students appreciate that ACF is a [positive] alternative, especially since OU is known to be a party school, ranking fifth in the nation for party schools.”

Helbleys Engage OSU Students
Gina and David Helbley did not let impending parenthood slow down their efforts at The Ohio State University (OSU). In between re-establishing an ACF group on campus, creating a website for their group (acf.org.ohio-state.edu), weekly Bible studies led by ACF students, connecting community members with opportunities to engage the campus in fun, inspirational events, the Helbleys had their first child, Anna Journey. Gina also speaks at area churches to increase awareness of and promote campus ministry.

Araiza Finds Disciples at Wright State
According to Chaplain Sabrina Araiza, “Wright State ACF really had a great kickoff!” As the campus was bustling with 19,793 students, “We were eager to find excited [Seventh-day] Adventists and other Christians on campus who would want to grow as disciples on a public campus.” And that is just what she and her team did through Bible studies, multiple social events and community service projects in the Dayton area. A praise band is already in place for Friday night vespers for the coming school year. Araiza says one student who was not an Adventist shared with her how difficult it was for her to share her faith but felt that at ACF she finally had “a place where I can talk about God freely and … feel comfortable going out and sharing God with others.”

After having one-on-one meetings with the most active members, Ohio ACF chaplains have seen student leaders take charge of their own campus organizations. ACF leaders from the three campuses are planning a statewide conference for public students throughout all public universities titled “Engage Ohio 2011.”

Read more about all of the campus ministries at ohioacf.blogspot.com. To learn more about this outreach, contact Steve Carlson at the Ohio Conference at (740) 397-4665, ext. 122, or email youth@ohioadventist.org. Provide financial support by sending contributions to The Ohio Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, c/o Campus Connections, P.O. Box 1230, Mount Vernon, OH 43050.