Mount Vernon Spanish Youth “Awaken” Their Talents for Ministry

“God is really blessing,” shares Victor Martinez, who is pictured with his wife, Brenda, performing a skit. According to Martinez, the blessing is that Potomac Conference’s Mount Vernon Spanish church, which has 40-50 active members consistently draws some 90 young people to their monthly Friday night vespers services at 2001 Sherwood Hall Lane in Alexandria, Va.

What’s the draw? Awakening, which is anything but traditional worship. Participants now say that this service has become a refuge and allowed them to use their talents to worship God. Each month, young people come from as far south as Stafford, Va., and as far north as Germantown, Md., to share their original songs, poetry and skits.—Story and photo by Taashi Rowe

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Los jóvenes hispanos de Mount Vernon “despiertan” sus talentos para el ministerio

“Dios está realmente bendiciendo”, comparte Víctor Martínez, el ex director de jóvenes de la iglesia hispana Mount Vernon, en Alexandria, Va. Según Martínez, la bendición es que esta iglesia de la Asociación del Potomac, que tiene unos cuarenta a cincuenta feligreses activos, regularmente atrae a unos noventa jóvenes a sus servicios vespertinos mensuales los viernes de noche, en la localidad de 2001 Sherwood Hall Lane.

Hace un año no había este servicio. “Nos dimos cuenta que nuestros jóvenes no tenían una manera de disfrutar el sábado”, recuerda Martínez. “Muchas veces salían con sus amistades no cristianas y participaban en actividades no cristianas”. Luego, comenzaron a realizar un servicio vespertino tradicional, que con el tiempo se transformó en lo que hoy se conoce como Awakening (despertar), que es cualquier cosa menos una adoración tradicional.

LEA MAS Y VE FOTOS

Adventist Risk Management Prioritizes Safe Churches

A new child protection program from Adventist Risk Management (ARM) is galvanizing the church’s ongoing efforts to shield minors from abuse and misconduct.

Through training for adults and children, as well as background screening for employees and volunteers who work closely with minors, ARM’s Child Protection Plan equips local leaders to make the church a safe place, says Arthur Blinci (pictured), ARM vice president and chief risk management officer.
The plan is already getting resounding support. “The Columbia Union’s Office of Education embraces every effort that seeks to further protect, nurture and equip young children in their daily journeys to spiritual, social, emotional and academic growth,” says Hamlet Canosa, Education vice president for the Columbia Union. “This new initiative further aligns other Seventh-day Adventist ministries across North America with that of education to provide safe and secure environments for one of the church’s richest treasures—its children.”—Story by Adventist News Network/Visitor

CLICK HERE TO READ THE FULL STORY AT ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK

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**Washington Adventist University Leads Russian Bible Translation**

In 2010 Mikhail Kulakov, DPhil, became director and editor-in-chief of the Bible Translation Institute, which is based at Washington Adventist University (WAU) in Takoma Park, Md. Kulakov (pictured) shares his thoughts on this work:

**Q:** Isn’t there already a Russian translation of the Bible?

**A:** The most recent translation of the complete Bible authorized by the Russian Orthodox Church was published in 1875. For most Russians today, it is practically unreadable. The WAU institute is leading in the translation of the Bible into contemporary Russian language. The New Testament, the Psalms and the Pentateuch are already complete and published, and the institute plans to publish the new translation of the entire Bible by 2015.

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**Pennsylvania Conference Church, Students Plant Children’s Church**

When the Pennsylvania Conference challenged churches and pastors to become
intentional for mission, the Kenhorst Boulevard church in Reading took up the challenge. Together with the Pennsylvania Conference Youth Ministries Department Cool Camp team, they reached out to children in the low-income community neighboring their church. The week before Cool Camp, the Pennsylvania Youth Challenge student literature evangelist team reached hundreds of homes around the church.

As a result of these efforts, approximately 40 children attended their Cool Camp, with more than 35 kids accepting Christ as their Savior. When Cool Camp was over, Pastor Mike McCabe (pictured with some of the kids) and the Kenhorst Boulevard members created the Oakbrook Project. Designed as a church-planting project, McCabe recruited a team of Blue Mountain Academy (BMA) students to lead this Sabbath afternoon ministry. McCabe is mentoring these young people. Church members prepare meals for the children and students each week, get to know the children and pray for the ministry.—Story by Ray Hartwell

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Mountain View Teacher Embraces Education Mission

Students in Melvin Glass’ physics class at Valley View Adventist School (VVAS) in Bluefield, W.Va., get a practical understanding of the world. His field trips can involve analyzing the forces on an elevator as it goes up and down or learning about angular momentum while on a merry-go-round. Glass, who also teaches chemistry, algebra and geometry, has taught in Seventh-day Adventist schools for 25 years, seven of which have been at Mountain View Conference’s VVAS.

Before coming to VVAS, Glass (pictured) taught at a self-supporting Adventist school and then at Valley Grande Academy in Texas. He holds undergraduate degrees in physics and math from Southern Adventist University (Tenn.) and a Master of Arts in Teaching Mathematics from Andrews University (Mich.). While he enjoys preparing students for life here on Earth, Glass says his favorite part of teaching in an Adventist school is “being free to talk about God and the Bible and how it fits in with science.”—Story by Taashi Rowe

READ MORE
New Film to Explore Adventist Education

Martin Doblmeier, founder and president of Journey Films, and the man behind The Adventists, the award-winning documentary that highlights the Adventist Church’s health emphasis, is at it again. For his latest film, Doblmeier is in the beginning stages of exploring Adventist education. He says he became interested in the topic after noticing that Adventists were doing one particular thing well: “Providing students something that is difficult to describe but something everybody wants, and that is developing body, mind and spirit,” he explains.

He adds, “And while it’s possible to quantify results of education on mind and body, quantifying spirit is the most elusive of all. We will try to unearth what that means and try to quantify spiritual development.” Doblmeier (far right) is pictured in a sixth-grade technology class at Spencerville Adventist Academy in Spencerville, Md., with teacher Darlene Rackley and students Cameron Mayer (left) and Emma Tennyson. He estimates the new film will be released next spring.—Story by Taashi Rowe

Review and Herald Seeks 1,000 Local Church Reps

Want free books? Then join the more than 1,000 church representatives that Adventist Book Centers (ABC) and the Review and Herald Publishing Association in Hagerstown, Md., are recruiting. The positions do not come with a paycheck, but they do have perks for those who love books and reading. “The idea is to have an ABC representative in each church congregation,” says Oscar Hernandez, who directs the Church Promoter Program.

Church promoters receive a monthly package that contains instructional information and several promotional pieces, such as posters, bulletin inserts, church announcements, scripts and summaries of the
books being promoted. Also, promoters receive free copies of the books featured that month. Their part of the bargain is to inform local church members about new products and help the local ABC take orders. For more information, visit www.reviewandherald.com/churchpromoter or contact Oscar Hernandez at ohernandez@rhpa.org or (301) 393-3252.

End Quote: Are Your Toes Wet Yet?

My parents, Nem and Zelda Bailey, have always been strong supporters of Christian education, even when the money was not on hand to support their vision. When three of their four children were school aged, my parents had to make a decision. Was there a Seventh-day Adventist school near us? No. Did they have the money for private school? No. Were they discouraged? Of course not! They knew God would provide the money when it was needed and He did.

Seventh-day Adventist Christian education is expensive, but our God is in control and He only asks that we trust Him and claim the promises. Remember the priests of Israel as they approached the swollen Jordan River. The Jordan did not part until they obeyed God’s command. So I ask again, are your toes wet yet? Have you put God to the test? He will never ask us to do anything without making a way for obedience. If your child is not yet attending an Adventist school because you believe you cannot afford it, put your toes in the water and watch the miracle unfold.—Yvette Cooper, Allegheny West Conference Education Superintendent

Columbia Union Members in the News

Kettering College Mentioned in Newscast

Central Church in Columbus Gets Produce to Needy

Pennsylvania Conference Couple Gleans for the Hungry, See p. 39
UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2-31: Driven: Who’s Navigating Your Life? All are invited to come out and attend this powerful evangelistic series that is sure to cause you to think about who’s navigating your life. Paul Graham, Restoration Praise Center’s senior pastor, will host the series, which will feature the following guest speakers: Pastor Gregory Nelson on March 2-3, Mario Broussard on March 9-10, Pastor Jamie Kowlessar on March 16-17, Pastor Abraham Jules on March 23-24 and Pastor Furman Fordham on March 30-31. Come out each weekend during the following times: Friday night beginning at 7:30, Saturday morning beginning at 11 and Saturday afternoon beginning at 5. The church is located at 10411 Greenbelt Road in Lanham, Md.

March 8-11: The Columbia Union chapter of the Adventist-laymen’s Services and Industries (ASI) convention will feature Ivor Myers, speaker/director of Power of the Lamb Ministries; the Guild of Adventist Musicians and Henry Wright, pastor of the Community Praise Center in Alexandria, Va. The convention will be held at Potomac Conference’s Vienna (Va.) church, located at 344 Courthouse Road SW in Vienna. For more information visit www.asicolumbi Union.netasi.org or register at www.plusline.org.

March 10: Kelly Mowrer Presents “Into His Presence With Praise” on Sabbath morning at 11 a.m. at the Staunton (Va.) church at 1000 North Coalter Street. You are invited to come renew your faith through beautiful music and stories of beloved hymns. An inspiring speaker, pianist and recording artist, Mowrer travels in full-time ministry telling of God’s great grace and love. She also hosts two television programs, Praise and His Words Are Life. For more information, call (540) 886-8081.

March 10: Kelly Mowrer will present a piano concert at the Hagerstown (Md.) church located at 1507 Robinwood Drive at 5 p.m. This Sabbath Sundown Serenade concert is open to all.

March 10: “How to Share Your Faith” is the title of a seminar that Rajkumar Dixit, associate pastor of New Hope church, will present this Sabbath. Learn the basic tools of how to tell your personal testimony in this high speed, practical seminar. The seminar starts at 1:30 p.m., at the New Hope church, which is located at 12350 Hall Shop Road in Fulton, Md. Lunch is provided. There is no charge, but registration by March 7 is required. Visit lookingforachurch.org, or phone (301) 854-1866 to register.

March 14: Frederick Adventist School invites any interested student in grades 7-9 to attend their Junior Academy Days. Frederick Adventist School’s junior academy offers a rigorous academic program with a low teacher-to-student ratio, affordable tuition,
financial aid and merit scholarships available. For more information or to RSVP, email Teresa Kelchner at teresakelchner@comcast.net or call her at (301) 788-9522. The school also offers tours every Wednesday. To schedule a visit, call (301) 663-0363.

March 15: Vienna Adventist Academy’s Open House will start at 6 p.m. Vienna Adventist Academy is a private, Christian school that educates children from pre-kindergarten through 8th-grade. They are located at 340 Courthouse Road, SW, in Vienna, Va. For more information, visit www.viennaadventistacademy.org, call (703) 938-6200 or send an email to viennaadventistacademy@gmail.com.

March 22: Dupont Park Adventist School Open House runs from 9-11 a.m. This school for pre-schoolers thru 10th-graders, is located at 3942 Alabama Avenue, SE, in Washington, D.C. They will have another open house on April 26. For more information about the school, call (202) 583-8500.

March 23: The Mount Vernon Spanish church in Alexandria, Va., invites youth to Awakening. The program allows young people to worship God in creative ways such as poetry, song or acting. The program is in English and starts at 7 p.m. Find out more at facebook.com/creativeworship.

March 30: “DECEIVED” is a stage play written and directed by Anthony Hackett, a local Seventh-day Adventist. This play is designed to expose how Satan can and will deceive people, but also how God always gets the victory! It also features the Washington Adventist University gospel choir and Orville, the poet. This free play starts at 7:30 p.m. at Sligo church, which is located at 7700 Carroll Avenue in Takoma Park, Md.

March 31: The Columbia Union Conference Has Designated This Date as Washington Adventist University Sabbath. This is a time for congregations to hold up the university in their prayers and support Adventist higher education. Visit www.wau.edu to learn more about the exciting things that are happening at your university. For more information, contact Lahna Farver, assistant in the Advancement Office at (301) 891-4133 or email lfarver@wau.edu.

April 4: Frederick Adventist School’s Pre-Kindergarten Round Up. Children who will be aged 4 (eligible for Pre-K) before September 1 and their parents are invited to visit the school for the day. There are many exciting things planned for the children, along with a complimentary lunch. RSVP to teresakelchner@comcast.net or (301) 788-9522.
April 15: Kettering College’s Fourth Annual Spring Into Health 5K Run/Walk starts at 2 p.m. at the college (3737 Southern Boulevard in Kettering, Ohio). Registration and packet pick-up begins at 1 p.m. in front of the school. The cost is just $25 for participants registering before Wednesday, April 4, and the first 250 registrants are guaranteed a T-shirt. More information and a link to online registration can be found at KC.edu/5K.

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Maria Galeas sings a song, which encourages listeners to praise God through anything.

Mount Vernon Spanish Youth “Awaken” Their Talents for Ministry

“God is really blessing,” shares Victor Martinez, the former youth director of the Mount Vernon Spanish church in Alexandria, Va. According to Martinez, the blessing is that this Potomac Conference church of some 40-50 active members consistently draws some 90 young people to their monthly Friday night “vespers” services at 2001 Sherwood Hall Lane.

One year ago, there was no such service. “We noticed that our young people didn’t really have any way to enjoy Sabbath,” Martinez recalled. “A lot of the time they would go out with their non-Christian friends and do non-Christian activities.”

This worried Martinez and the other youth leaders and so they started praying. Then they started hosting a traditional vespers service, which eventually morphed into what is now known, as Awakening, which is anything but traditional worship. Participants now say that this service has become a refuge and allowed them to use their talents to worship God. Each month, young people come from as far south as Stafford, Va., and as far north as Germantown, Md., to share their original songs, poetry and skits.

Awakening also has another twist—although it targets Hispanic youth, the service is in English making it easy for second-generation Hispanics to bring their English-speaking friends. “I think that’s why youth have come to the service from all over. We’ve also had non-Christians come as well and enjoy themselves,” Martinez says.

Maria Galeas, 20, is a student and member of Chesapeake Conference’s Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md. She participated in Awakening for the first time last month at Potomac Conference’s Hispanic Lay Festival in Ocean City, Md. She is excited that this program exists for artistic young Seventh-day Adventists like herself. Galeas, who already sings at different churches, says that praising God through song is a part of her Christian journey. “Worshiping through singing? That’s how I worship,” she says. “Yes I could sing in the congregation, but in His Word He says we should use the talents He has given us.”
More Than Entertainment

Daniel Cruz, Mount Vernon’s new Youth Ministries director, is another founding member of Awakening who gets to exercise his acting talent by participating in skits. He frankly says that Awakening is helping to keep him out of the streets. “I grew up Adventist, but strayed a bit,” he said. “I got involved because I want to work for God, reach kids and keep them away from [the streets].”

Martinez, who does poetry and skits, says, “Most of the adults enjoy [Awakening]. Then there are a few who think it’s more of us trying to entertain.”

But for some Awakening participants, the service goes beyond entertainment. It can present opportunities to literally save someone’s life. During that weekend in Ocean City, Suranny Villamizar, who attends the Culpeper (Va.) Spanish company and works as a registered nurse on an adolescent unit for teens who are suicidal and homicidal, heard two mentions of suicide. Villamizar says, “I see these young people need Jesus badly.” Once on stage, Villamizar didn’t sing, she instead shared a passionate plea for young people to give their hearts to Jesus and share Him with their hurting peers.

Still, music can be a balm, and one singer Lizzy Mejia Trochez, who attends the Montgomery Village Spanish church in Montgomery Village, Md., sang “Jesus is My Lifeguard” with the following words: “When I don’t have the strength; Jesus is the way, the truth, life; He is my reason for living.” Who knows how these words may have touched a suffering teen.

The ministry will continue to reach young people one Friday night a month. “We really do give God praise, and we are sincere in it,” says Martinez, who is now a member at the Community Praise Center in Alexandria. He and his co-laborers already plan to take the program on the road. The next program will be at 7 p.m. Friday, March 23. Find out more at facebook.com/creativeworship.
en el internet. Desde nuestra sede en Columbia, Md., trabajamos para avanzar y ejecutar la misión de la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día en el centro de los Estados Unidos--preparar a un pueblo para el pronto regreso de Cristo.

En esta página compartimos historias emocionantes de cómo Dios está obrando en las iglesias hispano hablantes. ¡Necesitamos su ayuda en mantener actualizada esta página! Le invitamos a enviarnos sus historias y noticias en inglés y español a Visitor@columbiaunion.net.

Los jóvenes hispanos de Mount Vernon "despiertan" sus talentos para el ministerio

Historia y fotos por Taashi Rowe
Publicada el 6 de marzo de 2012

"Dios está realmente bendiciendo", comparte Víctor Martínez, el ex director de jóvenes de la iglesia hispana Mount Vernon, en Alexandria, Va. Según Martínez, la bendición es que esta iglesia de la Asociación del Potomac, que tiene unos cuarenta a cincuenta feligreses activos, regularmente atrae a unos noventa jóvenes a sus servicios vespertinos mensuales los viernes de noche, en la localidad de 2001 Sherwood Hall Lane.

Hace un año no había este servicio. "Nos dimos cuenta que nuestros jóvenes no tenían una manera de disfrutar el sábado", recuerda Martínez. "Muchas veces salían con sus amistades no cristianas y participaban en actividades no cristianas".

Esto le preocupó a Martínez y a los otros líderes juveniles, así que comenzaron a orar. Luego, comenzaron a realizar un servicio vespertino tradicional, que con el tiempo se transformó en lo que hoy se conoce como Awakening (despertar), que es cualquier cosa menos una adoración tradicional. Los participantes ahora dicen que este servicio se ha convertido en un refugio y les permite usar sus talentos para adorar a Dios. Cada mes, los jóvenes vienen desde tan lejos como Stafford, Va., al sur, y tan lejos como Germantown, Md., al norte, para compartir sus cantos originales, poemas, y actuaciones dramáticas.

Awakening también tiene otro aspecto—aunque está dirigido a los jóvenes hispanos, el servicio se realiza en inglés, haciendo que la segunda generación hispana traiga a sus amigos de habla inglesa. "Creo que por eso los jóvenes llegan de todas partes. También han venido no cristianos y lo han disfrutado", dice Martínez.

María Galeas, de veinte años, es estudiante y feligrés de la iglesia Spencerville en la Asociación de Chesapeake, en Silver Spring, Md. Ella participó en Awakening por primera vez el mes pasado durante el festival hispano laico de la Asociación, en Ocean City, Md. Ella está emocionada porque existe este programa para los jóvenes artísticos de la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día, como lo es ella. Galeas, que ya canta en varias iglesias, dice que alabar a Dios a través del canto es parte de su jornada cristiana. "¿Adorar a través del canto? Así es como yo adoro", dice ella. "Si, yo podría cantar en la congregación, pero Dios nos dice en su Palabra que debemos usar los talentos que Él nos ha dado".
Más que entretenimiento

Daniel Cruz, director del ministerio juvenil en Mount Vernon, es otro fundador de Awakening, que puede ejercitar sus talentos de actuación participando en los dramas. Sinceramente dice que Awakening le está ayudando a mantenerse alejado de las calles. "Crecí en la iglesia adventista, pero me aparté un poco", dijo él. "Me involucré porque deseo trabajar por Dios, alcanzar a los niños y alejarlos [de las calles]".

Martínez, quien hace poemas y actúa en dramas, dice: "La mayoría de los adultos disfrutan [Awakening]. Y luego están los pocos que piensan que se trata de nosotros querer entretener".

Sin embargo, para algunos de los participantes de Awakening, el servicio va más allá del entretenimiento. Puede presentar oportunidades para literalmente salvar la vida de alguien. Durante ese fin de semana en Ocean City, Suranny Villamizar, que asiste a la compañía hispana de Culpeper (Va.) y trabaja como enfermera en una unidad para adolescentes, ayudando a jóvenes suicidas y homicidas, escuchó mencionar dos casos de suicidio. Villamizar dice: "Veo que estos jóvenes necesitan desesperadamente a Jesús". Una vez en el escenario, Villamizar no cantó, más bien compartió su petición fervorosa para que los jóvenes le entreguen sus corazones a Jesús y lo compartan con sus compañeros que están doliendo.

La música puede ser un bálsamo, y la cantante Lizzie Mejía Trochez, que asiste a la iglesia hispana de Montgomery Village, en Montgomery Village, Md., cantó "Jesús es mi salvavidas", con las siguientes palabras:

"Cuando no tengo fuerzas, Jesús es el camino, la verdad, y la vida; Él es mi razón de vivir". Nadie puede saber cómo estas palabras tocarán a un adolescente que sufre.

El ministerio seguirá alcanzando a los jóvenes un viernes de noche al mes. "En verdad alabamos a Dios y somos sinceros en ello", dice Martínez, ahora miembro en Community Praise Center, en Alexandria. Él y sus colaboradores ya tienen planes de llevar el programa por carretera. El siguiente programa será el viernes 23 de marzo a las 7:00 p.m. Conozca más en facebook.com/creativeworship.
A new child protection program from the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s risk management organization is galvanizing the church’s ongoing efforts to shield minors from abuse and misconduct.

Through training for adults and children, as well as background screening for employees and volunteers who work closely with minors, Adventist Risk Management’s Child Protection Plan equips local leaders to make the church a safe place, says ARM Vice President and Chief Risk Management Officer Arthur Blinci.

“It’s part of our mission to help protect the ministries of the Seventh-day Adventist Church,” says Blinci, citing Children’s Ministries, Youth Ministries, Pathfinders and Adventurers as a “core component” of that mission. “Faith-based communities have a moral, ethical and legal responsibility to protect children from harm when they’re in our care,” he says.

The church has made significant strides toward achieving that goal. In North America, many church employees and volunteers are mandated reporters, Blinci says. This means they have a legal obligation to report abuse or allegations of abuse that occur within the church setting. By 2003, the church’s North American Division had drafted protocol for dealing with sexual misconduct and child abuse. Late last year, the division voted a new child protection policy mandating that every level of church administration implement a training and screening program for volunteers.

The Adventist world church has also been proactive about writing guidelines and voting policies to protect minors. Indeed, at the church’s General Conference Session in 2010, delegates voted to add to the Church Manual specific language guiding the appointment of church employees and volunteers who work closely with minors. They agreed that adults leading out in Pathfinders, Vacation Bible School, Children’s Ministries and Sabbath School programs “must meet church and legal standards and requirements, such as background checks or certification.”

Still, Blinci says that policies, guidelines and good intentions only go so far. Adventist Risk
ARM Vice President and Chief Risk Management Officer Arthur Blinci wants to put tools and resources in the hands of local church leaders. A partnership with Shield The Vulnerable equips them to better protect children, he says. [photo courtesy ARM]

Management routinely handles a couple dozen cases of child abuse every year and has spent some $30 million on indemnity cases over the past two decades. Many U.S. states have open statutes of limitations, allowing older claims of abuse to be raised and litigated.

What the church needs are tools and resources to put in the hands of local church administrators and leaders, he says.

“We’ve heard for so many years from church members, ‘How do we do it?’ Blinci says.

Now Adventist Risk Management is providing an answer. Through a partnership with Shield The Vulnerable, the organization’s new Child Protection Plan offers online training for adults on addressing abuse, neglect, predators, bullying, boundaries and respect. It also provides age-appropriate information for children on recognizing and reporting abuse.

Shield The Vulnerable -- a California-based service provider that frequently works with faith-based, non-profit organizations -- also offers background screening for employees and volunteers as a “critical” line of defense, Blinci says.

“So often, especially on the volunteer side, there’s typically no screening. You want to volunteer for Children’s Ministries? Great, come on, we can use you,” he says. “Now, when potential volunteers know before they even apply that you’re going to run a criminal background check, if they have a propensity, they’re not even going to volunteer.”

While creating the Child Protection Plan, ARM discovered that the church’s Lake Union Conference had already partnered with Shield The Vulnerable and piloted its training and screening programs in the U.S. states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin and a portion of Minnesota.

Blinci expects all 59 of the North American Division’s conferences will follow suit in the coming months. Through Shield The Vulnerable, a conference or other administrative unit creates an account that tracks progress as they train volunteers and perform background screenings. “It goes all the way down to the local church and school level,” he says.

ARM resource kits for local churches include PowerPoint presentations, a video clip, a sample child protection policy and reference information.

While North American Division policy doesn’t mandate the use of Shield The Vulnerable, it does require some type of training and screening. “There are other ways a conference may choose to do their own training and orientation, but they have to do something,” Blinci says.

“Abuse of children is not only prevalent in society, but is also occurring within our churches,” says Phyllis Washington, Children’s Ministries director for the North American Division. “By recognizing that the problem exists in our congregations, we are taking a crucial step toward providing a safe
environment, restoring trust, promoting healing and ultimately preventing child abuse.”

While the Shield The Vulnerable program may not fully apply to the world church due to differences in reporting laws, some of its elements are universally relevant and can be tailored to fit local needs, Blinci says.

“The goal is to protect our kids, which are the greatest resources we have. Hopefully now there are no excuses.”

Click here to download Child Protection Plan resources and references from Adventist Risk Management.
Washington Adventist University Leads Russian Bible Translation Project

In 2010 Mikhail Kulakov, DPhil, became director and editor-in-chief of the Bible Translation Institute, which is based at Washington Adventist University. While Kulakov is based at the Takoma Park, Md., campus, he is partnering with the Zaosky Adventist Seminary and Institute in Russia. Recently, the entire Sabbath service at Potomac Conference’s Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., was devoted to raising awareness of the project. Kulakov preached for both worship services and Elena Rudoy, a Russian soloist, sang at a fundraising concert that evening. Kulakov shares his thoughts on this work below:

Q: Isn't there already a Russian translation of the Bible?
A: The most recent translation of the complete Bible authorized by the Russian Orthodox Church, the Synodal translation, was published in 1875. For most Russians today, it is practically unreadable. The WAU institute is leading in the translation of the Bible into contemporary Russian language.

In his address to the 1917 Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, I. Yevseyev, chairman of the Russian Bible Commission, said this translation, "does not follow consistently the original text. A much more serious problem is its literary backwardness. The language of the translation is heavy, outdated …"

Q: What is the Bible being translated from to what?
A: The current project involves the translation of the entire Bible into the Russian language. The Old Testament is being translated from the ancient Hebrew and the New Testament from the biblical Greek.

Q: Who are the participants in this project?
A: The WAU Bible Translation Institute is an exciting initiative in international and interdenominational scholarly collaboration. Together with the team of biblical scholars from various universities across Russia, the WAU institute is leading in the project of the translation of the Bible into contemporary Russian language.

We value the privilege to enlist the help of many distinguished scholars in Russia and the assistance of the United Bible Societies with the preparation of the electronic text. We are enjoying a very close and profitable collaboration with the leading philologists and Biblical scholars in Russia.

Q: When will this new translation be ready?
A: The New Testament, the Psalms and the Pentateuch have already been completed and published and the institute plans to publish the new translation of the entire Bible by 2015.
Pastor Mike McCabe spends time with some of the children who attend the Sabbath afternoon Oakbrook Project.

Conference challenged churches and pastors to become intentional for mission, the Kenhorst Boulevard church took up the challenge. Together with the Pennsylvania Conference Youth Ministries Department Cool Camp team, they reached out to children in the low-income community neighboring their church. The week before Cool Camp, the Pennsylvania Youth Challenge student literature evangelist team reached hundreds of homes around the church.

As a result of these efforts, approximately 40 children attended their Cool Camp, with more than 35 kids accepting Christ as their Savior. When Cool Camp was over, Pastor Mike McCabe and the Kenhorst Boulevard members created the Oakbrook Project. Designed as a church-planting project, McCabe recruited a team of Blue Mountain Academy (BMA) students to be the ministry leaders for this Sabbath afternoon ministry. McCabe is mentoring these young people, guiding and teaching them how to lead, plan and implement ministry. A team of Kenhorst Boulevard members provide support and encouragement by preparing meals for the children and students each week, getting to know the children and praying for the ministry.

Compelling stories are coming from the children as Seventh-day Adventist youth and the Kenhorst church family minister to them. They’re coming not only on Sabbath afternoon, but are attending Sabbath School, church and Kenhorst’s Friday evening youth program, Youth Connect. Little ones quickly volunteer to have prayer during the meetings and share prayer requests honestly during the prayer time each week.

Church members are responding as well. Once a month, members bring bags of groceries for the children. So far they’ve provided enough bags of groceries that every child has gone home with their own bag. When given a bag, one 9-year-old commented, “This will really help my family because we don’t have much food.”

This is just one of the ways that conferences and local churches are seeking to recapture the Seventh-day Adventist calling to mission and empowering youth. Will you join me in lifting up in prayer these efforts to incorporate our youth and adults together in the mission and ministry of Christ all across Pennsylvania?

Ray Hartwell is president of the Pennsylvania Conference.
Blue Mountain Academy students lead out in song service with neighborhood children.

BMA students mentor boys from the neighborhood.
HELP WANTED: Higher Education Pays

DAYTON -- Is it worth going back to school to secure a job? It's question many job seekers are asking. In tonight's special report, we found a degree or advance training gives job seekers not only an advantage, but earning power.

It's been ten years since Laurie had homework, term papers and study Group. "getting back into study mode was definitely hard." said Laurie Miller. After twenty years working in auto manufacturing as a supervisor she was laid off. "It was definitely a blow."

She took her severance and decided she wanted to become a respiratory therapist. "That was more of a j-o-b this is more what I see as a career." Laurie is one of many non-traditional students at Kettering College pursuing degrees in the high demand field of health care.

Eric Bailey says "It's definitely about doing something I love to do." Bailey owned several businesses before deciding to give it all up and head back to school to earn a degree as physicians' assistant. Once he graduates he will be able to do as much as a doctor without having sacrificed six years of medical school and residence.

"P.A.'s do very well," said Bailey. "Think it's ranked the number two job in America by one of the ratings and the average starting is eighty thousand."

A recent study finds health care, science and business majors have low unemployment and the highest earnings. Even if you're not interested in a career in business or health care statistics show education pays.

The median weekly earnings for a person with a bachelor is nine hundred sixty-two dollars compared to four hundred and three for someone with some college and the weekly pay for a high school drop-out is less than four hundred dollars a week.

"They can't have a career just graduating high school they are going to need some specialized training whether it is community college or said Kathy Trautman of Manpower "vocational training in high school and getting involved in a specialized skill."

Investing in higher education can pay off in dividends as long as you choice wisely. Laurie is looking forward to the pay off when she graduates in June. "God willing and the creek don't rise maybe I will find a position with Kettering Network."

Churches get produce to needy in winter

Farmers market is first in offseason to be supplied by Mid-Ohio Foodbank

Bob Jones was already planning this weekend's dinners as he pushed a shopping cart full of apples, pears, potatoes and other produce across a Near East Side church parking lot yesterday afternoon.

The crisp winter weather wasn't keeping the Central Seventh-day Adventist Church from holding a farmers market for the community's low-income residents, who pushed carts through a church hall and down a hallway as volunteers piled in fresh goods.

“I didn’t expect greens. My mom loves greens,” said Jones, a 56-year-old unemployed commercial driver. “We know what we’ll be having Saturday and Sunday.”

He was among dozens who were given some of the roughly 10,000 pounds of produce provided through the church's food pantry on 18th Street in partnership with nearby Broad Street Presbyterian Church.

Another market will be held at the site from 4 to 6 p.m. Thursday.

The event was the first winter-season farmers market supplied by the Mid-Ohio Foodbank, which began the produce-dispensing program in 2010, said spokesman Colin Baumgartner. In that first year, 26 produce markets operated in 20 counties from July through October. In 2011, the number of markets over the same four-month period jumped to 150. The
Churches get produce to needy in winter | The Columbus Dispatch
ONE FARMER’S WASTE IS ANOTHER MAN’S MEAL

Adams County Gleaning Network involves agriculturists to help feed the hungry

By James Rada Jr. / Photography by Mike Chepurin
Jerry Althoff, owner of Countryside Gardens nursery in Gettysburg, was delivering produce one day when he noticed another local grower throwing out what looked to Althoff to be perfectly fine vegetables. When he asked about the discarded vegetables, the grower told him that, yes, the vegetables weren’t spoiled and were quite edible, but they weren’t considered salable.

Each year, farmers throw out tons of produce that might be too small, odd shaped, off color or slightly bruised. Any of these factors can lead to a fruit or vegetable being separated from the harvest and labeled unsalable.

**PERFECTLY GOOD FOR EATING**

Althoff hated to see all that food going to waste when there were thousands of families in Adams County wondering where they would get their next meal. He talked to his wife, Jan, about the problem and, as they discussed it, Lisa Beaver’s name came up. Beaver attends church with Jan and coordinates the activities of food pantries for the South Central Community Action Programs (SCCAP).

SCCAP provides food to seven Adams County food pantries that help feed low-income families and individuals. The pantry locations include Abbottstown, Fairfield, Gettysburg, Littlestown, New Oxford, Rural Opportunities Inc. in Aspers and York Springs.

Althoff stopped in at SCCAP and asked Beaver if she would be able to use perfectly good, but not perfect, fruits and vegetables in the food pantries. The suggestion couldn’t have come at a better time. State aid to SCCAP was shrinking as the economy turned south. SCCAP was facing personnel layoffs and other cost-reducing measures, including smaller budgets for food purchases to be distributed to needy families in the county just as the need was increasing.

“This allowed us to have food we can’t purchase,” Beaver says. “Fresh produce is expensive, and there’s no way we can get it at the food bank with the time we’re allowed to go there for pickups.”

Also, to stretch the food purchase budget, SCCAP buys low-cost food items that have a longer shelf life. Fresh produce is both expensive and has a short shelf life.

Althoff began putting together the Adams County Gleaning Network by contacting local growers to see if they were interested in allowing volunteers to glean their fields, orchards and vineyards.

Ellie Hollabaugh Vranich, assistant business manager of Hollabaugh Bros. Inc. Fruit Farm and Market in Biglerville, says her family farm has been participating in the program for all three years that it has been operating in Adams County.

“We thought it was a good idea because we were constantly throwing out a ton of waste that, if you cut out a small bad area, would have been perfectly fine to eat,” Vranich says.

Since the Adams County Gleaning Network started making regular pickups from the Hollabaugh retail operation, the amount of waste has dropped considerably, she says.

“It took me a long time to understand why farmers were so happy when we were taking away their livelihood,” Jan Althoff says. “Then I realized they were thrilled that the food was going to a good cause rather than to waste.”

Once Jerry had lined up some initial growers, he started compiling a list of volunteers who would be willing to help collect the produce. “Volunteers have been as young as 8 and as old as 86,” Jan says. “We try to stay out only two hours on a gleaning since there are no bathrooms, and it can be hard work for some older people.”

**GLEANING FROM THE HARVEST**

Perhaps the best-known example of gleaning is found in the story of Ruth from the Bible. She went into the fields after the harvesters had finished and collected the grain that they had missed. It was a common biblical practice, and farmers were encouraged to leave some of their harvest behind for the poor.

Little has changed with gleaning today. Volunteers, some of whom may also be recipients of the produce, go into the fields and pick what hired hands and farm machines have missed. However, the Adams County Gleaning Network is flexible with its gleaning methods. Some growers may leave small sections of their fields unharvested for the Gleaning Network volunteers, or the growers may sort their produce themselves and give the Gleaning Network items that they can’t offer for sale.

“My husband Steve and I have gone with three of our kids picking apples,” says Denise Weldon Siviy, the community outreach liaison with the Gettysburg Community Soup Kitchen. “I came back with a huge respect for the people who do that work every day. It was
ADAMS COUNTY GLEANING NETWORK

The Adams County Gleaning Network can use more volunteers willing to help glean produce and agriculturists who want to help their community.
Contact Jerry or Jan Althoff at 717-334-0601 or e-mail acgleaning@pa.net.

South Central Community Action Programs (SCCAP)
The South Central Community Action Programs (SCCAP) is seeking food donations to support its Adams County and Gettysburg food pantries.

Gettysburg Food Pantry
South Central Community Action Programs
Adams County Headquarters
153 N. Stratton St., Gettysburg
717-334-7634

The food pantry is open Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Items may also be dropped off during the SCCAP’s regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
For a list of hours and addresses for SCCAP’s Adams County food pantry locations, call Lisa Beaver at 717-334-7634, ext. 131.

GETTYSBURG COMMUNITY SOUP KITCHEN

The Gettysburg Community Soup Kitchen is always seeking volunteers to help prepare and serve meals and donations of either food or money to continue its mission of serving free lunches to those in need every Monday through Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Located in Peace House (old St. Francis Xavier Rectory)
22 W. High St., Gettysburg
717-334-6463
www.gettysburgsoupkitchen.org

exhausting, but great exercise—kind of like aerobics for a cause!”

How much the Gleaning Network collects each year varies just as a farmer’s harvest can vary each year. The first year the Gleaning Network started in Adams County was only a partial season, but volunteers collected 80,000 pounds of produce. Last year, the Gleaning Network collected 123,000 pounds of food.

During a good year, the Gleaning Network might conduct gleanings 15 to 30 times. In 2011, however, there had been only five or six, according to Jan.

The Gleaning Network has been successful in gathering a variety of fruits and vegetables. Volunteers have gleaned pumpkins, apples, pears, eggplants, brussels sprouts, bananas, tomatoes, onions and avocados.

PROCESSING THE PRODUCE

SCCAP is the largest recipient of produce from the Adams County Gleaning Network, but Bethel Assembly of God in Littlestown and the Gettysburg Community Soup Kitchen also receive food.

Once the produce comes in, it is put to use while it is fresh. SCCAP serves roughly 2,800 families a month. To qualify for the SCCAP programs, individuals must earn no more than $1,300 per month and families of three must earn no more than $2,300 per month. Recipients can only get one distribution per month from SCCAP.

There are no such restrictions on the Gleaning Network produce. Any produce that isn’t distributed during the week is set out on Fridays for anyone to pick up, since fresh fruit and vegetables are perishable and won’t last over a weekend.

“We have clients who come in once a month for their distribution, but they come in two to three times a week looking for produce,” Beaver says.

The Gettysburg Community Soup Kitchen serves free lunches to needy community residents at the Prince of Peace Episcopal Church in Gettysburg. The produce from the Gleaning Network allows the soup kitchen to supplement their lunches with fresh fruits and salads and even send vegetables home with those who come to the kitchen for lunch.

The soup kitchen also allows groups to use the kitchen facilities to prepare meals or can food for future use. The Bermudian Springs High School National Honor Society performed a service project peeling 100 pounds of potatoes that had come from a gleaning session.

“And dozens of wonderful individuals who picked up and processed fresh pumpkins allowed us to drop off over 50 pies for SCCAP’s food pantry to hand out with Thanksgiving baskets last year, in addition to the pies we served at the soup kitchen and delivered to the homeless shelter,” says Weldon-Siviy.