

# FOCUS

THE ANDREWS UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

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Vol 61 No 4

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PG 22—Alumni Homecoming 2025  
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# Be the Blessing

John Wesley Taylor V, *president*

WHAT IF YOUR GREATEST IMPACT IN life isn't measured by what you achieve but by who you bless?

We often measure life's value by milestones and accomplishments. Yet Scripture points us to something deeper: the quiet but powerful influence of blessing others.

To "be the blessing" is to live so that others glimpse God's heart through you. Three gifts make this possible.

## *The Gift of Presence*

To be fully there—heart open, attention undivided—is one of the most profound gifts we can give. In a world obsessed with likes and followers, true presence is radical. It creates a sacred space where others can feel seen, heard and valued.

John 1:14 is significant: "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us" (NIV). God didn't just love from afar. He walked our roads and shared our meals. He gave us not just His power but His presence.

When Lazarus died, Jesus could have performed a remote miracle. Instead, He showed up. He wept with Mary and Martha before raising Lazarus (John 11). His presence said, "I am here."

You can do the same. Pause for a struggling colleague, listen to a neighbor's story or walk with someone who feels alone. When you give your presence, you reflect God's heart.

## *The Gift of Kindness*

Kindness is more than politeness or pleasant smiles. True kindness is compassion in action, flowing from a heart shaped by grace.

The Good Samaritan modeled this (Luke 10). When others passed by a wounded traveler, too busy or scared to help, the Samaritan stopped. He bandaged wounds, paid for recovery and asked for nothing in return. Jesus said simply: "Go and do likewise."

Jesus lived this out every day. He noticed

the woman who touched His garment, welcomed children others dismissed and restored Peter after failure. His kindness was intentional, heart-first love.

You can mirror that love. Send a message to a friend who's hurting. Offer a genuine thank-you to someone overlooked. That small act may become a window into God's kingdom.

In a world aching for gentleness, your kindness might be the clearest glimpse of Jesus someone sees today.

## *The Gift of Encouragement*

What if your words could ignite a spark of hope? What if a positive message you share could change the arc of someone's life?

Barnabas, nicknamed "Son of Encouragement," understood this. When Paul, fresh off persecuting Christians, was shunned by the early church, Barnabas vouched for him, seeing his potential (Acts 9:27). That single act helped launch Paul's ministry.

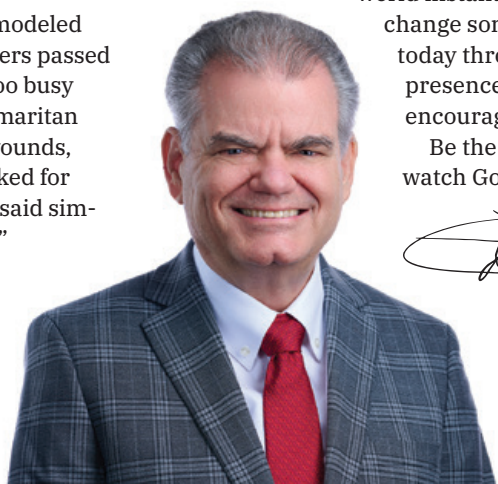
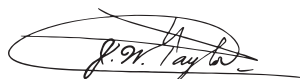
Your words can do that. It's not about empty hype but about seeing God's possibilities in someone and daring to call it out. When someone believes in us before we believe in ourselves, courage awakens.

Encouragement channels God's strength into someone's life, breathing hope where doubt has taken root. Paul urged, "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up ..." (1 Thessalonians 5:11, NIV). Each time you lift another person, you build God's kingdom.

So, send a message of support, celebrate someone's effort or pray over a friend's dream. In a world quick to criticize, encouragement is radical. It is Jesus speaking life.

You may not change the whole world instantly, but you can change someone's world today through your presence, kindness and encouragement.

Be the blessing and watch God move.



World Changers Made Here.

2—FOCUS

# FOCUS

THE ANDREWS UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

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Alumni Homecoming



Heritage Celebrations

## Features

### 22 Alumni Homecoming 2025

Andrews University welcomed alumni for a full weekend of events and celebration.

### 27 Class Reunion Photos

Members of this year's honored classes gathered with returning classmates.

### 30 Honoring Alumni

Three Up-and-Coming Alumni were recognized during Homecoming weekend.

**Cover:** Students Denisse Mortera (left) and Jhoana Mortera (right) at the International Flag Raising Ceremony  
**Photo credit:** Darren Heslop (BFA '12, current staff)

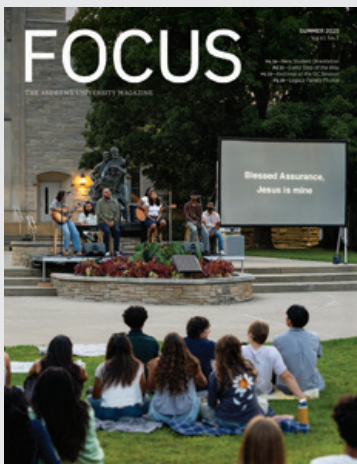


Howard Happenings

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Visit Andrews University's YouTube channel to view University Chapel, the Alumni Homecoming Gala, Week of Prayer and more.  
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## Don't forget to write

### Letters are always welcome.

To ensure a range of viewpoints, we encourage letters of fewer than 300 words. Letters may be edited for content, style and space.

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## Campus Update

# Unique new scholarship for School of Social Work

## Benefits students with disabilities

A NEW SCHOLARSHIP, LIRA'S LEGACY Scholarship, was recently established to aid students with disabilities within the Andrews University School of Social Work. Valued at \$1,500, the scholarship will be offered annually. In order to apply, students must be studying social work and identify as living with autism spectrum disorder or a documented disability that significantly impacts day-to-day life. This scholarship enhances both the University and its surrounding community, as it emphasizes the importance of individuality and recognizes the need to create a more equitable path for people with disabilities.

The recipient of the 2025–2026 scholarship is Caundee Cauvin, Master of Divinity and Master of Social Work student. Reflecting on her feelings and experiences, Cauvin shares, "Applying required me to reflect honestly on what it means to live with ADHD—both the challenges and the strengths it brings. It pushed me to acknowledge parts of my story that I usually keep private." She adds, "When I found out I had been selected ... it was a moment of validation—a reminder that when we are honest about invisible disabilities, we open the door to understanding, support and encouragement rather than stigma."

The scholarship was created by Mariella Pechero. She shares that one of her many reasons for creating

the scholarship was her experience as the mother of a non-neurotypical son. Pechero says, "My hope is that this scholarship will offer comfort to parents, in a small but meaningful reminder that they are seen, understood and not alone. I hope it serves as a symbol of our shared belief that our children can thrive."

Pechero named the scholarship in remembrance of her late aunt, Lira Weiss. She describes Weiss' "passionate love and tenacity" as well as her lifelong commitment to people. Pechero also affirms that Weiss, inspired by the many social workers in her family, saw the inherent value of every individual, regardless of ability. Weiss had deep roots within the Andrews community, as the mother of Ingrid Slikkers, associate professor of social work and executive director of the International Center for Trauma Education & Care, as well as the grandmother and aunt to several students in the School of Social Work.

Slikkers reflects, "This scholarship feels deeply personal because it represents my mother's legacy of compassion and service. It reminds me that the values she lived—care, advocacy and community—continue to shape others through this award."

Shannon Trecartin, professor and chair of the School of Social Work, adds that focusing on the support of individuals with disabilities ensures that new social workers entering the field will be diverse; this allows for advocacy and empathy within both workplaces and client relationships. She shares that this representation in the social work field "enhances the quality of services and promotes a more inclusive understanding of disability and neurodiversity throughout the community."

"This scholarship feels deeply personal because it represents my mother's legacy of compassion and service."



# LIFE ON CAMPUS



AUSA AY program, Oct. 25



"Card"nival, Sept. 7



October Weekend Experience, Oct. 17-20



Employee Christmas Party, Dec. 2



An Evening with  
Lily-Arison René  
de Roland, PhD,  
Sept. 28

Graduate School  
Fair, Oct. 20



University Convocation, Sept. 11



Christmas  
Behind Bars,  
Oct. 26





FROM TOP, L-R:  
Open Air Movement Therapy,  
Wellness Week ■ Students enjoy  
nutritious food samples at the  
Healthy Cooking Demo, Wellness  
Week ■ Healthy Cooking Demo

## Thriving together

*Advancing holistic health through thoughtful wellness initiatives*

EACH YEAR, UNIVERSITY WELLNESS PUTS on a number of intentional initiatives designed to nurture well-being for students, staff and the wider community. Engagements go beyond physical well-being to address the emotional, social, occupational, intellectual and spiritual dimensions of wellness, as well.

One recent event was the Community Health & Wellness Expo, held in late September at the Andreasen Center for Wellness. Free and open to all ages, the expo offered therapy dog visits, fire truck tours, a healthy cooking demonstration and more. Visitors had opportunities to win prizes by interacting with local businesses and with students and employees from various Andrews University health professions programs.

In addition, Andrews hosted its second annual Wellness Week from Sept. 28–Oct. 3. Daily programs included fitness classes, social events and wellness challenges. Activities ranged from classes on self-defense to cooking, doodling and a chili cook-off. Participants in the “Gym Class Heroes Challenge”

earned chances to win prizes like personal training packages or massages by attending group fitness classes.

“Our goal is to provide a variety of engagements focused on well-being,” says Rachel Keele, director of University Wellness and manager of the Andreasen Center for Wellness. “Not every initiative or activity will speak to everyone, but the hope is that each person in our campus community can find an opportunity that resonates with an aspect of their wellness that they currently care about.”

Looking ahead, the Andreasen Center for Wellness will host its third annual

“These initiatives reflect a commitment to create a sustainable culture of well-being based on Christ’s desire for us to have life ‘more abundantly’ ...”

Andreasen Indoor Triathlon on Feb. 22, 2026. Participants from the campus and local community will swim in the pool, bike on stationary bikes and run on treadmills to complete the timed race.

In March 2026, students and employees can participate in the Wellness Sleep Challenge, earning prizes by creating bedtime routines and ensuring they have an adequate amount of rest each night.

Other areas on campus also actively contribute to the University’s wellness initiatives. Multiple student clubs and departments sponsor runs and walks throughout the school year to support different causes. One of the longest-standing events of this nature is the “Motion is Medicine 5K Fun Run/Walk” planned by the School of Rehabilitation Sciences. The race happens each April and raises funds for childhood education efforts in El Salvador.

Keele says, “These initiatives reflect a commitment to create a sustainable culture of well-being based on Christ’s desire for us to have life ‘more abundantly,’ as expressed in John 10:10. Through coordinated programming and cross-departmental collaboration, the University is reinforcing the message that health is holistic, flourishing is a communal journey and we were made to thrive.”





## Andrews University honors veterans

*Under the theme "Service to Our Nation"*

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY HELD A VETERANS DAY PROGRAM ON Nov. 11 under the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' 2025 theme, "Service to Our Nation." The event reflected the University's commitment to fostering a campus environment that values both military service and academic excellence, a dedication recognized by its Gold-Level Veteran-Friendly School designation from the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency.

The program opened with welcoming remarks from Chaplain, LTC, MIARING, Ret. Keith Mattingly, emeritus professor of Old Testament studies, who shared personal reflections on faith and service. Following the Pledge of Allegiance and a rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner" performed by Chaplain, LTC, USAF, Ret. James North Jr., emeritus professor of pastoral care, those gathered joined in a moment of silence to honor all who have served and currently serve. The event continued with a prayer by Caden Victor, an Andrews University student veteran.

The keynote address was delivered by Pastor Taariq Patel, alumnus and Army veteran, who drew parallels between the biblical story of King Saul and the modern veteran's journey. He inspired listeners to love with purpose, courage and compassion, and reflected, "In God's army, there are no veterans and all are in active duty, serving right now."

Patel's message was followed by closing remarks from John Wesley Taylor V, University president. The program concluded with a tribute slideshow of student veterans who have attended Andrews.

In addition to the main ceremony, the University hosted a "Thank-a-Veteran" card station, where individuals wrote personalized notes of appreciation. A special dinner was also held for Andrews veterans and their families on Nov. 10.

The 2025 Veterans Day program was an expression of thankfulness, reflection and unity, a testament to the University's dedication to building a campus culture rooted in compassion and service.

## Horn Lectureship Series

*Presentations throughout the fall semester*

THE HORN LECTURESHIP SERIES DELIVERED A RICH and engaging semester of scholarly presentations, inviting participants to explore significant events, texts and discoveries in ancient history and archaeology.

The first program took place on Sept. 14 and was themed "Exploring the Composition of the Pentateuch." Gary A. Rendsburg, the Blanche and Irving Laurie Professor of Jewish History, Rutgers University, shared a presentation titled "Narrative Coherence in Genesis 37, Exodus 14, and Numbers 16: Three Confusing Texts Reflecting Confusion at the Moment." The day continued with a presentation by Rabbi Joshua Berman, professor of Tanakh at Bar-Ilan University, who spoke on "The Unity of Exodus 14."

On Oct. 20, the series continued with Randall Younker, professor of archaeology and history of antiquity at Andrews University. His lecture, "Exploring the Ark Mountains: Discoveries from Our Latest Excursions," shared about his team's recent ascent of Mount Judi and exploration of the archaeological ruins on the mountain and in the vicinity.

The final lecture of the semester took place on Nov. 10 and was delivered by Eva Katarina Glazer, professor of history and faculty of Croatian Studies at the University of Zagreb. Her talk, titled "Beyond the Sea Peoples: Rethinking the 1200 BCE Collapse," offered a fresh evaluation of the so-called "catastrophic collapse" of major ancient Near East civilizations.

Together, the lectures enriched participants' understanding of the archaeological and textual foundations that continue to shape contemporary interpretations of history, deepening appreciation for the enduring questions that connect past and present.



### FROM TOP:

Gary A. Rendsburg ■  
Randall Younker ■  
Eva Katarina Glazer





## Honors community comes together

*For Agape Feast and church service*

THE J.N. ANDREWS HONORS PROGRAM FOSTERED A STRONG spiritual community during the 2025 fall semester with its biannual Agape Feast on Sept. 12 and its annual Honors Church service on Nov. 8. Students from across campus were joined by faculty and staff members for moments of fellowship and spiritual strengthening.

The Agape Feast, held in the lobby of the Howard Performing Arts Center, featured the theme “Unity in Christ.” Attendees were provided a spread of soups, breads, cheeses and fruits to enjoy while listening to various musical performances by Honors students, with opportunities to sing along as well. A talk was given by Ryan Hayes, professor of chemistry, who demonstrated several short chemistry and physics experiments to illustrate the need for being in tune with God and having faith in Him.

The Honors Church program, themed “Greater Love Hath No Man Than This,” was held in the Seminary Chapel and featured a literary-based service. Several Honors students read portions of the Bible and excerpts from other texts in various languages throughout the program. Between the readings were musical performances by the University Singers, conducted by Stephen Zork, professor of music. The service’s sermon was given by Rahel Wells, professor of biblical studies. She discussed the curses from God listed in the Book of Deuteronomy as an example of His love, as reflected in Jesus’ willingness to bear the consequences of those curses.

Ultimately, attendees from across campus enjoyed taking part in the spiritually enriching events held by the Honors Program.

FROM TOP, L-R: *Agape Feast* ■ *University Singers* ■ *Rahel Wells*



## Giving Tuesday

*A day of faith and generosity*

ON NOV. 4, THE OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT PARTNERED with Andrews University faculty, staff, alumni and friends for Giving Tuesday, an opportunity to invest financially in the future of Adventist education.

Participants were invited to explore and pray over 32 unique projects and causes—including scholarships, student space renovations, student missions and academic initiatives—that shape everyday campus life at Andrews.

Steven Manoukian, director of Development, says, “This Giving Tuesday we were happy to share new campaigns that showcased the innovative work and service of our students, faculty and staff. We were also excited to support the return of ongoing initiatives.”

Giving Tuesday generated \$52,319, a 37% increase in comparison to Development’s most recent and successful campaign in April 2024.

In addition to the donations from Giving Tuesday contributors, the Office of the President provided awards for the top three campaigns in two categories: “Bring in the highest amount of donations” and “Have the greatest number of donors.”

The three campaigns that received the highest amount of donations were the Museum of Natural History with \$5,850 (plus an award of \$3,000); Griggs International Academy with \$4,250 (plus an award of \$2,000); and the Architecture Scholarship Fund with \$4,133 (plus an award of \$1,000).

The three campaigns that had the greatest number of donors were the Department of English (award of \$3,000), Evangelism Field School (Religion) (award of \$2,000), and James White Library Student Space Improvements (award of \$1,000).

Manoukian says, “Giving Tuesday was more than a day to give. It was a day to come together as faithful supporters who believe in the mission of Christ-centered service and Adventist education. Every gift contributed to our work helps share Andrews University’s mission to seek knowledge, affirm faith and change the world. This was possible because God was at work through all those who participated. Thank you!”







## Heritage celebrations enrich campus community

*Fostering cultural understanding and awareness*

THROUGHOUT FALL SEMESTER, Andrews University students, faculty and staff, with support from the Office of Mission & Culture, recognized several major cultural celebrations, including Hispanic Heritage Month, Filipino American History Month, and Native American Heritage Month.

During Hispanic Heritage Month, from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15, the Andrews University Latino Association (AULA) invited the campus to celebrate under the theme of “Por un futuro mejor” (“For a better future”). Events included educational sessions on culture and identity, local Latino entrepreneurs, and food as a cultural expression; a bonfire; Noche Latino; and a Friday evening Proximity vespers collaboration. These events highlighted the contributions of Hispanic communities while welcoming the broader campus to participate in learning and engagement. Through this intentional programming, the Andrews community deepened its understanding of Hispanic cultures and strengthened connections across diverse student and employee groups.

In October, the University celebrated Filipino American History Month with

the Andrews Filipino International Association (AFIA). The theme for 2025–2026, “Pamana” (meaning “heritage,” “legacy” or “inheritance”), emphasized honoring the work of past generations and continuing their contributions. AFIA held multiple events, including a Night Market co-hosted with other cultural groups and an AFIA Sabbath service and potluck. These activities fostered cultural awareness, community engagement and appreciation for Filipino heritage. The events encouraged the campus community to reflect on the legacies of Filipino Americans and inspired collaborative learning and cultural exchange.

In November, Andrews University recognized Native American Heritage Month. This observance focused on acknowledging the history, culture and sovereignty of Indigenous people groups. President John Wesley Taylor V and Willie Hucks II, assistant to the president for Mission & Culture, continued dialogue with the nearby Pokagon Band of Potawatomi, promoting communication and mutual understanding. In an email to campus, Hucks noted the diversity among Indigenous people



PHOTO: Christian Dalida



**FROM TOP, L-R:** Night Market, co-hosted by AFIA, KASA, AULA, SASA, ASA, AUMSA and AIC ■ AFIA Sabbath at Michiana Fil-Am Seventh-day Adventist Church ■ Proximity & AULA vespers at Pioneer Memorial Church

groups, their significant contributions to the broader American society and their dedication to environmental stewardship. These efforts allowed the campus community to appreciate Indigenous perspectives, recognize the significance of history and embrace inclusive practices that honor Native American contributions.

Hucks shares, “These events not only celebrate the rich diversity of our campus but also encourage understanding, engagement and shared learning across cultures.”



# Andrews community participates in Research Week

From Oct. 21–24

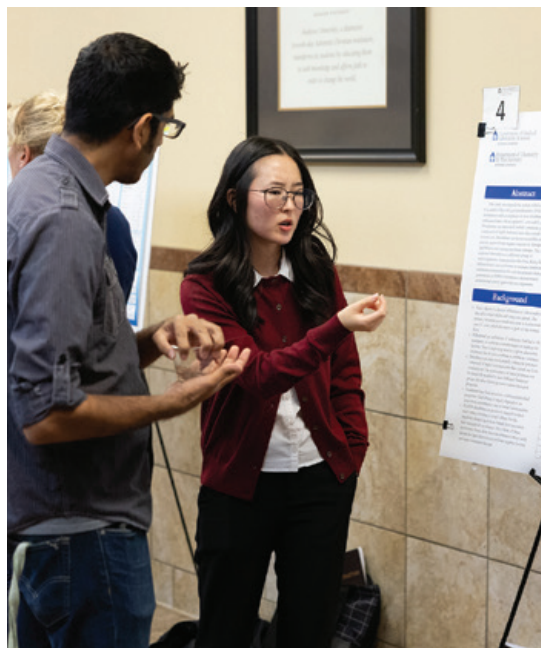
ANDREWS UNIVERSITY HELD ITS annual Research Week from Oct. 21–24. Programming included keynote lectures, oral presentations and poster presentations.

The first event was the John O. Waller Lectureship on Oct. 21, featuring Claudia M. Allen, director of Advancement for Maryland Humanities. Her talk, titled “Notes of a Native Daughter: Preserving the Humanities in an Age of Erasure,” explored the importance of the humanities as a form of expression for all communities and cultures.

“From the moment God created the world using a speech, to the day and time that we stand and sit together now, the humanities have always been at the core of human creation,” said Allen. She expressed disapproval of excessive censorship from any political party, instead advocating for “the preservation of our histories, so that we can see this is what society thought at this time.”

The following evening, Karen Lozano, chair and trustee professor of materials science and NanoEngineering at Rice University, spoke for the Robert and Lillis Kingman Lecture Series on Science and Society. Her talk was titled “Engineering the Future: The Role of Nanofibers in Innovation and Societal Impact.” Lozano spoke extensively about new nanofiber technologies as well as her personal journey of spiritual and emotional growth.

Lozano also shared about facing imposter syndrome as a woman in a male-dominated field, noting, “When I started realizing that God’s driving the wheel, I decided I’m just going to keep on working hard, and then just let Him drive.



... So, it probably took me three years to talk in meetings, and then they couldn’t quiet me down.”

The final Research Week event was the 16th annual Andrews University Celebration of Research and Creative Scholarship, held on Friday, Oct. 24. The keynote presentations were given by the winners of the 2025 Siegfried H. Horn Excellence in Research and Creative Scholarship Award.

Ranko Stefanovic, professor of New Testament at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, spoke on “Writing a Bible Commentary on Romans,” noting his reflections on contributing to the new Seventh-day Adventist International Bible Commentary series. Vanessa I. Corredera, professor of

**FROM TOP, L–R:** Poster presentations by Andrews faculty and students ■ Ranko Stefanovic ■ Claudia M. Allen

English at Baylor University and former chair of the Department of English at Andrews, shared about “Shakespeare and the Stories We Tell: A Case for Literary Criticism,” examining the value of researching literary works and the numerous themes and concepts that can be gleaned from quality texts.

After the lectures, an hour was allotted for poster presentations by Andrews faculty members and students, followed by oral presentations on archaeological, mathematical and theological topics.



# Reimagining global leadership at Andrews

*Through AUCORE and School of Business Administration programs*

IN OCTOBER 2025, THE ANDREWS UNIVERSITY Centers for Organizational Resilience and Excellence (AUCORE) and the School of Business Administration hosted two major leadership programs for Vietnam's top business delegations. Together, the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) Artificial Intelligence (AI) & Innovation Executive Seminar and the Petrolimex (PLX) Global Board Leadership Forum showcased how Andrews is shaping executives, organizations and industries. The programs embodied the University's mission to extend leadership development from the classroom into the boardroom and across global economies.

Armand Poblete, executive director of AUCORE and instructor of information systems, led the planning process and shares the philosophy that shaped both programs. "We are building leaders who understand that technology and ethics must move together," he says. "Innovation means nothing without integrity."

The first delegation, hosted from Oct. 5–10, brought CEOs and senior leaders from across Vietnam's private sector, including energy, banking, telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing and finance, to Andrews University for the VCCI AI & Innovation Executive Seminar. Leaders from organizations including the Vietnam National Industry–Energy Group (PVN), Bank for Investment and Development of Vietnam (BIDV), Vietnam Posts and Telecommunications Group (VNPT),

AGIMEXPHARM, Bonfiglioli Vietnam, and United Overseas Bank Vietnam spent a week discussing the future of AI-driven decision-making, digital transformation and innovation governance.

Andrews faculty led hands-on design labs, interactive simulations and strategic dialogues, allowing executives to experience AI strategy modeling, financial resilience forecasting, immersive VR learning systems, and data-driven

**At the highest level, AUCORE equips executives, board members and global influencers to lead with courage, clarity and ethical foresight.**

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) innovation. Beyond technical skill-building, many participants described the experience as uniquely transformative because it united faith, ethics and data-driven leadership.

Two weeks later, from Oct. 20–23, AUCORE welcomed a second delegation for the PLX Global Board Leadership Forum. Petrolimex, an energy group based in Vietnam, sent its board of directors and subsidiary chairpersons for a four-day retreat on the future of corporate governance. The forum tackled a series

of difficult questions facing modern enterprises, including how boards can use AI as a tool of governance rather than a source of risk and how accountability should evolve within intelligent enterprises.

The operations team at AUCORE ensured that both experiences were executed with professionalism and excellence. Derill Legoh, logistics lead, and Dina Kelly-Rodriguez, hospitality lead, managed travel coordination, hospitality experiences and on-site support. Participating faculty members and University Hospitality staff also demonstrated a spirit of service to the visiting international leaders.

Andrews University has created an ecosystem that supports leadership development across a lifespan. Programs like ThinkerBox and the STEAM X framework prepare K–12 students to explore robotics, AI and entrepreneurship. Undergraduate and graduate programs in the School of Business Administration train future leaders to understand systems, people and service. At the highest level, AUCORE equips executives, board members and global influencers to lead with courage, clarity and ethical foresight.

Through initiatives like these, the University demonstrates that ethics and analytics can share the same space, that technology can enhance empathy rather than diminish it, and that global partnerships thrive when trust and service lead the way.

*PLX Global Board Leadership Forum delegation*



*VCCI AI & Innovation Executive Seminar delegation*



PHOTOS: Armand Poblete

## Andrews receives grant for graduate psychology program

*From Michigan's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity*

A \$350,000 GRANT HAS BEEN AWARDED TO Andrews University's School of Graduate Psychology & Counseling by Michigan's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO). According to Renette Portecop-Prentice, assistant professor and School Psychology Program coordinator at Andrews, these funds will be primarily used to establish an online version of the University's school psychology program. A statement released by LEO shares that this investment will "increase the school psychologist workforce in Michigan, support students who are facing mental health challenges and help schools navigate available resources." Portecop-Prentice adds, "Students will benefit significantly from increased faculty support and resources."

Portecop-Prentice submitted the grant application in March 2025 with assistance from Carlisle Sutton, sponsored research officer. Portecop-Prentice and Carole Woolford-Hunt, chair of the School of Graduate Psychology & Counseling, express that they were pleasantly surprised when LEO officially announced in July that Andrews University was one of the grant winners. "We were up against big universities," says Woolford-Hunt. "I don't know if there were any schools smaller than us who applied. We were literally the 'David' in this whole situation, and when the grants were announced, we were one of only two programs who were awarded."

The second grant award went to Western Michigan University, which will be launching its school psychologist training program for the first time. Andrews will use the funds to build on its preexisting, in-person program. The \$350,000 will be spent on supplies, faculty, staff, recruiting and marketing within the guidelines LEO set for the grant.

The program will begin taking applications for online students in spring 2026 and will conduct its first semester of online classes the following fall. Although all students are invited to be a part of the online program, Michigan residents are encouraged to apply, with the goal of growing the state's school psychologist workforce.

Portecop-Prentice shares that the National Association of School Psychologists recommends that schools have a ratio of about 500 students to one school psychologist. "Michigan is at approximately 1,350 to one," she says. "So we've definitely had a shortage. It's been improving in recent years, but there are just not enough of us to go around." Grant programs and initiatives, like the one Andrews and Western Michigan are a part of, are working to increase the number of qualified school psychologists available within the state.

The School of Graduate Psychology & Counseling offers quality education and training for its students. Portecop-Prentice notes that evaluations from surveys sent to the employers of recent graduates "have consistently been strong and above average." She adds that another factor in the grant award may have been Andrews' ongoing contributions to neighboring school districts in Michigan, including the work of many alumni.

Ultimately, Portecop-Prentice and Woolford-Hunt share the sentiment that God is continuing to bless the work of the School of Graduate Psychology & Counseling. "We know it's nothing but God," says Woolford-Hunt.

"... We were literally the 'David' in this whole situation, and when the grants were announced, we were one of only two programs who were awarded."







# Andrews fall 2025 enrollment and rankings report

*Climbs in national rankings for academics, value and programs*

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY IS ONCE AGAIN taking the measure of current enrollment trends and is also reviewing and celebrating some of its recent national university rankings.

## Rankings

Andrews University climbed 31 places in this year's 2026 U.S. News Best Colleges ranking, placing #242 out of 436 national universities in America. This continues the University's upward movement, having risen 43 places in 2024 from the year prior.

National universities are selected from more than 1,700 U.S. colleges and universities based on several metrics of academic quality and graduate success. Andrews is the only Adventist university to be classified by U.S. News as a national university, reflecting the University's competitiveness alongside both state and top private universities.

Andrews additionally climbed 29 places as a Top Performer on Social Mobility, ranking in the top half of national universities (#189 of 436), and rose in the ranking for Best Undergraduate Engineering Program (#226).

Andrews University was also recognized in Niche's Best Colleges in America

ranking system, which combines several metrics of academic quality and graduate success with student surveys. Significantly, Andrews was ranked among the top 10% of Best Christian Colleges in America (#26 of 314) and in the top 15% for Best Academics in America (#239 of 1,612). It placed highest of any Adventist university in both categories and was the only Adventist university to be included on the list of Colleges with the Best Professors in America (#329 of 1,595).

Andrews was also ranked the #1 Most Diverse College in America (#1 of 1,612), reflecting the diversity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the #1 Best Small

**Andrews was also ranked the #1 Most Diverse College in America (#1 of 1,612), reflecting the diversity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the #1 Best Small College in Michigan.**

College in Michigan. Moreover, Niche recognized several of Andrews' academic programs as among the nation's best, including architecture, physical therapy, psychology and religion.

"These rankings reflect the exceptional professors and programs of study that students can find at Andrews. Here they'll experience the transformative learning opportunities they'd expect of a highly ranked national university within our close-knit, supportive faith community," says John Wesley Taylor V, University president.

## Enrollment

Following a review of fall census figures, Andrews University saw significant growth in its freshmen class, with a 13% enrollment increase of FTIAC (First Time in Any College) students compared to last year. The College of Professions also saw meaningful growth—a 9% increase—this fall.

However, due in part to visa challenges, there was a 6% decrease in the headcount of international students compared to last year. The University's headcount enrollment for fall 2025 showed 2,967 students, reflecting a 2% decrease from last year. In response, the University has been working with international students who were not able to arrive in time for classes this fall, helping them join classes in the spring semester or online. The fall census numbers also indicated an overall modest increase in enrolled credit hours from last year, growing from 29,254 to 29,362 this fall.

In addition to the fall census report, the University measures its unduplicated headcount, which includes the total number of students enrolled at Andrews over a 12-month period. Approximately one thousand additional students are included in this number, demonstrating that several programs do not follow the typical semester schedule.

"We acknowledge that the challenges facing many of our students are real, but we are counting the blessings of our good God. We do not have a spirit of fear," says Bordes Henry Saturné, vice president for Strategic Enrollment Management, Marketing & Communication. "We are confident that the same omnipotent God who has begun this magnificent work among us will bring it to completion with a resounding success."





## Andrews hosts soccer and volleyball tournament

*For Seventh-day Adventist academies*

STUDENTS, COACHES AND PARENTS from eight Seventh-day Adventist academies attended the first-ever Andrews University High School Soccer and Volleyball Invitational from Sept. 17–20. Participants were able to engage in athletic recreation and spiritual fellowship throughout the event.

The participating schools included College View Academy, Highland View Academy, Hinsdale Adventist Academy, North Dallas Academy, Shenandoah Valley Academy, Takoma Academy, Wisconsin Academy and Andrews Academy. Simon Indreiu, a Hinsdale Adventist Academy soccer player, shares, “I’ve enjoyed being able to make a lot of connections with everyone else from the other schools and being able to just make some friends.”

All eight schools were represented in the volleyball tournament. The team from Takoma Academy, located in Silver Spring, Maryland, earned third place. Abigail Oluwole, one of Takoma’s players, says, “I really like being able to see all the schools that are around the U.S., to be able to improve on volleyball and to gain experience as a team and to get closer to my teammates ... and have Adventist fun.”

North Dallas Academy’s volleyball coach, Francis Nicholas, also shares his appreciation for the community

surrounding the invitational. “What I have enjoyed is the fellowship that we have with all the other teams. They’re not just being secluded from each other. They’re talking with other teams, and that’s what this is all about,” he says. The North Dallas team placed second, and Nicholas credits the team’s ability to play together and “for each other” as their keys to victory.

College View Academy, located in Lincoln, Nebraska, was the first-place winner of the volleyball tournament. Dan Carlson, a parent of the College View players, appreciates the fact that all the teams were able to play each other at least once during the tournament and that the busy schedule flowed “cleanly” throughout the weekend.

“What I have enjoyed is the fellowship that we have with all the other teams. They’re not just being secluded from each other. They’re talking with other teams, and that’s what this is all about.”



Six teams participated in the men’s soccer bracket. Andrews Academy was represented by both its junior varsity and varsity teams, placing fourth and first, respectively. Wisconsin Academy, based in Columbus, Wisconsin, won third place. Shenandoah Valley Academy, located in New Market, Virginia, earned second place.

Andrew Dennison, a Highland View Academy soccer player, says he liked witnessing growth in both skill and cohesion from his team. “I’ve really enjoyed just connecting with the team better, playing a lot of games, and just getting better at playing.”

Kevin Wooldridge, University athletic director, acknowledges the many employees and students who helped organize and run the tournament, sharing that the Athletics team plans to make the invitational annual.

Wooldridge also describes the event as an opportunity to showcase Andrews to high school students. “We want to immerse them in the Andrews experience,” he says. “This gives them the opportunity to attend campus worship services, eat in our award-winning cafeteria, meet our coaches, see and play in our beautiful facilities. These tournaments are vital in helping our academy graduates make decisions on where they would like to continue their education.”



## Andrews hosts inaugural mental health symposium

*Themed “Building a Mental Health Friendly Campus”*

FROM SEPT. 11–14, ANDREWS UNIVERSITY hosted the first Thrive: Mental Health Symposium. Coordinated by the University’s Counseling & Testing Center, the symposium was themed “Building a Mental Health Friendly Campus.”

The event began with an outdoor resource fair on Sept. 11 exhibiting mental health resources available on campus.

At the symposium’s opening session that evening, Stacey Nicely, director of the Counseling & Testing Center, spoke on the creation of the event, noting, “Rather than always looking at mental health through a crisis lens, what if we created a space—an annual event—to help people learn strategies not just to survive ... but teaching you how to thrive?”

The session continued with acknowledgements, a moment of remembrance for Sept. 11, 2001, and a special musical performance from graduate student and JUNO Award winner K-Anthony. Plenary presenter John T. Boston II, evangelist and motivational speaker, shared his personal testimony surrounding mental health and God’s miracles and protection in his life.

Boston affirmed to listeners, “Your pain is not lost. Your purpose is not forgotten.

You are seen. You are visible. The reason we have a mental health symposium is because we’ve been through some mess. The beautiful thing is ... you will be reminded that no matter how long it’s been or what you’ve been through, you were not rejected; you were protected.”

The program closed with a presentation by Jennifer Burrill, assistant vice president for Campus & Student Life and Residence Life, who spoke about the University Student Intervention Team and support services offered on campus. Participants were then encouraged to attend breakout sessions led by students, faculty and members of the community. These sessions continued on Friday morning, covering topics such as suicide, behavioral therapy tools and brain function.

On Saturday, Sept. 13, attendees were invited to a second resource fair that displayed mental health resources available in the surrounding community. An afternoon session began after the fair with a prayer, welcome and second musical performance by K-Anthony. Participants were then invited to attend a final round of breakout sessions, covering topics including boundaries, campus care and social emotional competence.

**“We have to approach faith not just as a set of beliefs but as a set of actions.”**

After the breakout sessions, Nicely chaired a panel discussion on the topic of faith and mental health. Panel members included Carole Woolford-Hunt, chair of the School of Graduate Psychology & Counseling; L. Ann Hamel, psychologist; Karl Bailey, professor of psychology; Natasha Richards, assistant professor of chaplaincy; and Lindsay Syeh, commissioned pastor.

The panelists discussed spiritual struggles and mental health struggles; how to change one’s picture of God; and support tools and resources. Bailey shared, “Our educational ministries, our health ministries and our development ministries go alongside our preaching ministries.” He added, “We have to approach faith not just as a set of beliefs but as a set of actions.”

Each panelist also shared messages of hope with those gathered. “God made us in community,” said Woolford-Hunt. “We are meant to be in community, and community is meant to help and support us. We can’t pull away from it ... we need to get back in community with each other.”

The symposium closed with final remarks, followed by a prayer from Shane Anderson, lead pastor of Pioneer Memorial Church. Frances Faehner, vice president for Campus & Student Life, encouraged each participant to pray for God’s heart, remarking, “Just as Jesus gives us new mercies every morning, He puts people in our path to be His hands and feet for Him every day.”

Thrive: Mental Health Symposium will return next year, with a focus on hyper-connectivity, artificial intelligence and implications for mental health.



Plenary presenter  
John T. Boston II



# STEM Day at Andrews engages Adventist educators

*Offering professional development opportunities and resources*

NEARLY 50 EDUCATORS PARTICIPATED in the second STEM Day at Andrews University on Sept. 4. The event was co-sponsored by Andrews and the Lake Union Education Department and was themed “STEM by Design: Hands-on = Minds-on Engaged.”

At the opening program, Ruth Horton, director of education for the Lake Union, and Wagner Kuhn, Andrews University’s chief academic officer, welcomed participants. Anthony Bosman, chair of the Department of Mathematics and learning officer, gave a brief worship.

Afterward, educators had the opportunity to participate in labs designed for replication in their classrooms. All participants were able to take kits of reusable lab supplies back to their schools at no cost, thanks in large part to a \$40,000 grant provided by the Versacare Foundation, an independent Seventh-day Adventist philanthropic organization. The grant also covered hotel accommodations for those who needed it.

Monica Nudd, one of the lead organizers of STEM Day, describes the kits as a truly impactful blessing. “The schools receive materials that they can use year after year,” she says. “Most things that are this caliber would cost hundreds of dollars, and [for this event] they come for free.”

Several educators expressed deep appreciation for the STEM Day programming. Jeremy Hall, vice president for Education for the Michigan Conference, spoke highly of the training provided. “I think that learning needs to be fun, and I think that what I’ve seen from the people who have been teaching the teachers, they’re making the learning fun and interesting,” he shares.

Both organizers and participants hope to see STEM Day become an annual event, with additional subjects and labs added in the future.

*Educators participated in labs designed for replication in their classrooms.*



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From Top, L-R: Howard Center Presents: Phil Keaggy, Sept. 7 ■ Howard Center Presents: Cerus Quartet, Sept. 28 ■ Howard Center Presents: Heritage Singers, Oct. 4 ■ Sunday Music Series: Jason Marquez & Tyler Ninalga, Oct. 19 ■ Wind Symphony Fall Concert: Echoes of Majesty, Oct. 25 ■ Andrews University Choir Fall Concert, Nov. 1 ■ Howard Center Presents: Reggie & Ladye Love Smith, Nov. 2 ■ Andrews University Symphony Orchestra Fall Concert, Nov. 8 ■ South Bend Youth Symphony Orchestra, Nov. 9 ■ Sunday Music Series: Junqi Sophie Tang & Abigail Koo, Nov. 16 ■ Andrews University Voice Vespers: For Unto Us a Child is Born, Nov. 21 ■ Howard Center Presents: Rachel Barton Pine, Nov. 23 ■ Department of Music Christmas Extravaganza, Dec. 7



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# University Advancement welcomes new team members

*Representing several areas on campus*

The Office of University Advancement at Andrews University has welcomed several new employees to its team over the past year. The team members represent multiple areas on campus, including the Office of Alumni Services, the Office of Development and the Office of Planned Giving & Trust Services.

## Office of University Advancement

**Miriam Taylor** serves as the University's new Advancement event planner. In her role, she is responsible for organizing details and logistics related to Homecoming, regional alumni events, the President's Council and other activities planned by University Advancement.

A certified meeting professional, Taylor holds a master's degree in human resource management and development from the University of Salford. Most recently, she served as community development coordinator and event planner for Hope Channel International and, before that, as executive assistant and associate meeting planner for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Taylor most looks forward to getting to know the faculty, staff, students and alumni of Andrews. She affirms, "I would love for everyone engaging with us, either here on campus or through other off-campus activities, to feel that they are part of our family."

**Maxine Umana** brings a wealth of institutional knowledge and relationship-building experience to her new role as engagement officer. A proud double alumna of Andrews University with degrees in personal ministries and religion, she has served the Andrews community for over 11 years, including two years as administrative assistant, librarian and contract teacher at Andrews Academy and nine years as administrative assistant and recruiter for the J.N. Andrews Honors Program.

Umana coordinates social media and other forms of communication for the four offices within University Advancement, sharing their stories with alumni, constit-

uents and friends of the University. She ensures branding consistency, advocates for her team members and empowers effective communication.

"In this role, I help tell the bigger picture about Andrews. It has to do with the future of the University," she shares. "I'm seeing the importance of these offices and how their work makes a difference—through maintaining relationships and how interconnected they are. I'm glad I'm able to help out in a bigger way."

## Office of Alumni Services

As the new director of Alumni Services, **Jeana Wallin** serves as an ambassador for Andrews University. In this key position, she develops, coordinates and directs activities for Andrews alumni. She shares that she hopes to bring "fresh outlook and ideas from past experiences as an Andrews University student and current alumnus" to the role.

Wallin graduated from Andrews with a bachelor's degree in public relations and a minor in general studies. She went on to gain valuable work experience as an outreach specialist, marketing specialist, manager, event planner, consultant, client relations professional and registrar. "I have acquired skills from all past working experiences that I will be able to incorporate into this new position as director of Alumni Services," she says.

"God's direction and leading" brought Wallin back to serve at Andrews, and she most looks forward to "connecting and engaging with past and present students, because they are our future." She is excited to embark on this new journey at Andrews with her family, and she places God at the center of her new role.

Miriam  
Taylor



Maxine  
Umana



Jeana  
Wallin





## Office of Development

**Steven Manoukian** oversees his team as director of Development. Passionate about people, culture and missions, he carries out various duties for the office, including administrative work, strategizing, meeting with donors and overseeing annual fundraising campaigns.

Manoukian holds bachelor's degrees in business administration and theology from Middle East University and a master's degree from Newbold University. Drawn to serving the worldwide Adventist church through the diverse student body at Andrews, he brings experience in the pastoral, missions and administrative fields to his role. His vision for the future includes updating campus buildings, supporting a self-sufficient University endowment and seeing Andrews become a leader in world missions.

He has enjoyed the kindness of his colleagues, the beauty of the seasons and the creativity of the campus. "I have worked in many parts of the world, and Andrews has been one of those places where Seventh-day Adventist values are upheld and Jesus is shared on campus," Manoukian notes. "I hope people from all over the world ... will know how much Andrews is invested in the mission and the values of the Seventh-day Adventist Church."

**Esther Penn**, gift records associate, works to accurately record, update and maintain donor contributions in the University's database. She ensures the integrity of gift data and supports the timely acknowledgement of donors. Penn notes that she has enjoyed "being part of a mission-driven environment where every gift supports education and research." She adds, "I've found it especially rewarding to contribute behind the scenes to meaningful donor relationships and long-term institutional impact."

Born and raised in Berrien Springs, Michigan, Penn worked at Hinsdale Hospital in Illinois after completing her education. She went on to live in several places across the United States while raising her two sons, before becoming part of the Andrews community in 2014.

"In the future, I hope to continue strengthening the accuracy and efficiency of our gift processing systems to better support the University's fundraising goals," Penn says. "I also look forward to contributing to a collaborative community that values continuous improvement and shared success."

Responsible for conducting research and analyzing data to support the efforts of major gifts officers, **Hayden Baldwin**, prospect management officer, plays a key role in the Office of Development. He works closely with the Advancement team, helping connect alumni and donors with their goals and vision for Andrews.

Originally from Arizona, Baldwin graduated with a bachelor's degree in computer science from Andrews University. Before his current role, he gained important skills working for the Office of Information Technology Services and Office of Alumni Services, providing technological support, contributing to the documentation of internal processes and developing custom digital signage solutions.

Baldwin has enjoyed being surrounded by a team of "great people" while working at Andrews. He shares, "My colleagues have always been hard-working and dedicated to the mission of Andrews. Perhaps even more important, they are dedicated to surrendering to God's will in their lives."

## Office of Planned Giving & Trust Services

Director of Planned Giving & Trust Services **Cindy Hill** looks forward to helping individuals and families discover and articulate their legacy, while fostering a culture of generosity within the Andrews campus and community. "Partnering with donors that wish to leave a lasting legacy and impact students in their journey to find their purpose and serve faithfully is both fulfilling and rewarding," she shares.

Hill holds a degree in accounting and business management as well as a Certified Specialist in Planned Giving professional designation. She previously served as a financial analyst and controller for AdventHealth, financial services professional with Prudential Financial, account and project manager for a boutique estate planning firm in Atlanta, Georgia, and assistant director for Planned Giving & Trust Services at Andrews.

"It is a joy to work for a higher education institution that values strong academics but also prepares students to serve their communities with excellence, compassion and vision—within the context of a Seventh-day Adventist Christian worldview," she says.



Steven  
Manoukian



Esther  
Penn



Hayden  
Baldwin



Cindy  
Hill



# Andrews welcomes Rebecca Fanai to CFE

*As student missions and service program director*

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY WELCOMES Rebecca Fanai as the new student missions and service program director in the Center for Faith Engagement. In this role, Fanai mentors and connects students with meaningful service and mission opportunities, both locally and internationally. She also collaborates with campus partners—including churches, community organizations and global mission agencies—to build sustainable service pathways and develop programs, trainings and outreach initiatives for the Andrews community.

“I guide students through the entire journey—from exploring their calling, to preparing for cross-cultural service, to supporting them during and after their mission experience,” Fanai says. “Overall, my role is about creating spaces where students can grow, serve and discover how God is calling them to make a difference.”

Fanai was born and raised in Myanmar/Burma, with family roots in Northeast India. She also spent time living in the Philippines, which she notes, “deeply shaped my worldview and my love for service in multicultural settings.” Most recently, she lived in Maryland and affirms, “Each place I’ve lived has shaped my heart for ministry, service and building community across cultures.”

She attended Andrews University for her undergraduate degree, sharing, “My strongest connection to Andrews began during my time as a student. Being here shaped me in so many ways—spiritually, academically and personally. I was involved in ministry and service opportunities on campus, and those experiences planted the seeds of purpose and calling that I’m now able to pour into my work with students.”

In 2020, Fanai graduated from Andrews with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, later becoming a licensed registered nurse. She also started a nonprofit organization called Project Chin Hills,

which serves the Chin diaspora and provides humanitarian aid to communities in need. Her work in these roles developed important skills in communication, outreach, service and support.

“Both my nursing background and nonprofit leadership have prepared me to serve students in missions by giving me a strong foundation in compassion, cultural sensitivity, mentorship and practical problem-solving,” she explains. “These experiences allow me to walk alongside students in meaningful ways as they prepare to step into unfamiliar environments and explore God’s calling for their lives.”

Earlier in 2025, Fanai learned about the opening for student missions and service program director at Andrews. She

reflects that the position immediately resonated with a passion God had placed on her heart: to empower young adults to serve with purpose. “It felt like God opening a door back to a community that shaped me, and I sensed a calling to return and invest in students the same way mentors once invested in me.”

Fanai most looks forward to journeying with the students on campus—hearing their stories, encouraging their sense of mission and witnessing the growth that happens through service. She hopes to bring a spirit of compassion, openness and intentional mentorship to her new role, noting, “I want to help cultivate a campus culture where service and mission are woven into everyday life and where students feel empowered to live out their faith through meaningful action. I hope that each individual/student I encounter would come to know the love of Jesus or live out their love for Jesus and serve like He did.”

She shares, “I’m deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve Andrews again, and I’m humbled by the ways God has led me back here. I’m excited to walk alongside our students as they step into mission, grow in their faith and discover how they can serve the world with courage, compassion and purpose.”

“It felt like God opening a door back to a community that shaped me, and I sensed a calling to return and invest in students the same way mentors once invested in me.”





## Influencing student journeys

*Carolyn Hurst retires after nearly 20 years at Andrews*

### CAROLYN HURST FIRST CAME TO ANDREWS

University as a graduate student. She pursued a Master of Arts and, in 1993, completed her degree. She worked briefly in market research until returning to Andrews—this time in 1998 as the graduate dean's administrative assistant.

In 2001, Carolyn moved into Graduate Admissions as the graduate admissions supervisor. Her responsibilities continued to grow and, in 2010, she became director of Graduate Admissions.

"When I first moved into the Graduate Admissions Office, the typewriter was still being used as part of the process of preparing files," she says. "While I didn't get everything done that I wanted to, I was able to streamline the processes. Figuring students' GPAs on their undergraduate degrees was done with pencil and paper and a calculator, and after telling my brother what we needed, he developed a spreadsheet that met our needs. We also started scanning documents so we could have a digital copy of what was submitted to us."

A few years later, in 2014, Carolyn accepted the job of registrar at University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, (UEAB) in Kenya. She worked at UEAB for five and a half years, where she again helped to streamline processes, then rejoined Andrews University as associate registrar of Undergraduate and Graduate Programs in 2020.

Carolyn says, "When I came back to Andrews, I helped to test several new computer processes to streamline the registrar's office, including for the online graduation application and the Change of Program application used when students want to change their majors from one program to another." Her goal was to make sure students met their degree requirements in order to graduate with Andrews degrees.

She adds, "During my first time as an employee at Andrews, I prepared students' files to be processed for admission, and during my second time as an Andrews employee, I cleared students for graduation. I helped students get into Andrews, and then I helped them graduate. Both jobs were challenging and varied depending on the students' circumstances."

Carolyn began her retirement in 2024, though she currently assists Andrews part-time as a degree audit specialist in Academic Records. She also volunteers at the Ruth Murdoch Elementary School library, which brings extra occasions to see her grandchildren. Carolyn plans to primarily stay in the Berrien Springs, Michigan, area to be close to her family. She will



**"I helped students get into Andrews, and then I helped them graduate. Both jobs were challenging and varied depending on the students' circumstances."**

continue a personal project that she began in 2011—making prayer shawls for people who have recently lost a loved one or who are going through health challenges. Carolyn has made over 100 shawls that have been given to people in the U.S. and Kenya.

Reflecting on her years at Andrews, Carolyn notes that while her career path is not in the least what she expected, she is grateful she had the opportunity to work in higher education—something she had hoped for and enjoyed. She always aimed to do her job to the best of her ability, appreciated working in a Christian environment where her office team had worship every day, and valued the cultural diversity of Andrews.

Carolyn says, "I will miss the people I worked with. I also will miss the joy of seeing students graduate."





Andrews University  
Alumni Homecoming  
*September 25–28, 2025*

# Together *Again* ... Together *Forever*





From Top, L-R:

Wes Christiansen Memorial Golf Outing ■ Homecoming Classic Car Show ■ Spirit of Philanthropy & Homecoming Banquet ■ Elynda Bedney, Empowering Journeys Scholarship Breakfast ■ 38th Annual Homecoming Parade ■ Empowering Journeys Scholarship Breakfast ■ Pastor Thorly James, Proximity Vespers ■ 38th Annual Homecoming Parade







From Top, L-R:  
 IMPACT Vespers ■ Gymnastics intermission performance, Alumni vs. Students Basketball Games ■ Legacy of the Roundtable ■ James Doggette Jr., DSL, New Life Fellowship ■ One Place Fellowship ■ Pastor Shane Anderson, lead pastor, Pioneer Memorial Church ■ Alumni Haystacks Supper







From Top, L-R:

Andrews University Symphony Orchestra, Alumni Homecoming Gala ■ Andrews University Wind Symphony, Alumni Homecoming Gala ■ Alumni women's basketball team ■ Alumni men's basketball team ■ Alumni vs. Students Basketball Games







Top & Bottom:

Fly-in/Car Meet Pancake Breakfast (Airplane and Car Show) ■ Bradley Family 5K Harvest Run

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*Getting involved is a great way to make a difference!*



# 2025 HONORED CLASSES



## Golden Hearts Club

### Classes of 1975 and earlier

**FRONT ROW, L-R:** Jeanette Johnson, Beverly (Campbell) Pottle, Marilyn Castelbuono, Edith (Metzger) Applegate, Stanley Applegate, Bonnie Beres, Luz M. Journet-Earp, Bruce Zimmerman, Jan (Green) Krpalek, Don Dronen, Gary Kaufman

**SECOND ROW, L-R:** Rick Regester, Joan Starkey-Regester, Janet Hainey, Sylvia Marsh Fagal, William Fagal, Barbara Jemison Myers, Fred Myers, Donald Krpalek, Dwight Magers

**THIRD ROW, L-R:** Jon Butler, Donald Jensen, A. George Walker, Jared Bruckner, Sylvia Smith Budd, Paul G. Koles, John Matthews, Sylvia (Nelson) Clarke, Ann (Steinweg) DiCicco

**BACK ROW, L-R:** Doug Anderson, Karren (Kieler) Jensen, Debbie Bedell Schultz, Marvin Budd, Debbie (Jeffery) Habenicht, Rolf J. Pöhler, Wil Clarke, Larry Geraty, Mary Wein Green



### Class of 1965



### Class of 1955

**L-R:** Luz M. Journet-Earp, Bruce Zimmerman

**FRONT ROW, L-R:** Joan Starkey-Regester, Sylvia Marsh Fagal, Bill Barney, Jeanette Johnson

**BACK ROW, L-R:** Jared Bruckner, Doug Anderson, Fred Myers, Phil Lane, Larry Geraty, Wil Clarke





Class of 1975

**FRONT ROW, L–R:** Karren (Kieler) Jensen, Debbie (Jeffery) Habenicht, Debbie Bedell Schultz, Sylvia Smith Budd, Jan Krpalek, Gary Kaufman

**MIDDLE ROW, L–R:** Steve Dunson, Dale Creech, Jon Butler, Janet Hainey, Donald Krpalek, Dwight Magers

**BACK ROW, L–R:** A. George Walker, Paul G. Koles, John Matthews, Alvin Davis, Rolf J. Pöhler



Class of 1985

**FRONT ROW, L–R:** Sari Butler, Richard Kelly, Ron du Preez, Nori Lachica, Lorena Bidwell

**BACK ROW, L–R:** Linda Nieb, Ted Pottle, John L. Delinger, Denise Small Kelley



Class of 1995

**FRONT ROW, L–R:** Darlene Barnhurst, Rich Liebelt, Rolf J. Pöhler, Rosalind Aaron

**BACK ROW, L–R:** Douglas Krull, Aristede Dukes, Gregory Hann, Vladimir Radivojevic





Together Again ... Together Forever

# HONORED CLASSES



**Class of 2000**

**FRONT ROW, L-R:** RoseMarie (Parker) Augsburg, Sallie (Wheeler) Alger, Cynthia Jack

**BACK ROW, L-R:** Julián Anderson-Martín, Lee Griffin



**Class of 2005**

**FRONT ROW, L-R:** Willyta Wamack, Clara Meyer

**BACK ROW, L-R:** John Lee, Cleveton Jack, Rodrigo Correa



**Class of 2015**

**FRONT ROW, L-R:** Betsy Quetz, Christine Rorabeck, Tunisia Peters

**MIDDLE ROW, L-R:** Julie Logan, Aimee-Joy (Cork) Hearn, Mindy McLarty, Bakar Razmadze

**BACK ROW, L-R:** John LaVanture, Marissa Voegelé, Miriam Dramstad



**Class of 2025**

**L-R:** David Carnero, Peter Gordon, Oriel Paulino-Pena







# UP-AND-COMING ALUMNI

The “Up-and-Coming Alumni Award” is presented to alumni aged 40 and under who are “Changing the World” through notable achievements in a profession or occupation, impactful contributions to the community or church, and/or outstanding service to the University. Nominations are submitted by fellow alumni or Andrews faculty/staff and approved by the Alumni Association Board of Directors. *Congratulations to this year’s recipients!*



## Gary B. Howell-Walton

(BA/BA '10)

Gary B. Howell-Walton graduated from Andrews University with Bachelor of Arts degrees in psychology and Spanish studies in 2010. He went on to receive his master’s degree in social work, community organization, planning and administration from the University of Southern California in 2014 and worked as a clinician in a nonprofit setting prior to law school.

Gary joined WilmerHale as a summer associate in 2018. During law school, he served as a judicial intern for the Honorable George A. O’Toole Jr. of the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts and as a legal intern with the Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee. Gary received his Juris Doctor from Northeastern University School of Law in 2019.

He is currently a senior associate whose practice covers a variety of complex litigation matters, including commercial disputes, regulatory enforcement matters and internal investigations. He has experience in all phases of civil litigation, including pleadings, discovery, trial and appeals. Gary maintains an active pro bono practice and has represented clients seeking support relating to housing, public benefits and immigration status.

## Ehren McLarty

(BS '11)

Ehren McLarty graduated from Andrews University with a Bachelor of Science in animal science, *summa cum laude*. In 2015, she completed her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine at the University of California (UC), Davis, College of Veterinary Medicine, a highly competitive veterinary school with one of the lowest acceptance rates in the U.S. After graduation, she was accepted for a one-year rotating internship at the University of Minnesota Veterinary Medical Center. Following the internship, Ehren returned to UC Davis to complete a four-year residency in diagnostic imaging. Upon completing her residency in 2020, Ehren joined the faculty at UC Davis as assistant professor of clinical diagnostic imaging.

Ehren feels blessed to have grown up in a Christian home and has been a member of the Woodland Seventh-day

Adventist Church for 12 years, where she enjoys serving in music and children’s ministries.

While an undergraduate student at Andrews, Ehren was a teaching assistant for the Foundation of Biology labs for 2.5 years and a member of the active pre-veterinary club. As an alumnus, she has supported the Department of Sustainable Agriculture.

## Stephen Mayer

(BSE '10)

Stephen Mayer graduated from Andrews University with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering in 2010. He was president of the Andrews University student chapter of the Society of Automotive Engineers and was involved, for two years, with helping Andrews’ student chapter participate in the annual Baja SAE Competition.

While attending Andrews, Stephen stayed busy and worked hard at the welding department, the Dairy and the cafeteria.

Since graduating from Andrews University, Stephen has worked at Heritage Academy in Tennessee and the M+W Group in Chicago, Illinois. He is currently the mechanical team manager at Arcadis in Albany, New York.

Stephen was part of the first group of students from Andrews University’s School of Engineering to complete the requirements for and be certified as a Professional Engineer (PE). Stephen has stayed connected with Andrews and has referred multiple graduates, who have been hired. He is also very involved with his local church, Joy of Troy in New York, where he has served as head deacon and clerk.



# REGIONAL EVENTS



PHOTOS: Jeana Wallin

The Office of Alumni Services was delighted to host alumni in the DMV (Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia) area for the first Alumni Regional Event of the season. President John Wesley Taylor V and members of the University Advancement team shared exciting Andrews news, initiatives and giveaways. We enjoyed engaging conversations, reconnecting with familiar faces and meeting new friends over a meal.

Thank you to those who attended. We are grateful for your ongoing connection to Andrews University and hope the event reminded you of the lifelong friendships, shared faith and meaningful experiences that make our alumni community so remarkable. We look forward to seeing you at future events!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

(Dates subject to change)

Jan. 11, 2026—Orlando, Florida  
Feb. 8, 2026—Chattanooga, Tennessee  
March 11, 2026—Dallas, Texas  
March 15, 2026—Loma Linda, California  
April 19, 2026—Asheville, North Carolina

Please visit [andrews.edu/alumni/events](https://andrews.edu/alumni/events) to access up-to-date information and registration for future Regional Events. To be sure you are connected to Andrews and can receive direct invitations, please update your contact information by emailing [alumni@andrews.edu](mailto:alumni@andrews.edu) or calling the Office of Alumni Services at 269-471-3591.

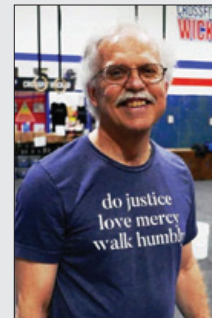
## Who are alumni?

If you've graduated, attended, worked or taught at Andrews University, we consider you alumni! And if you're a parent or a potential student considering Andrews, you're invited to be our honored guest.

## 1960s

**Dale L.** (BA '62) and **Karen Crandall** (att.) **Clayton** retired to Whidbey Island in the Pacific Northwest. They co-authored "A Gentle Clash of Cultures: Filipino Students and Colleagues, Martial Law and Civet Cats," published by Koehler Books. Their mission experience was during the rule of Ferdinand Marcos. After decades serving in Adventist education, they enjoy visiting their son Jeffrey in California and daughter Kimberly and her family in Australia.

## 1970s



**Frederick Gerhard Christiansen** (BS '75) lives in Ipswich, Massachusetts. He attends Stoneham Memorial Seventh-day Adventist Church, where he is an elder and teaches Earliteens.

Frederick recently celebrated 50 years of marriage to Kathie Ewald Christiansen. He also recently celebrated 30 years of working for Hewlett Packard Enterprise.

## 2000s

**Lora Lynn Lucas** (BS '02, MSPT '03) and her husband are raising their two teens in the Chattanooga, Tennessee, area. She is working as a lab assistant for the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Southern Adventist University.

**John Thomas Gagnon** (BA '04) spent 20 years in federal service spanning the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and U.S. Food and Drug Administration. He recently started a new position focused on civil rights compliance at the University of Michigan.





**Woodrow "Woody" Wilson Whidden II** (BD '69, former faculty), 81, passed away peacefully at home in Berrien Springs on Nov. 11, 2025, beside his loving wife, **Margaret** (MMus '69), after a full life.

Known for his big voice, rich southern drawl, humor and a vocabulary filled with obscure words and sayings, Woody enjoyed long conversations with friends, family and anyone he met.

Born in Orlando, Florida, to Woodrow and Helen Whidden, he grew up in Titusville, Florida. From a young age, he worked as a beekeeper alongside his father and brothers, supplying honey and royal jelly to visitors at the family's roadside stand on Old U.S. 1.

He attended Titusville High School before graduating from Forest Lake Academy in Apopka, Florida, in 1963; Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University) in Collegedale, Tennessee, in 1967; and Andrews University in 1969, where he met the love of his life.

Woody married Margaret Gibbs on Oct. 26, 1969. As their family grew, he served as the pastor of Seventh-day Adventist churches in Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Michigan before earning his PhD from Drew University in 1989.

Woody devoted his professional life to the science of salvation. In 1990, he began his tenure at Andrews University as professor of religion and, in 2006, at Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS) Theological Seminary in the Philippines, capping his career as a scholar, teacher and author.

Woody's published work included authored, co-authored and edited books; book chapters; articles in academic journals and popular magazines; and conference papers. Much of the work throughout his academic life had a direct relationship to his favorite theme—the gospel of grace.

Woody was preceded in death by his parents and brother, Donald.

He is survived by his wife, Margaret; three children, **Jamie** (BA '93), **Jonathan** (BS '98) (Zelda) and **Laura** (BA '01) (**Cory** (BA '01, MDiv '05, PhD '18)) **Wetterlin**; six grandchildren; brothers, Ivan (Phyllis) and **Phillip** (MA '74); and sister, Sylvia.



**Eduardo A. Ocampo** (former faculty) passed away peacefully on Oct. 22, 2025, in Loma Linda, California, surrounded by his loving family. He was 94.

Eduardo was born on Oct. 13, 1931, to Lucila Yábar de Ocampo and Wenceslao Ocampo. At fifteen, he met the love of his life, **Flora Alva León** (DIP2YR '50). They married in 1957 and, in 1973, moved with their four children to the United States, where Eduardo hoped they would receive an ideal education.

A graduate of the Universidad Adventista del Plata in Argentina and the Universidad Nacional de San Antonio Abad del Cusco, Eduardo devoted his life to ministry and education. He served as a pastor in Tacna, Peru, and Mountain View, California, and as education director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church's South American region, encompassing Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador.

In 1977, he joined Andrews University in Michigan as professor of modern languages at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, where his clarity, eloquence and love of learning inspired generations. Upon retiring in 2002, he was named emeritus professor. That same year, Eduardo and Flora settled in Loma Linda, where they shared more than two decades of joyful retirement together.

Those who knew him remember a man of intellect and grace, a Christian gentleman whose faith and humility guided every step. The Ocampo home was always open, filled with conversation, music and laughter.

Eduardo will be remembered as a devoted husband; a loving father to **Samuel** (BA '84, MBA '91) (and Gwen), **Nino** (BS '87) (and Adriana), **Lucy** (BA '84) and Florita (and Andrew); and a proud grandfather to Eduardito, Natali (and Britney), Adrianita, Robert, Isabella, Nicholas, Mariana and Bia. Melissa Price, Ella and Kainoa; Amy Ukleja, Mark, Thaddeus and Summit; and Justin Brownfield, Tammy, Kaila, Juliett and Noelle also knew him affectionately as "Belo."

Above all, Eduardo was a man of God—in the place God appointed, doing God's work in God's way.

**Jacqueline "Jackie" Marva Cook Wright** (former staff) died on Sept. 2, 2025.

She was born Oct. 1, 1935, in Dayton, Ohio, to Reverend Charles and Elizabeth Cook. Raised in the Baptist church—

her father a pastor and her mother an organist—Jackie grew up surrounded by faith and music. From a young age, her soulful voice touched hearts, carrying her across the country and around the world.

As a teenager, Jackie's family moved to Germantown, Ohio, where she met her future husband, Walter Leon "Beeky" Wright. Their marriage brought her into the renowned Wright Family Singers and, later, The BlendWrights, where Jackie's powerful alto became a signature sound. Her renditions of "These Are the Hands," "Cover Me" and "Hallelujah! Home at Last" remain unforgettable.

While music was central to her life, Jackie's greatest joy was her family. She and Walter raised four children while she supported his more than 40 years of ministry. Jackie also built a career as an administrative assistant at Kettering College of Medical Arts, the Southwest Union and Andrews University. Through every role—wife, mother, professional, singer—Jackie lived with grace, strength and unwavering faith.

Jackie was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Elder Walter L. Wright Sr.; parents; sister, Yvonne; and niece, Sharon.

She is survived by her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren and extended family who cherish her legacy of love and faith.



**Lysandra Joelle (Acre) Otto** (BS '16) died Aug. 24, 2025. She was born Oct. 20, 1988.



Joelle (as she preferred to be called) was a precocious, caring child who learned to read when she was four. She completed high school through home schooling and then attended Andrews University, where she graduated with a double major in mathematics and biology.

Joelle had a gift for teaching and tutored in the Math Center all four years of her stay at Andrews, then served two years as a student missionary in Egypt.

At Andrews, Joelle served as president of Nagilah Grace, a traditional Jewish dance group that performed during many events.

She also taught at a few different schools when she was not working on her MS in mathematics at the University of Toledo, which she did until COVID-19 interrupted her studies.

In March 2023, Joelle met Jonathan Otto online. When she found out that he was a cowboy and a farmer, she was thrilled since she had always wanted a garden of her own. In March 2024, Joelle married Jonathan and was able to garden to her heart's content at the couple's home near Collegedale, Tennessee.

Jonathan, Joelle and Joelle's son, Azeriah, went on many outdoor adventures, including geocaching, rafting and camping. One of Joelle and Jonathan's favorite activities was walking in a corn maze.

The family's outdoor adventures ended on Aug. 24, 2025, when Joelle gave birth to her son Samuel only thirty minutes before she died from an amniotic fluid embolism, a very rare and typically terminal event.

Joelle's life was full of love for God, her husband, children, family, people, animals and service. She was intelligent, courageous, compassionate and dedicated. Though her years were too few, her impact was immeasurable, and the memory of her faith and kindness will live on in all who knew her.



**Daniel Joseph Drazen** (BA '74, MA '03, former faculty) passed away on June 24, 2025, in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He was born on Dec. 29, 1951, in Chicago, Illinois. Daniel's journey through life was one marked by love, dedication and an unwavering desire to make the world a better place.

Daniel earned a master's degree from Andrews University and devoted his professional life to Andrews, where he worked tirelessly as a periodical editor. His contributions to the University's publications enriched the lives of both students and faculty, resonating with his passion for education and the printed word.

A man of devout Christian faith, Daniel was an active member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. His service to the church was a testament to his belief in the power of community and spirituality. His gentle soul found solace and joy in the simple act of helping others, whether it was through his role in the church or cooking for the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen. His actions spoke volumes of his character, as he lived out his creed of love and charity in every aspect of his life.

Daniel's passion extended to his love for animals, especially cats, which he cared for with the tenderness they deserved. His benevolence was not limited to humans alone, and his empathy for all living creatures was a true reflection of his beautiful heart.

Daniel was preceded in death by his beloved parents, Joseph Edward Drazen and Eva Erika (Lasch) Drazen; his wife, Nancy (Noble) Drazen; and his brothers, Patrick Edward Drazen and Timothy John Drazen.

To those who knew him, Daniel was the embodiment of what it means to be loving, kind and generous. His memory will forever be cherished and held as an example for how to lead a life full of purpose and grace.



**Delmer Ivan Davis Sr.** (former faculty) died on June 2, 2025, in St. Joseph, Michigan.

Delmer was born Nov. 6, 1939, in St. Helena, California. He attended the elementary and secondary Seventh-day Adventist schools in Angwin, California, graduating from Pacific Union College Preparatory School in 1958.

Delmer then earned his BA and MA degrees in English at Pacific Union College before beginning a PhD in English at the University of Colorado, Boulder, in 1964.

In Colorado, Delmer met and fell in love with **Margaret Wall** (MA '82), a graduate of the nursing program at Union College (now Union Adventist University). Delmer and Margaret were married in La Junta, Colorado, on Dec. 19, 1965, and celebrated 30 years of married life before Margaret's death in 1996.

In 1966, Delmer's teaching career began in the English department at Loma Linda University. In 1969, he joined the English department at Walla Walla College (now

Walla Walla University) before returning to California to chair the English department at Loma Linda University (La Sierra Campus) from 1971 until 1977.

In 1977, Delmer arrived at Andrews University to begin a distinguished career as an English professor and administrator, serving as chair of the department from 1979 until 1987 and in various administrative posts until his retirement in 2005.

Those varied posts included dean of the School of Graduate Studies (1987–1996); associate vice president for Academic Administration (1991–1992); director of Andrews University Press (1991–1996); vice president for Academic Administration (1992–1994); acting vice president for Academic Administration (1997–1998); and director of General Education (1998–2005).

In 2002, Delmer's book, "Teaching Literature: A Seventh-day Adventist Approach," was published by Andrews University Press.

Over the course of his long career at Andrews, Delmer was known as a beloved teacher and mentor, a generous colleague and a sensible administrator.

Following his retirement, Delmer enjoyed traveling, indulging his wide-ranging reading interests, spending time with friends, and enjoying his children and grandchildren.

Delmer is survived by his children, **Ivan** (MA '92, current faculty) and wife, **Brynja (Snorason)** (BS '97, current faculty), and **Rhonda Davis-Cheshire** (att.) and husband, Michael, as well as six grandchildren, including Leifur (current student).



## A product of God's grace

by Cyril Punay

### AFTER GRADUATING FROM THE ADVENTIST

University of the Philippines (AUP) in 2015 with a bachelor's degree in music education, I worked as a music teacher at AUP Academy for several years. I had no intentions of coming to the United States, but then I saw a video of Winner Silvestre, an Andrews University graduate student at the time and a fellow Filipino, conducting a graduate recital. I decided pursuing a graduate degree at Andrews might be for me.

I prayed about it, and God opened doors for me to apply. I submitted all the necessary paperwork and other required audition materials to the Department of Music, and after some time I received word directly from one of the music professors that they would like to have me at Andrews. I had been officially accepted.

Although I was initially excited to join the program, I had no idea how I would cover the program costs—and I needed to send Andrews the money quickly so that they could give me my I-20 form for my U.S. visa interview. I felt God was telling me to be bold in pursuit of my degree, so I even talked to the president of AUP about my plan.

God continued to open doors and work on my behalf. Andrews soon emailed to inform me that I qualified for an additional scholarship, which eliminated any discrepancies in paying the tuition due at the time. I was able to attend Andrews.

Throughout my stay as a student at Andrews, I repeatedly received funds from anonymous donors, friends and AUP. In May 2024, I completed my master's degree in conducting.

Outside of Andrews, I was blessed to found the Sola Gratia Chorale, a ministry-driven vocal ensemble with the mission of sharing the gospel through excellent, spirit-filled choral music. Over time, what began as a small gathering grew into a recognized ensemble dedicated to proclaiming sola gratia, “by grace alone,” through every performance.

By God's grace, the Sola Gratia Chorale has been blessed with significant achievements on the international stage. These accomplishments include being a Grand Prix Winner at the eighth Singapore International Choral Festival and Champion of the fourth Asian Choral Grand Prix.



PHOTO: Cyril Punay

**Many opportunities came through unexpected connections, moments of favor and people who believed in my calling even before I fully saw it myself.**

Currently, I work as a choir director and music educator at Spring Valley Academy in Ohio, where my responsibilities include conducting ensembles, preparing students for performances, choosing repertoire and helping singers grow technically, musically and spiritually.

I have truly seen God open doors for me in this role. Many opportunities came through unexpected connections, moments of favor and people who believed in my calling even before I fully saw it myself. Being far from home has been challenging at times, but it has also pushed me to rely on God more deeply. Through every transition, He has provided clarity, strength and opportunities that have aligned perfectly with the gifts He has entrusted to me.

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**Cyril Punay** (MMus '24) is still amazed at God's leading in his life. He plans to continue following wherever and however God guides.




# Give a gift that pays you back.

When you fund a charitable gift annuity with Andrews University, you get more than the satisfaction of supporting our mission. You also get fixed payments—for life. You may enjoy significant tax benefits as well, including a deduction in the year of your gift and future payouts that are partially tax-free. If you're interested in supporting Andrews University while enjoying the benefit of a dependable income, call or email us to learn more.

Age	Payout rate*
70	5.9%
80	7.6%
90	9.7%

\* Actual rate varies based on age and annuity type. Not available in all states.

A close-up portrait of an older man with grey hair, smiling broadly. He is wearing a dark jacket over a plaid shirt. His hand is visible near his chin.

**Najeeb Nakhle**  
MA '71, MDiv '73, DMin '78  
Longtime advocate/friend  
of international students  
and accomplished gardener.

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*During the Department of Music Christmas Extravaganza held on Dec. 6 & 7, Stephen Zork, professor of music and conductor of the University Singers and Chorale, and Susan Zork, emerita professor of religion, performed Stephen's arrangement of "Christmas Dinner" with the University Singers and Chorale and chamber orchestra. This academic year marks Stephen's final year at Andrews before retirement—and the 14th time in 34 years that the Zorks have performed "Christmas Dinner" together at Andrews University.*

**PHOTO CREDIT:** Kimberly Agosto

