For the first time in the nearly 22 years since Africa University was founded by The United Methodist Church, the boards of the university and the agency that spearheaded the founding of the Pan-African educational institution met together on the campus in Old Mutare, Zimbabwe.

“This is a historic meeting,” Bishop David Yemba said of the joint meeting of the governing bodies of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and Africa University.

Yemba, chancellor of the university and bishop of the Central Congo episcopal area, welcomed the opportunity for a worship service in Kwan Lim Chapel that included the GBHEM and AU boards, students, faculty, and members of the West Michigan Conference, who were at AU for the dedication of the Ubuntu Retreat Center. The West
Michigan Conference raised $500,000 to build the center after the Rev. Laurie Haller visited the university when she was a GBHEM board member. An anonymous donor matched what the conference raised.

“Our hope is that now that the dream of Africa University has come true, GBHEM will continue strong collaboration and work with Africa University,” Yemba said, noting that there has been transition and change at the university as well as at GBHEM.

The Rev. Dr. Kim Cape, GBHEM’s general secretary, said the contributions Africa University is making to the continent are so important that she wanted directors to see the campus first-hand and meet students and faculty.

“Seeing is believing,” Cape said. After General Conference approved the founding of Africa University in 1988, “GBHEM was the midwife,” she added.

“Africa University is one of the ways we are making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of Africa,” Cape said.

The university, which opened in 1992, draws students from all over Africa. The current enrollment of 2,000 represents students from 29 countries, and nearly 5,000 graduates are changing the face of Africa as they become leaders in the church, government, business, and civil society.

Bishop Marcus Matthews, vice-chair of the AU Board, and Bishop James Dorff, president of GBHEM’s board, agreed the face-to-face meeting was important.

“For me, the founding of Africa University is the most significant thing that has happened in our denomination in the last 20 years,” Matthews said.

“We came together with a common purpose of building a Pan-African university to be used by all the continent,” said Matthews, episcopal leader of the Baltimore-Washington Conference. To do that, the denomination put aside politics and other differences, he said.

Dorff said it was good for GBHEM directors to see the strength and diversity of those who serve on the Africa University Board of Directors, and for AU boards members to see that GBHEM’s board is made up of a good cross-section of the church.

“It also gave representatives from Africa University the opportunity to express appreciation to GBHEM for its role in the development of Africa University over the years. And it gave GBHEM a chance to say thank you to the Africa University Board for their hard work over the last 22 years,” said Dorff, episcopal leader of the Southwest Texas and Rio Grande Conferences.

The joint meeting featured introductions and reports about Africa University and what the university’s nearly 5,000 graduates are doing now.

(continued on page 4)
New AU Vice Chancellor Unanimously Elected

Dr. Munashe Furusa, a Zimbabwean and dean of the College of Arts and Humanities at California State University, Dominguez Hills, was unanimously elected as the new vice chancellor of Africa University, Bishop David Yemba announced.

Yemba, chancellor of the United Methodist university in Old Mutare and episcopal leader of the Central Congo Area in the Democratic Republic of Congo, said the appointment is effective July 1.

“We wanted someone who is able to face challenges such as growth,” said Yemba, who noted that the university has grown from two faculties to seven in more than 20 years.

“It is also expected that the new vice chancellor will be called to be more aggressive in the area of fundraising. We believe Furusa will be able to fulfill this mission,” Yemba said.

Bishop Marcus Matthews, episcopal leader of the Baltimore-Washington Conference and vice chairman of the Africa University Board of Directors, said the university is fortunate to have a scholar of Furusa’s eminence and wide experience in Africa and the United States.

“His extensive contacts in the international business and education communities will raise the profile of Africa University around the world,” Matthews said.

The Rev. Dr. Kim Cape, general secretary of the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry, said Furusa was the unanimous choice of both the search committee and the AU Board.

“He was the final choice from 70 applicants. He impressed both students and faculty during his visit to the campus,” Cape said.

Furusa replaces Fanuel Tagwira, who has held the post of vice chancellor since 2009. Tagwira plans to take a sabbatical and then return to the Faculty of Agriculture at AU.

A member of the Board of Directors for the National Council for Black Studies, Furusa has maintained strong ties with African people and organizations. He works closely with African American and African elected officials, African consul generals, ambassadors, black churches, nonprofit organizations, and Chambers of Commerce to create opportunities for developing underserved communities in the U.S. and Africa.

Furusa, a first-generation college student, received his doctorate in African literature and critical theory, and his master’s and bachelor’s in English from the University of Zimbabwe.

Africa University, established by The United Methodist Church in 1992, draws students from all over Africa. The current enrollment of 2,000 represents students from 29 countries, and nearly 5,000 graduates are changing the face of Africa as they become leaders in the church, government, business, and civil society.

While at California State University, Dominguez Hills, Furusa served as professor and department chair of Africana studies, chair of the Academic Senate, and the executive director of the California African American Political and Economic Institute.

In Zimbabwe, Furusa served in numerous posts, from high school principal and assistant professor at the University of Zimbabwe, to chairman of the Zimbabwe Literature Curriculum Development Committee.

His publications include The Borders in All of Us: New Approaches to Global Diasporic Societies, and African Womanhood in Zimbabwean Literature: New Critical Perspectives on Women’s Literature in African Languages.
GBHEM’s directors toured the campus, including the farm and dairy, as well as attending the worship and the dedication ceremony and the chancellor’s dinner.

Robin Minthorn, a GBHEM board member, said Africa University had much to teach the U.S.

“I think oftentimes Native Americans don’t have a voice, and seeing the strong indigenous way Africa University is doing things is inspiring,” she said. Minthorn, a member of the Kiowa tribe, said she hopes seeing what Africa University is doing will give GBHEM board members a new perspective and help them acknowledge the diversity in the cultures of the United States.

Africa University board members also felt the meeting was powerful and would serve to strengthen relationships and understanding between the two boards.

Grace Muradzikwa, a Zimbabwean member of AU’s Board, said the chance for personal interaction was especially useful. “I thought it helped the two bodies appreciate each other and understand how they work together,” she said. However, both Muradzikwa and Natu Oswald Tweh, an AU board member from Liberia, said they would have preferred more opportunity for discussion.

“Next time there is a joint meeting, I think it should be expanded to have more discussion of issues,” Tweh said. Students were on campus and participated in all the events, telling visitors their own stories and talking about the work of the university.

Robinah Nambafu, a student from Uganda, said students promise to continue taking our studies seriously and responsibly with determination, dedication, and discipline, to put resources provided by the church to good use.

“It is my pleasure to express a heartfelt gratitude to you all who source and provide funding for this university,” she said.

Several students from the Democratic Republic of Congo talked about how Africa University cares for its students and how the learning environment and resources are better than many African universities.

“I went to a public university, and it was so crowded, some people were even standing in classes,” said Kabey Tshiyen Teggy, a student in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

Emmanuel Makal, a first-year student in Health Sciences who dreams of one day building his own hospital, also praised the chance to know other students from all over Africa. “I’m learning a lot about the rest of Africa,” Makal said.

Bishop Dorff summed up the week at the joint board meeting.

“Even though we may be separated from you, we are always with you in prayer and spirit.”

Brown is associate editor and writer, Office of Interpretation.
Board Approves Four GBHEM-initiated Proposals for Young Clergy

A Sunday focused on call and $600,000 to expand Project Transformation were among four proposals approved by the directors of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry during the March meeting in Mutare, Zimbabwe. The proposals are aimed at increasing the number of young clergy in the United Methodist Church.

The four proposals approved by the Board of Directors were initiated by staff and were in addition to 91 applications submitted for grants from the $7 million Young Clergy Initiative. Those awards were announced May 2. The deadline for the second round of applications is July 2, 2014.

“If we funded every request, $5.5 million would be given out for the first round,” said the Rev. Trip Lowery, GBHEM’s director of Young Adult Ministry Discernment and Enlistment. Lowery said applications were received from 23 different states and 27 requests were for $100,000.

The expectation is that about $1.5 million will be disbursed each year.

After reviewing the 91 completed applications, the staff also developed GBHEM-initiated grants for projects that staff viewed as having the potential to make a big difference.

Four of those proposals were approved by the directors:

- Providing $600,000 in funding to help with a national expansion of Project Transformation, a program that attracts college student leaders and engages them in ministry with unserved communities and in revitalizing struggling inner-city churches.
- Creating a churchwide Sunday concentrating on call, observed on Pentecost Sunday. Suggestions and a liturgical rationale would be offered if a church wanted to celebrate this Sunday at another time. There would be no cost potentially, but up to $18,000 was approved for producing resources if needed. One option would be to partner with an annual conference that applied for a grant to create these resources.
- Response to call opportunities — personalized response cards, videos of call stories, liturgy resources and suggestions. Resources would be produced by GBHEM staff and distributed online or electronically.
- Two options for a gap year program were approved. The first would support 200 United Methodist recent college graduates participating in existing programs such as Teach for America or AmeriCorps by giving them opportunities to explore faith and ministry and connect to the church as they serve. This had a cost of $40,000 the first year and $30,000 the second year. The second gap year option would help interested seminaries establish intentional communities for service year participants, including theological and ministry exploration, at a cost of $10,000 to $20,000.

There was some discussion about whether to provide such a large grant to Project Transformation. “A dozen annual conferences are asking to start Project Transformation in their conference,” said the Rev. Beth Ludlum, GBHEM’s director of Student Faith and Leadership Formation.

The project started in Dallas in 1998, and more than 60 percent of the college students who worked with Project Transformation have gone on to do some sort of ministry or service. More than half are employed by the UMC.

Project Transformation had presented a detailed proposal for the expansion and requested $1.2 million, with matching funds of $2.5 million to be raised. The board approved a grant of $600,000.

The Rev. Dr. Kim Cape said officials at the UMC Connectional Table were enthusiastic about a churchwide Sunday focused on call and would like to see an offering taken up that the conferences could use to support their students in education for ministry.

Several board members expressed concern that care should be taken to ensure that resources developed are inclusive and that the team developing resources is racially and ethnically diverse.

Bishop James Dorff, president of GBHEM’s Board of Directors, noted that while GBHEM is attempting to use the Young Clergy funds to encourage new opportunities, “We should realize that some of it is going to fall on hard ground and won’t come up.”

In other action, directors approved Dr. Lallene J. Rector, president of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, as a new member of the Board of Directors. She replaces Jodi Cataldo, who stepped down when she took a job at another UMC general agency, the General Board of Discipleship.

— Vicki Brown

To learn more about the Young Clergy Initiative, visit www.explorecalling.org/yci.

For information about the YCI grants and the application process, go to www.explorecalling.org/yci/grant.
GBHEM Scholarship Helps Many Aging Out of Foster Care

NICOLE BURDAKIN

For Dustin Haley and others facing uncertain futures as they age out of foster care or children’s homes, scholarship support from The United Methodist Church has helped turn the distant goal of a college education into reality.

“Since my first year as a scholarship recipient, I have always been grateful for the assistance that the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry has provided me,” Haley said. “They, along with other organizations, provided me with the funds to graduate from The University of Texas this past May, debt free.”

Haley, a Doctor of Physical Therapy candidate at UT Southwestern, was first awarded the J.A. Knowles Scholarship—a scholarship slated for college students who have lived in religious, charitable, and benevolent children’s homes and orphanages or were in the foster care system in the state of Texas—when he was pursuing his bachelor’s in kinesiology.

For youths aging out of a foster care home and unsure of how they will pay for rent and food, much less tuition, funding a college education can seem like an impossible dream.

“This scholarship has been a Godsend for our youth. The current financial aid programs allotted to our youth do not provide for summers, Spring Break, Thanksgiving, and Christmas breaks,” said Kami Jackson, Director of the Lubbock Transition Center in Lubbock, Tex., who frequently refers candidates for the Knowles scholarship to GBHEM.

The Lubbock Transition Center opened three years ago as a “one-stop shop” for all foster, former foster, and at-risk youth in Lubbock and the surrounding areas. The center helps 14-25 year olds with basic needs including food, housing, and transportation, but focuses on education services. GBHEM awards many scholarships to youths from the center each year.

Haley, who first heard of the scholarship from Jackson, said receiving the Knowles scholarship has helped reduce his dependence on loans that so many students struggle with today.

“I am able to fret about finances a little less and focus my time and efforts on my schooling,” Haley said. “Today I am in my third semester of PT school, and I am constantly learning new things every day. I cannot wait to get into the clinic and start working with patients in just two short years.”

For students who qualify for GBHEM restrictive-criteria scholarships like the J.A. Knowles Scholarship, these funds can fill an important gap for those who don’t have family to rely on for help.

“This is a difficult road for youth who do not have stable housing or dependable family and friends,” Jackson said. “So, where do they go? Where do they live? How do they eat if they are a full-time student with no access to residence halls or dormitories? Through the Knowles Scholarship, we have been

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largest number of historically black institutions of higher learning supported by any church body in the United States.

“The 12 South Clinic is a precious gift to the community and fills an important niche in primary care and critical diagnostic testing,” said Cynthia Bond Hopson, GBHEM’s assistant general secretary for the Black College Fund and Ethnic Concerns. “Meharry students and faculty don’t just learn the school’s motto, ‘Worship of God through Service to Mankind.’ They put their hearts and souls into living it out. Meharry students understand early and often that they are the difference between visionary, culturally sensitive intervention, and poor health and despair. We praise God and applaud their efforts.”

Founded in 1876, Meharry’s mission is to improve the health of minority and underserved communities by offering excellent education and training programs in the health sciences. The medical school has 7,000 alumni worldwide, including nearly half of the practicing African-American doctors in the U.S. About 18 percent of all African-American physicians in the nation graduate from Meharry each year, and the dentistry school is the nation’s leading producer of African-American dentists.

Every Thursday, eight to ten patients normally receive primary care at 12 South Clinic, which uses facilities operated during normal business hours by United Neighborhood Health Services, a private, nonprofit network of primary care clinics and health programs based in Nashville.

Although appointments are made weekly for 12 people, there are usually no-shows, and walk-ins typically make up half of the patients. Each is seen for an hour, first by two students—a third- or fourth-year student and a first- or second-year student—and then by the attending physician along with the student team.

One night recently during the height of the flu season, 75 people came for free flu shots. When word spread that 12 South was offering these shots, 10 to 20 people began coming each week for the immunizations.

Since it opened in September of 2012, the clinic has provided more than $20,000 in free care to its patients.

The clinic is a blessing for patients like Jeffery Reynolds, 51, who lost his job and his health insurance last summer. On a recent Thursday night, Reynolds was making his third monthly visit to the clinic for treatment of his hypertension, arthritis, and painful gout in his ankles.

“Everybody’s been great. Actually, I’ve had results from the treatments I’ve gotten,” said Reynolds, whose high blood pressure is now in check. “The medication I’ve been on for the gout has helped me a lot. I mean it’s still there, but it’s kind of tolerable.”

Jorie Jones, left, Meharry 12 South Community Clinic student volunteer, works with Courtney James, a student case manager at the clinic.

Dr. James Sullivan with student volunteers from the Meharry 12 South Community Clinic.

Learn more about the clinic at www.mmc.edu/about/community1/studentclinic.html. Donations to the clinic can be made through the medical college online donation site, www.mmc.edu/_modules/giving/david_chube.html. Donors may designate where they want a gift to go.

To learn more about the Black College Fund, visit www.gbhem.org/bcf. To order resources and read inspiring stories about the BCF, visit www.umcgiving.org/bcf.

Gillem is a freelance writer and photographer in Brentwood, Tenn.
able to bridge this gap and help them where they need it most.”

Jackson first discovered the scholarship when she received a paper application from the Office of Loans and Scholarships more than seven years ago when she was an aftercare case manager for 17-21 year olds aging out of foster care.

Each year, GBHEM’s Office of Loans and Scholarships contacts about 60 Texas children’s homes to promote the fund and to invite the benevolent homes to participate in the online application.

Many scholarships offered through GBHEM risk not being awarded year after year due to the highly restrictive criteria outlined in the original gift, often bequeathed in wills, to the agency. GBHEM’s Office of Loans and Scholarships searches diligently to find the right students in order to distribute these funds.

“We work hard to distribute the scholarship money we have to those looking for a way to attend college,” said Allyson Collinsworth, executive director of GBHEM’s Office of Loans and Scholarships. “Many of us take for granted the help our parents or relatives give in transitional periods, like going to college for the first time. The Knowles program is close to our hearts because we understand how much our support can do for the recipients.”

In 2013, 10 homes and two foster care families submitted applications for the J.A. Knowles Scholarship, and 32 applicants were awarded a total of $280,000. In 2013, the number of applicants and recipients had doubled over the year before, and the total money awarded tripled.

“Without the constant stress of worrying about paying bills, buying books, and other struggles of college students, I not only graduated, but did so with Honors,” Haley said. “I believe that it was due to the gracious hearts of donors within each of the organizations that have helped me along the way.”

For more information about the J.A. Knowles Scholarship program or other GBHEM scholarships, please visit www.gbhem.org/loansandscholarships or e-mail umscholar@gbhem.org.

Black College Fund Continues Work of Freedmen’s Aid Society

The Black College Fund’s support of 11 United Methodist-related historically black colleges and universities continues a rich Methodist tradition dating back to the Civil War era when educational opportunities were almost nonexistent for 4 million newly emancipated slaves.

The roots of those historically black colleges and universities extend directly from the work of the Freedmen’s Aid Society, which was organized in 1866 by the Methodist Episcopal Church to begin providing formal education to the freed men, women, and children.

“The Black College Fund continues to follow up on the mission that was carved out by the Methodist Episcopal Church right after the Civil War,” said Gerald Lord, staff executive in the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry’s Division of Higher Education.

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry staff examine copies of the charter, as well as the sealed package containing what is believed to be the original charter.
Original papers of the Freedmen’s Aid Society, including what is believed to be its incorporation document, are archived at GBHEM’s office in Nashville, Tenn.

“The energy emanating from these historic documents gently reminds us that higher education is still the common denominator for access, empowerment, and self-determination,” said Cynthia Bond Hopson, GBHEM’s assistant general secretary for the Black College Fund and Ethnic Concerns. “The society’s visionary and courageous acts so long ago continue to inspire, inform, and invigorate our best efforts as we carry on this proud legacy.”

Through the BCF, United Methodists support the largest number of historically black colleges and universities of any church body in the United States. Approximately 16,000 students are enrolled in the BCF schools, which are located in the church’s Southeastern and South Central jurisdictions. About 90 percent of the students qualify for financial aid.

The BCF was established by the 1972 General Conference of The United Methodist Church. Its schools were among the more than 70 colleges and universities that the society launched after the Civil War.

Funded through a churchwide apportionment fund — one of the seven funds that the entire UMC contributes to — the BCF annually distributes money equally among the schools. About $9 million was collected in 2012 and distributed to the 11 BCF schools.

David L. Beckley, president of Rust College, said the BCF is important to his school because it “represents a stable source of support of our current operations program.”

The 11 BCF schools are among the 119 UM-related schools, colleges, and universities in the U.S.

As the Civil War was ending in 1865, Congress established the U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, more commonly known as the Freedmen’s Bureau, to provide housing, food, and medical aid to poor whites and former black slaves. The Freedmen’s Bureau also offered legal assistance and established schools in the South, but was never adequately funded and was abolished by the federal government in 1872.

The Freedmen’s Aid Society was one of scores of freedmen’s aid and relief organizations formed by religious and secular groups as the war ended.

The Freedmen’s Aid Society, incorporated in 1870, became the Board of Education for Negroes of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1920. It owned the property where all of its institutions were located. Eventually the property of the organizations was deeded to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Those deeds, in turn, were passed along to the Methodist Church, which was formed in 1939 when the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Protestant Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church South re-unified after having been split since the mid-19th century. Then the ownership was passed to The United Methodist Church in 1968 following the merger of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren.

The actual deeds to the original properties are in the church archives, Lord said. Over the years, most property has been deeded to the individual institutions, although the church retains ownership of some small parcels.

“You can look at American history textbooks and see the difference that the Freedmen’s Aid Society made in American society during those years in terms of progress in race relations and educating African-Americans for the professions,” Lord said. “And then you see in the early twentieth century the rise of middle class African-Americans who succeeded in business largely because they were educated at these institutions that the Freedmen’s Aid Society started.”

— Tom Gillem
Funding Sought to Expand Pilot E-Reader Project

A pilot project to provide e-readers loaded with theological texts for a seminary in Liberia has proved so successful that additional funding is being sought to expand the project to other seminaries in Africa, including Africa University, Kamina Methodist University, Kabongo Methodist University, and several others.

The goal of the original project was to raise $30,000 to buy 100 electronic books and texts for professors and students at the Gbarnga School of Theology in Liberia. The students and professors no longer spend precious time and money copying texts and making notes from scarce textbooks.

Once the $30,000 goal was reached, fundraising efforts continued and more than $70,000 has been pledged to support implementing this project in other parts of Africa.

The pilot project was funded by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and the General Board of Discipleship. The United Methodist Publishing House provided select texts that were loaded into the e-readers.

Amos Nascimento, GBHEM’s special assistant for Global Education and New Initiatives, said the general agencies provide technical assistance and support.

“This campaign involved members of the Board of Directors in the two agencies, Boards of Ordained Ministry, Annual Conferences, local churches, individual donors, universities in Africa, faculty, and the students — who also contribute to the process by paying $30 to acquire the e-readers. For all these reasons, this project has been a great success and can be expanded,” Nascimento said.

The project not only funded new technology, it also involved working with faculty to identify key texts that matched the curriculum they needed in that school, according to the Rev. Stephen Bryant, GBOD’s director of Discipleship Resources International.

He added that the use of e-readers can potentially bridge an important gap that still exists in theological education in Africa. GBHEM has invested in online education and technological infrastructure for Methodist-related universities and theological seminaries in 12 African countries, focusing mainly on the provision of computer labs, access to the Internet, generators, and other equipment that can be installed at institutional settings.

To learn more or to donate online, visit drint.org/donate.
Baker Scholarship Recipient Spearheads New Wesley House Dormitory at Tyler Junior College

A dilapidated dorm at Tyler Junior College has been transformed into a missional community that is helping students at two Texas colleges grow in their faith. The vision of a campus minister — who is also a General Board of Higher Education and Ministry Baker Scholarship recipient — came to life with help from the Texas Annual Conference, local churches, and the Wesley Foundation.

“I love living at the Wesley [House] because it allows us to share our faith with everyone, and we can live with other believers,” said Courtney Johnson, a student living in the Wesley House dormitory.

The new residence hall was the vision of the Rev. Sunny Brown Farley, campus minister at Tyler Junior College. The Tyler United Wesley Foundation serves both Tyler Junior College and the University of Texas at Tyler. The new dorm is located at the junior college, but students from both campuses can live there. Any student who agrees to live under the community’s Rule of Life is welcome, regardless of affiliation with The United Methodist Church.

The Wesley House opened in August 2013, in response to crowded worship services and outreach programs that had outgrown the Wesley Foundation’s previous location.

Farley, who is on the Missional Church Studies track at Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University, received the Bishop James C. Baker Award, a GBHEM scholarship designated for UM campus ministers who are pursuing advanced training. Farley said the scholarship allowed her to return to seminary for a doctor of ministry degree. “The scholarship has offset the cost so that I can go back and gain useful education for the ministry we are now doing.”

Missional church studies emphasize a shift in focus from creating programs that meet the needs within a congregation to equipping members to address the needs of those outside the congregation — an idea which Farley brings to the Wesley House.

“Our first semester was a real learning experience,” said Farley. “Forty-three students moved into our building, and we had to negotiate things like visitation guidelines, snoring roommates, and Wi-Fi issues.”

Currently 43 students live at Wesley House — about half men and half women. The housing cost is $2,350 per semester.

The Tyler United Wesley Foundation offers free weekly meals to the TJC campus, serving lunch to about 200 students every Tuesday. In addition, there are weekly Bible studies and Bible readings at both campuses; a “Tuesdays on the Turf” outdoor weekly worship service; daily prayer; and regular mission projects, retreats, and fellowship events.

Several students read a daily devotional together, and students often post encouraging messages to one another on Facebook and Instagram. Students and staff are available to pray together throughout the week for any needs, from family troubles to injuries to midterms.

“I think the real advantage to living in this environment is that our staff really knows our students. We live with... (continued on page 14)"
Schools, pastoral counseling, hospitals, and children’s homes are all part of the outreach United Methodists are doing in Zimbabwe — work that took center stage during two days of the visit to Africa University by staff and directors of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Staff and directors visited and talked with doctors, teachers, children, and volunteers at the Old UMC Mutare Mission Center, which houses Hartzell Schools, Old Mutare Hospital, Project Tariro, and the Fairfield Children’s Home. They also visited Elm Pentecostal Church, where Dr. Mazvita Machinga runs a Pastoral Care and Counseling Service that provides special services for children with hydrocephalus.

Board staff and directors also attended an Easter play performed by children of the Ishe Anesi Project at Hilltop United Methodist Church Center, an afterschool program for children in the Sakubva area of Mutare.

The final visit was to the Nyadire United Methodist Church Mission in Mutoko. The Rev. Forbes Matonga, a member of the GBHEM Board of Directors, heads the mission, which includes primary and high schools, a teacher’s college, a hospital, a church, and the Home of Hope, a children’s home for orphans and vulnerable children.

The Old Mutare Hospital, founded as a clinic in 1903, serves mostly outpatients, seeing 14 to 60 patients a day who suffer from AIDS, HIV, tuberculosis, or other diseases, said Dr. Tendai Manyeza, administrator and chief medical officer.

“We used to treat a lot of chronic diseases such as diabetes, but those have been overshadowed by infectious diseases,” Manyeza said.

At each of the programs, GBHEM made a financial donation.

Project Tariro, another program at the Old Mutare mission, serves 144 adults who are HIV positive or have AIDS, helping them learn to live with their illness.

The Fairfield Children’s Home, the oldest home for orphans in Zimbabwe, is now organized so that about 10 children live in individual homes with a “mother.”

Dr. Mazvita Machinga, who earned her Ph.D. from Claremont School of Theology with the financial support of a Women of Color scholarship, welcomed the directors and staff to her pastoral counseling program. The Women of Color program, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, was designed to provide scholarships for racial-ethnic women who want to earn a Ph.D. and teach at a UM seminary.

“So you see, I’m proof of the good work GBHEM is doing,” Machinga said.

Machinga’s pastoral care and counseling services have a special emphasis on helping families deal with hydrocephalus, a condition in which excessive fluid accumulates in the brain. She also works with elderly people, especially widows.

At the Nyadire Mission, staff and directors attended a worship service at the O’farel Memorial Church, hearing performances by choirs from the mission schools, as well as spoken word pieces by students that described their studies.

The primary school at the mission serves 27 deaf children in addition to the students studying a regular curriculum, Matonga said. The school is one of the top-rated in the district with a passage rate of 91 percent in 2013, but has a serious shortage of housing for teachers.

After the service, David Beckley, president of Rust College, one of the 11 UM-related historically black colleges, announced that Rust was awarding a full scholarship to a student from the mission high school who graduates in May.

The Rev. Myron Wingfield, the Board of Higher Education and Ministry’s interim associate general secretary, preached during the worship service.

“The stories we have heard in Zimbabwe have made us much richer,” he said.

— Vicki Brown
Finding a Partner in Ministry Across the Street

When HiRho Park wanted to provide opportunities and support for clergywomen in Latin America, she encountered one big problem. There aren’t many ordained clergywomen in Latin America.

In January, with a little help from a good neighbor in Nashville, Tenn., Park coordinated a historic event: The Latin American and Caribbean Methodist Women Leadership Conference.

By partnering with The Upper Room, a ministry of the General Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church, the director of Clergy Lifelong Learning of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry was able to do what seemed impossible.

There are currently only two Methodist ordained clergywomen in Ecuador, three in Peru, eight in Chile, none in Costa Rica, less than 10 in Mexico, one in Panama, and about 20 in Argentina.

So Park was happy to get a request from Latin America to hold a clergywomen’s meeting such as those held in Africa and the Philippines.

“HiRho, can you provide such an event for Latin American women?” asked Guillermo Yoshikawa, president of the Peruvian United Methodist Church during the 2012 General Conference.

Park explained, “Every region has its own culture and complications, of course, but when Dr. Yoshikawa expressed interest in our work for women, I was overjoyed.”

“What would we do, though, if we could not find women in clergy roles?” she added.

Because of her worldwide travels connecting her with various publishing partners of The Upper Room, Publisher Sarah Wilke was eager to partner with Park. The Upper Room daily devotional

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Proposals to address seminarian debt include making sure seminary students understand the debt they are taking on, whether the master of divinity should be the normal path to ministry, and how more money could be raised in the denomination to alleviate seminarian debt.

The findings and proposals by the indebtedness advisory group gathered in Nashville, April 3-4, will be compiled by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry Seminary Indebtedness Task Force. A report will be made to General Conference 2016 on how to address seminarian debt, said Allyson Collinsworth, executive director of GBHEM’s Office of Loans and Scholarships. Legislation approved at General Conference 2012 recommended that GBHEM form a task force to address financial assistance and seminary debt.

The group talked about programs in United Methodist annual conferences that have proved successful, including the Stegall Seminary Scholarship Endowment Foundation, which in January reached its goal of providing $10,000 a year in financial assistance for all UM seminary students in the Alabama-West Florida Conference.

The Rev. June Jernigan, director of the Office of Ministerial Services for the conference, said the foundation was started by a retired pastor, the Rev. Dr. Karl K. Stegall.

The Rev. Wade Giffin, director of the West Ohio Conference’s Office of Ministry, asked if the classic three-year master of divinity was the “normative path” to commissioning and ordination in the UMC.

Giffin said the West Ohio Conference has a college internship program that assigns students to a church at a cost of about $4,400 per student.

“Sixty-seven percent of our college interns are in seminary or on their way,” he said. He added that a stronger work-study path might help solve a frequent complaint of churches that classic M.Div. graduates are not prepared to lead a church.

The Rev. Meg Lassiat, GBHEM’s director of Candidacy, Mentoring, and Conference Relations, noted that
deacons can be ordained after getting a master's degree in a specialized area of ministry such as social work or music, then taking 27 hours of the Basic Graduate Theological Study.

Other paths include Course of Study and Advanced Course of Study for local pastors, and some at the meeting suggested that a Bachelor of Divinity with some additional training might be another path.

The task force reviewed research that GBHEM had collected, including annual surveys by the Association of Theological Schools, which found that support from the UMC was an important source of income for 28 percent of UM seminarians, compared to 9 percent of students from other denominations who reported denominational support.

In April 2013, GBHEM surveyed UM-related colleges and universities, seminaries, annual conferences, and scholarship recipients on questions concerning educational debt. That survey found 60 percent to 75 percent of UM students entering ordained ministry had educational debt averaging between $26,513 and $34,782.

Financial literacy for candidates for ministry and for clergy already serving had solid support from members of the task force, who thought classes on financial literacy should be required by seminaries and through the annual conference. Wee-Li Tan, president of the Florida United Methodist Foundation, said Florida has incorporated financial literacy into group candidacy mentoring sessions.

Brenda Hicks, director of financial aid at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas, said financial literacy needs to start with college students since many begin borrowing money for undergraduate degrees.

Joe Arnold, research manager for the Lewis Center for Church Leadership at Wesley Theological Seminary, said that pastors who don’t feel comfortable about their own debt levels are less comfortable talking about church finances.

Annual conference staff at the meeting said they are seeing some elders surrendering their credentials in order to go work for a non-denominational church that pays more.

The Rev. Tom Choi, district superintendent in Hawaii, said there is something to be learned from non-Western cultures. “Korean and Tongan seminarians have little or no debt. Their churches are supportive of them,” Choi said.

In dreaming of how to fix the problem of seminary debt, the group figured that raising $500 million would provide funds for all UM candidates to go to seminary for free, but others raised the question of whether paying all the bills for seminarians was a good thing since it would mean candidates had little personal investment.

Collinsworth said one proposal her office would look into is refinancing debt for seminarians at a lower rate.

Jonathan Strandjord, director for seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, said the ECLA’s studies of debt have found that pastors who are worried about debt are more passive.

“Even more important than debt is concern about debt,” Strandjord said.

Collinsworth said the GBHEM Seminary Indebtedness Task Force, made up of staff, will continue conversations on the issue with annual conferences, foundations, UM-related undergraduate institutions, and seminaries.

“The hope is together we will form a holistic denominational plan that will create a culture of stewardship around the cost of seminary education with training and input from all levels of the connection that will reduce clergy debt and the fear that is often associated with that debt.”

— Vicki Brown
Students are eagerly getting on board with the tools provided by the new Distance Learning Center at the Methodist University of Côte d’Ivoire. The university is now offering classes online and connecting students and the library to the Internet.

“Even though several professors are being trained, there is great need to find ways to encourage them to use this powerful instrument effectively and efficiently,” said Yed Angoran, chair of the university’s Board of Directors. “There is still some way to go in order to achieve the global connectivity required for a full-fledged Distance Learning Center.”

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry recommended the Distance Learning Center as part of a Methodist Global Education Fund for Leadership Development plan that included a radio station. The station was completed and commissioned in 2010, but the distance learning program was put on hold due to socio-political unrest, Angoran said.

Amos Nascimento, GBHEM’s special assistant for Global Education and New Initiatives, said all GBHEM/MGEFLD activities are based on the motto “shared vision, shared responsibilities, shared costs.” With the involvement of various stakeholders and local partners, it was possible to share the cost of connecting the university through fiber optics, updating their network, installing new computers, and providing training in distance education. The university made additional investments in lab extensions and computers and labor, as well as meals, lodging, and transportation for consultants.

“We are now working toward connecting the Methodist University of Côte d’Ivoire with the Methodist University of Katanga so they can exchange materials and classes in French,” Nascimento said.

Angoran said two labs equipped with computers are operational. A website with a Moodle E-learning module is being developed by a local consultant for the university.

To learn more about the Methodist University of Côte d’Ivoire, visit www.umeci.org.

— Vicki Brown
More than $1 Million Awarded for Central Conference Theological Education

Fifty-seven grants totaling more than $1 million were awarded for theological education in 11 countries in Africa, Asia, and Europe. The money will be used for curriculum development, training of local pastors, continuing education for clergy, faculty development, e-readers, and even $50,000 for the solar electrification of the Banyam Theological Seminary in Nigeria.

“The regional screening committees from each Central Conference wanted to be sure that everyone got some of the funds,” said the Rev. Rena Yocom, the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry’s assistant general secretary for Clergy Formation and Theological Education.

Grants awarded by the Commission on Central Conference Theological Education included:

• $32,500 for e-readers for Portuguese-speaking seminaries. Through the Sol Africa program, the Faculty of Theology at the Methodist University in São Paulo, Brazil, will provide some texts for free. Other material must be developed or translated.

• $53,750 was awarded for continuing development of the French Course of Study for local pastors and the training of trainers within the various conferences.

• A number of grants went to seminaries for faculty development, scholarships, development of online education, resources that are appropriate for the country and context in which the resources will be used, $25,000 to the Reutlingen School of Theology to develop a program specifically for educating ministers to work with youth, $7,200 to the Moscow Seminary for interactive white boards, and more.

• The Africa Association of United Methodist Theological Institutions received several grants, including $12,500 for a Young Theological Student Forum and $50,000 for e-reader resources in English and French for theological school libraries through the E-Readers for Africa project.

• The largest grant awarded, $150,000, will be used as a loan to begin working on a Central Conference theological education endowment.

• A number of grants were awarded for Course of Study and other pastor training programs, including $5,000 for Immanuel Bible School for the training of indigenous Filipinos as pastors, and $8,800 for Course of Study and scholarships in Bulgaria.

The fund was approved by the 2012 General Conference, and the grants awarded this month were approved after the proposals were recommended by regional screening committees and then approved by the full commission.

The full list of grants will be posted at a later date on www.gbhem.org.

— Vicki Brown
Sol Africa Program Trains 23 African Pastors in Brazil Since 2008

Since 2008, 23 pastors and teachers from Mozambique and Angola have studied at Methodist University in São Paulo, Brazil, and returned home to train other pastors in their annual conferences. The Sol Africa program also brings lecturers from the university in Brazil to hold classes in Africa that can reach even more Portuguese-speaking Africans.

The Rev. Adriano Quelende, the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry’s director of Global Formation for New Spiritual Leaders, said there are some who think sending Brazilians to Africa reaches more pastors.

“Some of the lecturers from Brazil who went to Africa taught 20 to 25 pastors in each class they offered.” He said that meant more than 100 pastors were trained in each of four annual conferences in Mozambique and Angola.

Overall, feedback about the program has been positive. Participants and annual conference leaders believe the studies have helped pastors to have a broader understanding of The United Methodist Church.

The pastors who travel to São Paulo spend three months studying at Methodist University. The sixth group returned recently, Quelende said. While at the university, pastors undergo intensive training studying homiletics, Christian education, pastoral care and counseling, and more. At the end of three months, each receives a collection of books about the subjects they studied.

The Rev. Almeida Lembia, director of the program in Angola, said 10 pastors from the Western Angola Conference have been trained in research and teaching of subjects such as Bible study, evangelism, Wesleyan theology, and more.

“Back home the pastors who studied in Brazil have been very helpful to pastoral work in the conference. They teach some subjects in our Course of Study, and during a theological refreshment week the conference holds each year for all pastors, they teach all of the subjects they have studied,” Lembia said.

The Rev. Olga Ranchaze, director of the program in Mozambique, said all of the pastors who have traveled to Brazil have learned a great deal and that the only complaint she has heard is that three months is a long time.

“We as a conference would also appreciate it if this program would continue sending Brazilian lecturers to Mozambique and Angola,” she said. That would allow a larger number of pastors to participate in the program by attending lectures.

— Vicki Brown
Six scholars involved in a scholarship and mentoring program for racial-ethnic students seeking ordination as deacons or elders will complete their M.Div. degrees this year, bringing the total number of graduates to 25 since the program began in 2004. Five more will complete their degree in 2015.


Students agreed that they learn a great deal at the retreats and from mentors in the program, in addition to the financial support of a $5,000 scholarship each year. Kihwan Choi of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary lauded the program’s ability to connect him with others from many different ethnic and economic backgrounds.

“When we come together — many of us Korean, Latino, African-American — we can see the intersections of our work and similar challenges we face reaching church members who come from such diverse backgrounds,” Choi said. The retreat, he explained, is a great time to talk about these connections and brainstorm together.

David Martinez, GBHEM’s director of Specialized Theological Education and coordinator of the 2014 JTOM retreat, said the students and mentors discuss the entire path to ordination, from resources for scholarships and their education to candidacy.

“We want them to use this knowledge not only for helping themselves after seminary, but also so they can help others who are called to ordained ministry,” Martinez said.

The six graduating scholars are:

- **Emma Escobar**, Boston University School of Theology  
- **Uziel Hernandez**, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary  
- **Heewon Kim**, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary  
- **Jaesun Kim**, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary  
- **Emm a Escobar**, Boston (New England)  
- **Robert S. King**, Wesley (North Georgia)  
- **Nickie Moreno Howard**, Wesley (Southwest Texas)  
- **Uziel Hernandez**, Garrett (Tennessee)  
- **Jaesun Kim**, Garrett (Wisconsin)  
- **Heewon Kim**, Garrett (Wisconsin)
Nickie Moreno Howard, Wesley Theological Seminary

Robert S. King, Wesley Theological Seminary

The seminarians also discussed community building, the importance of young adult clergy, and the future of the church as it expands globally.

“Exploring this cross-cultural way of practicing and experiencing your religion, is part of my calling. That excites me because the church is a place where we can discover our gifts, whether that be in ministry or elsewhere,” said Uziel Hernandez of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

As important as mentoring and financial support are for these seminarians, it is not only the students who benefit from the program. The United Methodist Church itself, in great need of racial-ethnic clergy, is experiencing the value and benefit of committing time and resources to its racial-ethnic seminary students. According to 2011 statistics from the General Council on Finance and Administration, 11.4 percent of UM clergy are racial-ethnic.

“Seeing their passion and hearing the discussion among our seminarians here, gives me great hope for the future of the church,” Martinez said.

Funding for this program comes from local church offerings on World Communion Sunday, held the first Sunday in October. The receipts allocated to GBHEM are earmarked for scholarships for racial-ethnic students.

For more information about the Journey Toward Ordained Ministry program and other United Methodist scholarship programs, visit www.gbhem.org/loansandscholarships.

Donate online to World Communion Sunday anytime at www.umcgiving.org/worldcommunion.

— Nicole Burdakin
GBHEM Awards Six Ethnic In-Service Training Grants

Six Ethnic In-Service Training grants — totaling $52,500 — were awarded by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to projects that aim to recruit, train, and retain ethnic United Methodists for leadership roles in every level of the church.

“Every project we fund allows a local church or entity to reach beyond itself to serve, inspire, and make a difference,” said Cynthia Bond Hopson, GBHEM’s assistant general secretary for the Black College Fund and Ethnic Concerns.

Funding for EIST grants comes from contributions to the World Communion Sunday Special Offering.

Programs which received grants are:

1. The Gateway North District of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference received $7,500 to establish a Digital Ministry Leadership Development program for training and equipping ethnic clergy and laity in 61 churches located in urban settings.

2. Duke University received $10,000 for the South Sudan Theological Training Initiative. This is a collaborative effort of the UM faculty at Duke Divinity School and the Holston and East Africa Annual Conferences and aims to provide basic theological education for 20 United Methodist pastors of the Yei District in South Sudan.

3. Lake Park United Methodist Church, Oakland, Calif., received $10,000 to develop Cambodian church leadership in the five Cambodian churches and fellowships in the California-Nevada Annual Conference. The goals for this grant are training of pastoral and lay leadership and equipping pastors for ministry.

4. The Tennessee Annual Conference received $10,000 for the SEE Tomorrow’s Leaders Today program, designed to assist in scholarships for students who are members of the Golden Triangle Fellowship at Belmont United Methodist Church and are graduating from high school. Many of these teens, who are refugees from Myanmar and Thailand, will be the first from their families to graduate from high school.

5. The Alcorn State University Wesley Foundation received $5,000 for youth camp outreach. According to the Center for American Progress, in 2010, Mississippi had the fifth worst gun-death rate for children ages 0-18. This outreach ministry will encourage safety and provide education on improper use of guns and the importance of human life.

6. Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Inc., (BMCR) received $10,000 for the Harambee Youth Conference, which BMCR sponsors every other year to provide a place for young people, ages 12-18, to connect, attend workshops on discerning God’s purpose for their lives, develop leadership skills, and have a place to witness to their faith.

EIST grant applications are open for another round of funding through June 30, 2014. Learn more about EIST grants at www.gbhem.org/eist. To learn more about World Communion Sunday, visit www.umcgiving.org/worldcommunion.
More Than 200 From 27 Different Countries Registered for IAMSCU Conference

More than 200 people from five continents and 27 different countries — including 70 students — registered for the 2014 International IAMSCU Conference in Hiroshima, Japan.

The program will include four seminars at which more than 30 papers will be presented on subjects including theology and peace, ethics and social responsibility, and human rights.

Speakers include: Koko Kondo, a survivor of the dropping of the atomic bomb; Jung Mo Sung, a professor at Methodist University in São Paulo, Brazil; Steven Leeper, former CEO of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum; Kabamba Kiboko, member of the Judicial Council of The United Methodist Church; Douglas Meeks, professor, Vanderbilt Divinity School; Kasap Owan, president of Katanga Methodist University; J.C. Park, president of Methodist Theological Seminary in Seoul, South Korea; Bishop James Dorff, president of GBHEM’s Board of Directors; and Pamela Machakanja, director of the Institute of Peace, Leadership, and Governance at Africa University.

IAMSCU, the International Association of Methodist-related Schools, Colleges, and Universities, includes more than 800 Methodist educational institutions around the world. The organization was founded in 1991 at the World Methodist Conference in Singapore.

The conference in Hiroshima, May 24-28, will take advantage of the historic site where an atomic bomb was dropped during World War II, to show how the human spirit can be destructive. The agenda includes a visit to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and Museum. The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry supports both IAMSCU and the conference.

The theme of the conference is “Peace, Reconciliation, and Human Rights.”

To learn more, or register for the conference, visit www.iamscu.net.

Registration Opens for Imagine What’s NEXT 2014

For college students, looking into the future can seem daunting or overwhelming. But what would happen if 600 Methodist college students gathered to listen to God’s call on their lives and to discern where God beckons them? What if vocation meant the creative arts, mission and service, theological education, and radical hospitality? What if you partnered with others to make a difference in the world now?

Imagine What’s NEXT is designed by and for students to facilitate this fertile ground for imaginative work, focused specifically on the spaces where church/world and present/future meet. Scheduled for Nov. 7-9, 2014, in Denver, Colo., the event is organized by a launch team of college students, campus ministers, and other creative disciples from across the United Methodist connection, and is sponsored by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry’s Division of Higher Education.

“The inaugural NEXT in 2012 successfully created space for students to explore and integrate faith, creativity, and action. This year we’re going even deeper. We’ve strengthened the small group process with access to experts in students’ fields of interest and a process for discernment and planning,” said Beth Ludlum, director of Student Faith and Leadership Formation at GBHEM.

All United Methodist college students, campus ministers, and chaplains are encouraged to participate in NEXT for a weekend of fellowship, worship, and inspiration.

Through a series of short talks, speakers and leaders will discuss innovative discipleship and will challenge students to consider their own next steps in their communities and future vocations. Students and leaders also will engage in dynamic worship, imaginative play, and small group discussions. The event this year includes a service plunge and worship concert in downtown Denver on Saturday night.

Following NEXT, a new six-week Bible study curriculum will be released to help participants and others capitalize on the event’s momentum and identify ways to make a difference on their campuses and communities.

“I think NEXT is unique because its optimism is grounded in pragmatism. It encourages wild imagination as holy activity or spiritual practice. It’s realistic because Beth and the launch team emphasize praxis alongside divine encounter,” said Bridgette Young Ross, GBHEM’s assistant general secretary for Campus Ministry and College Chaplaincy.

General registration for NEXT opened on April 10 and closes on October 10, 2014. To sign up, or for more information about the event, visit www.nextumc.org.

— Nicole Burdakin
In nineteen young adults attended the Jan. 8-12 Lina H. McCord intern orientation for training on how to serve as goodwill ambassadors to the UMC for the Black College Fund. Ambassadors and interns are current students or graduates of one of the 11 historically black United Methodist-related colleges and universities supported by the denomination’s Black College Fund, one of the churchwide apportionment funds. Each year, college staff nominate students to be Lina H. McCord interns for the 35-year-old program named for the first executive director of the Black College Fund Office. The students and recent graduates visit annual conferences to promote the work of the BCF.

Two students are expected to graduate this year from a Bachelor of Theology program designed for pastors whose primary language is Spanish, said the Rev. David Martinez. The program, cosponsored by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and the Latin American Biblical University in Costa Rica and offered in collaboration with the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry, began six years ago. There are 28 students registered in the program, and a total of 16 semester hours is offered each year. Two students are expected to graduate this year, one has started seminary at Iliff School of Theology, and 10 have another year until completion. The program provides a way for GBHEM to respond to the growing need for Hispanic/Latino leadership in The United Methodist Church, as well as providing educated clergy who can help the church understand ministry in the context of Spanish-speaking communities, Martinez said. Shown, students and GBHEM Staff.