Vision for the UMC’s Future in U.S. Education

Recognizing the transformative potential of the largest non-Roman Catholic system of higher education and the largest system of historically Black colleges in the U.S., the Council of Bishops, NASCUMC, and GBHEM have committed to a vibrant partnership in the twenty-first century.

**UM-related educational institutions will:**

- Create an inclusive and celebrative atmosphere that nurtures and supports the faith journeys of students, faculty, and staff;

- Uphold the vital principle of academic freedom where there is open and honest pursuit of knowledge and wisdom without restriction;

- Emphasize through teachings and example the worth and dignity of each person, with an emphasis on voluntary community service and international relations;

- Prepare students, regardless of social standing, ethnic identity, or gender, for lives of intellectual vigor, moral integrity, and spiritual fulfillment, not just as personal benefit, but for leadership;

- Affirm this relationship between the church and the educational institutions openly and with pride in our mutual history and shared potential for the future.

*We pledge our support to provide quality education, to be vital and vibrant faith communities, and to prepare individuals for lives of committed service.*

Adapted from *An Education Covenant of Partnership* (2000).
Highlights of the UMC’s History in U.S. Education

1780: Education for All
Establishment of the earliest frontier colleges “to give the key of knowledge to your children, and those of the poor…”

1836: Empowering Women
Opening of the first college to grant degrees to women in the U.S. (Wesleyan College)

1860: Scholarships and Loans
Initiation of programs of scholarships and loans to support Methodist students in pursuing higher education

1866: Freedman’s Aid Society
Founding of the Freedman’s Aid Society to address the vocational, educational, and religious needs of newly freed slaves

1866: First Mission School
Creation of the first mission school through the Women’s Missionary Society (Lydia Patterson Institute)

1872: Black College Fund
Establishment of the Black College Fund to minister to those underserved by the U.S. system of higher education

1913: First Campus Ministry
Establishment of the first Wesley Foundation to provide a presence at public colleges and universities (University of Illinois)

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1960s: Educational & Institutional Insurance Administrators (EIIA)
Insurance consortium created to assist institutions, particularly historically Black colleges unable to obtain affordable, high-quality insurance

1964: UMHEF
United Methodist Higher Education Foundation created to provide scholarships for Methodist students attending Methodist institutions

1972: HANA Scholars
Establishment of the HANA Scholars program to assist Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and Pacific Islander students

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2000: Commitment to Excellence
Council of Bishops, NASCUMC, and GBHEM covenant to continue mutual support

Now: Continued Connection
The UMC connects to 119 institutions, making it the largest non-Roman Catholic system of higher education in the U.S.