

connectED

Connecting United Methodist Colleges & Universities to the Church



Queen's University

Study USA/Irish American Scholars program celebrates 25th anniversary

Study USA, a program that offers students from Northern Ireland scholarships to spend a year studying in the United States, celebrated its 25th anniversary in October 2019. The program is managed by the British Council Northern Ireland on behalf of the Department for the Economy and it sends 54 students each year from Northern Ireland to the U.S. to study business, STEM and a host of electives at church-related (United Methodist, Catholic or Presbyterian) institutions.

Formerly known as the Business Education Initiative (BEI), the program was initially set up in 1994 to aid the Northern Ireland peace process. Today, many of the participating American schools are members of the National Association of Schools and Colleges of the United Methodist Church (NASCUMC).

During their year in the U.S., Irish students gain valuable international experience and global awareness, which helps to develop their vocational opportunities when they return to Northern Ireland.

"My year at Shenandoah University was an invaluable experience as I was surrounded by multicultural, motivated students who were striving to be the best that they could be while making a difference to the world," said recent Study USA participant Jessica Small.

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USA/IRISH *(continued from page 1)*

To celebrate over two decades of the program, the British Council recently invited U.S. partners, the Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities (APCU), the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM), and the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) to join 2019 graduates and alumni of the program in Belfast for an anniversary ceremony. Other guests included members of the Department for the Economy's Higher Education Division and the U.S. Consulate General in Belfast.

"We are delighted to be celebrating 25 years of success with the Study USA program. Over 2,000 undergraduate students in Northern Ireland have benefitted from this incredible scholarship program since it began in 1994," said Jonathan Stewart, director of the British Council Northern Ireland, as he addressed the crowd at the ceremony.

After studying at a U.S. college or university, students are able to boost their core employability skills and gain invaluable experience and intercultural skills working in an international setting. This enhanced global awareness is vitally important in developing Northern Ireland's export driven economy.

"The exciting Study USA adventure allowed me to explore new concepts and cultures, enhanced

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"My year at Shenandoah University was an invaluable experience as I was surrounded by multicultural, motivated students who were striving to be the best that they could be while making a difference to the world,"

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— JESSICA SMALL

IN THE FACE OF CHANGE



Mark Hanshaw
Associate
General Secretary,
GBHEM

It is encouraging to see the continuous flow of innovation emerging from United Methodist-related institutions of higher learning. From Otterbein University's recent hosting of a national Democratic primary debate to the groundbreaking work being done by High Point University students on driverless automotive technology, Methodist educational institutions are having a profound impact in shaping lives.

In short, United Methodist-related higher education is transforming individuals and communities. The individual accomplishments of these institutions is impressive but their collective potential is staggering.

This network of colleges and universities, situated in communities of every shape and size across the United States, welcomes almost 300,000 students to their campuses each fall and employs more than 45,000 faculty and staff. The shared annual economic impact of these institutions runs into the tens of billions of dollars. This network has contributed immeasurably to the growth of local communities, the emergence of new leaders in every field, and an increased accessibility to quality higher education.

Despite this collective success, recent events — ranging from denominational uncertainties to increased strains upon the business models in higher education — have placed new pressures upon this network of colleges and universities.

In the face of these shifts, steps are being taken to protect and reinforce this important association of institutions. The National Association of Schools and Colleges of the United Methodist Church

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"The individual accomplishments of these institutions is impressive but their collective potential is staggering. "

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MARK HANSHAW

(NASCUMC) will be voting to alter and expand its membership categories in January. Such changes may grow the organization's membership and broaden its geographic reach to include schools in regions outside the continental United States. As a part of these shifts, the organization will also likely vote on a change to its name, which will reflect its repositioning. Such steps could help to chart a new course for the organization.

NASCUMC has also begun a partnership with The Registry, a search firm for executive leadership in higher education, to engage in a study of the future of denominationally-affiliated associations. This work will be conducted through 2020 and should open up new programmatic opportunities for association member institutions and a new vision for the association.

In a season of change, NASCUMC is seizing upon emerging opportunities and renewing the ties that bind our Methodist-related colleges and universities. Despite looming challenges, the future offers significant promise.

my professional business skills, and provided networking opportunities — all while meeting lifelong friends,” said Sarah McClean, a Study USA student who attended Greensboro College.

As a means of thanking U.S. colleges and universities for hosting Study USA students, participating Northern Ireland institutions (Belfast Metropolitan College, Queens University, St. Mary’s University College, Stranmillis University College and Ulster University) offer American students from Study USA-supporting schools to spend one or two semesters on their campuses.

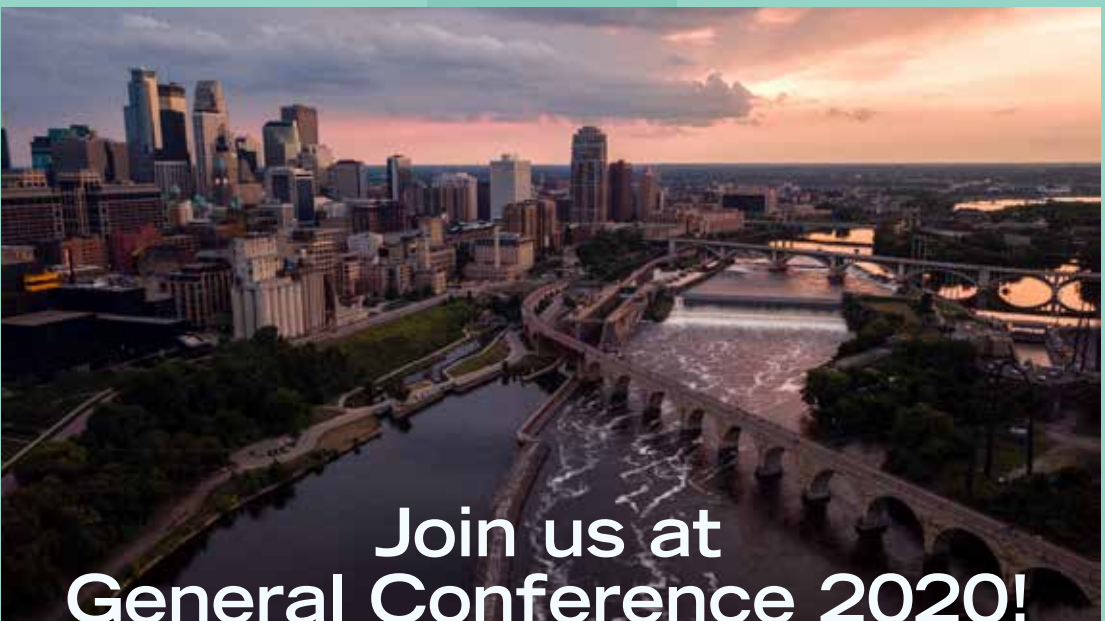
Each fall, representatives from APCU, GBHEM and ACCU invite their schools to nominate up to three students, who hold a 3.2 GPA or above, to be considered for a place at one of the Northern Ireland institutions. American students may study courses in any subject area available, and while they must cover



Belfast Metropolitan College

travel and living expenses, their tuition and fees are waved.

To learn more about participating in Study USA email Rev. Tammy Gieselman at tgieselman@gbhem.org.



Join us at General Conference 2020!

The GBHEM GC2020 booth will include a special showcase area for our schools, colleges and universities. This rotating 10' x10' exhibit will highlight different schools' projects, programs and initiatives on each day of the 11-day conference.

There are two ways your institution can partner with us to help remind voting delegates of the vital role you play in shaping future leaders:

1 EXHIBIT IN THE GBHEM BOOTH FOR FREE!

We are seeking programs and initiatives that are innovative and life-changing. We want to vividly display stories of how your institutions are changing lives.

2 SEND YOUR MASCOT TO GENERAL CONFERENCE!

Your mascots will roam the exhibit hall, make friends, pose for selfies, hand out school



literature and giveaways, and encourage attendees to visit our booth. Mascots will serve as roaming reminders of the breadth of our educational network.

If you'd like to discuss your school's participation at GC2020, contact Cynthia Howard, executive director of marketing and communications, at choward@gbhem.org by **January 23, 2020**.



Scholars Say “Embrace God’s joy and restore a focus on Christian practices and the virtues they instill.”

M. Kathryn Armistead, Ph.D., publisher, GBHEM

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) is pleased to announce a forthcoming new book published in cooperation with Yale University: “Youth Ministry: Reclaiming God’s Joy for a Good Life,” by David F. White and Sarah F. Farmer, General Editors. The book is set to publish in the fall of 2020 and has a forward by Miroslav Volf, a noted theologian and founding director of the Yale Center for Faith & Culture.

Taking cues from theologians such as Volf and his recent reflections on joy as the crown of the good life, this ecumenical group of contributors insists that reclaiming joy for youth ministry is crucial in light of modern secularism, which has eviscerated the world of such things as mystery, wonder, grace and transcendence.

The modern world urges us to work and consume compulsively — to value its creatures only for their use or to serve our egos. While consumption sometimes yields momentary fun or happiness, only rarely does it yield joy. This book asserts that to reclaim joy is to retrieve a practicable virtue of the Christian faith, expressing gratitude for God’s gracious gifts, moving us to worship and empowering us for active love of God and neighbor.

The authors point to a Christian faith that is grounded in a consequential way of life, including substantive moral ethical virtues and a sacramental ontological vision in which all of life participates with God. This book seeks to restore a focus on Christian faith and youth ministry that necessarily involves a certain way of life, a life well-lived in response to the Creator’s good gifts and the in-breaking kingdom inaugurated by Jesus.

Many theologians assert that joy is shorthand for Christian faith. This collaborative volume points to the joy that is essential to faith and resists youth ministry’s instrumentalization at the hands of such things as nationalism, consumerism, scientism, ageism, denominational power or fear.

CONTRIBUTORS:

- Steven Argue**, Fuller Theological Seminary
- Kyle David Bennett**, Caldwell University
- Kenda Creasy Dean**, Princeton Theological Seminary
- Michal Beth Dinkler**, Yale Divinity School
- Amanda Hontz Drury**, Indiana Wesleyan University
- Fred P. Edie**, Duke Divinity School
- Wesley W. Ellis**, First United Methodist Church of Toms River, New Jersey
- Sarah F. Farmer**, Indiana Wesleyan University
- Nyle Fort**, Princeton University
- Christian Gonzalez**, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
- Pamela Ebstyne King**, Fuller Theological Seminary
- Alaina Kleinbeck**, Duke Divinity School
- John Leedy**, University Presbyterian Church
- Stephanie Paulsell**, Harvard Divinity School
- Andrew Root**, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota
- James K. A. Smith**, Calvin College
- Miroslav Volf**, Yale University Divinity School
- David F. White**, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
- Anne E. Streaty Wimberly**, Interdenominational Theological Center
- Almeda M. Wright**, Yale Divinity School
- Vanessa Zoltan**, CEO of Not Sorry Productions and founder of Common Ground Pilgrimages

“Youth Ministry: Reclaiming God’s Joy for a Good Life” will be available at Amazon and other fine bookstores in September of 2020. It is published by GBHEM under the Wesley’s Foundery Books imprint. Representing the rich diversity of the church, Wesley’s Foundery Books offer a disciplined and balanced approach. GBHEM’s Publishing Office produces books that engage, nurture and advocate for the intellectual life of The United Methodist Church.



A CHAPLAIN'S TAKE ON "THE AWAKENED LIFE"



The Rev. Kelli W. Taylor is Vice President of Religious Life and Community Engagement and University Chaplain at Methodist University in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

When I first saw, "The Awakened Life: An 8-Week Guide to Student Well-Being," I knew my Methodist University students needed it. I bought copies during my annual conference, and together my students and I decided to make it part of our university's Peer Chaplain program.

The Peer Chaplain program is a new initiative meant to equip students to walk with others through the spiritual journey in college. "The Awakened Life" seemed like the perfect fit to use as the program's core study for the fall of 2019.

Heeding the teaching of the Apostle Paul that we pass on what we first know and experience, we invited the peer chaplains to participate in "The Awakened Life" group study with the hope that students would then multiply the study into the residence halls, reaching those who might never come to the designated sacred spaces on campus.

The study had a profound impact on students. Most evidently, it deepened their spiritual life and built community among the participants.

"The Awakened Life' has really helped me learn to slow down and breathe in the beautiful life that the Lord has blessed us with," said Mary Sue Parker, peer chaplain and Art Graphic Design major from Wendell, North Carolina.

The effects soon moved beyond the peer chaplains. Because the material is teachable,

adaptable, inviting and theologically sound, it gave birth to a plethora of ministries outside the Peer Chaplain program. We were able to introduce the concepts of "The Awakened Life" across campus, gently and in ways that encouraged investigation and discussion.

One example is the Fall Chapel Series, aptly titled, "The Awakened Life." Each weekly service intentionally focused on a single word to engage students, faculty and staff in mindfulness. Every service included a unison recitation of Romans

13:11-12, "But make sure that you don't get so absorbed and exhausted in taking care of all your day-by-day obligations that you lose track of the time and doze off, oblivious to God. The night is about over, dawn is about to break. Be up and awake to what God is doing!"

The bulletin then offered three ways (body, mind and spirit) for worshippers to engage the practices of "The Awakened Life" throughout the week. These takeaways were the result of a collaborative conversation among Methodist University's Department of Religious Life (spirit), the Center for Personal Development (mind), and the Center for Sport, Science and Wellness (body).

"The Awakened Life' series has introduced me to the joy of being still in the moment. The book has taught me the various ways to feel close connections to God's creation with gratitude towards the good and evil of life," said Tomomi Shiotani, a Political Science major from Tokyo, Japan.

Since we shared it in the Peer Chaplain program, "The Awakened Life" has spread and become important to many other stakeholders on campus. We've had an English professor use it to promote mindfulness in the classroom; a trustee employ it as a basis for sustainable wellness programs that

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"The study had a profound impact on students. Most evidently, it deepened their spiritual life and built community among the participants."

— REV. KELLI W. TAYLOR

AWAKENED LIFE (continued from page 5)



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“The Awakened Life’ has really helped me learn to slow down and breathe in the beautiful life that the Lord has blessed us with,”

— MARY SUE PARKER, MU STUDENT

combine body, mind and spirit; and an athletic coach share it with his team to help players become mindful and aware.

The impact on student lives is palpable. In the early days of the semester, I misspoke the name of the book many times and often called it “The Amazing Life.” As it turns out, this slip of the tongue was a true characterization of “The Awakened Life” and the community it has helped us build. Indeed, we have found that sacred

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space is any place on campus where we are awake to what God is doing.

“The Awakened Life” has stirred the heart and soul of religious life at Methodist University. I recommend it to any campus minister or chaplain looking for resources that truly speak to the needs of today’s students.

Coming Spring 2020
BIG GIVE

Big Give U is a crowdfunding platform to help you raise funds for your mission or cause. Your supporters’ tax-deductible contributions will fund transformative projects that align with the values and mission of The United Methodist Church (UMC) and affiliated institutions.

Big Give U’s fundraising site offers a low-cost, missionally based service to reach those who want to sponsor your idea. Simply set up your campaign and share your project with your friends. Then, showcase the success of your specific fundraising project – and launch!

Big Give U: A joint venture between NASCUMC and GBHEM

INNOVATION ON CAMPUS



Hendrix College

THREE NASCUMC INSTITUTIONS FEATURED IN COLLEGE GAZETTE ARTICLE AS 'ON THE RISE'

According to a recent article published by the College Gazette, the deciding factor for choosing a college comes down to one question: Is it a liberal arts college? This often means students are interested in a small, intimate setting where they can flourish in a culture that values the personal touch — a place where everyone knows your name.

The College Gazette named 10 institutions that are “on the rise,” in the small, private category and “quickly gaining recognition as being equal to many schools already at the top of most college rankings.”

More specifically, the list was formed using the following criteria: institutions that are not in the top 75 of the U.S. News liberal arts colleges list as of 2019; and that have demonstrated success over the past 15 years in programs, student/alumni accomplishments, faculty accolades or other similar metrics.

Three NASCUMC institutions made the list:

#10 ALBION COLLEGE

The College Gazette writes, “One thing that makes Albion unique is its environment; students and parents who review their experience consistently note how close students are with their professors, forging not only an academic relationship, but a personal one as well.”

#4 ILLINOIS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

The publication noted that Illinois Wesleyan’s Ames School of Art and its School of Music are widely considered two of the best specialty arts programs in the liberal arts landscape with many successful alumni.

#1 HENDRIX COLLEGE

Hendrix cornered the top spot with its consistent rankings by Forbes and

Kiplinger as a “Best Value” college. The College Gazette also pointed specifically at the level of involvement of Hendrix students: “Hendrix’s seniors engage in “high-impact” projects; 68 percent participate in internships, 66% engage in research study alongside faculty, and over 80% complete a thesis-type project.”

Congratulations to these fine Methodist-related institutions of higher learning! For more information, see the full article at collegegazette.com.



Albion College



Illinois Wesleyan University

‘Privileged to Serve’ Video Series Captures Wisdom of Retired HBCU Presidents

“When a knowledgeable old person dies, a whole library disappears.”

-African proverb

“Leaders must have integrity, and the greatest feeling in the world is when former students return and say, ‘you made a difference,’” said Paine College President Emeritus, Dr. Julius S. Scott Jr.

Scott’s poignant reflections are captured in, “Privileged to Serve: Lessons in Leadership & Life,” a Black College Fund (BCF) Council of Presidents’ oral history video series scheduled to debut this spring. An activist and scholar, Scott died in August at age 94. He served the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) as associate general secretary, was awarded multiple honorary degrees and was the official “go-to guy” for troubled schools. He was instrumental in developing Africa University and expanding international initiatives.

Scott and six other retired presidents — all trailblazers and giants in their own right — share personal and career insights in the interviews. “Privileged to Serve” includes interviews with:

- Dr. Gloria Randle Scott of Bennett College
- Dr. Thomas Winston Cole Jr. of Clark Atlanta University



- Dr. Larry L. Earvin of Huston-Tillotson University
- Dr. Trudie Kibbe Reed of Philander Smith College and Bethune Cookman University
- Dr. Shirley A. R. Lewis of Paine College
- Dr. Haywood L. Strickland of Wiley College

Newly retired Claflin University President, Dr. Henry N. Tisdale, served 25 years but was still working full time when this project began. BCF presidents must serve more than 10 years and retire as president to earn emeriti status.



Done in collaboration with the African American Methodist Heritage Center, the interviews will become part of the BCF and Center archives to preserve the voices and experiences of African Americans in the United Methodist Church. Conducted by communications specialist Adelle Banks, the interviews are also part of the Ebony Bishops and Spouses’ Preservation Project.

“Over the years when our leaders died, their life and leadership lessons died with them. We have captured these wise words to light the path and as the African proverb says, ‘preserve the library,’” said Dr. Cynthia A. Bond Hopson, BCF assistant general secretary.

WHO IS THE DIVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AT GBHEM?



Mark Hanshaw
Associate General Secretary
mhanshaw@gbhem.org



Catherine Carter
Executive Assistant to Dr. Mark Hanshaw
ccarter@gbhem.org



Cynthia Bond Hopson
Assistant General Secretary, The Black College Fund and Ethnic Concerns
chopson@gbhem.org



M. Kathryn Armistead
Publisher, Publishing Office
karmistead@gbhem.org



Mark Forrester
Assistant General Secretary, Collegiate Ministry
mforrester@gbhem.org



Jennifer Rogers
Associate Publisher Publishing Office
jrogers@gbhem.org



Crystal E. Banks
Director of Development, The Black College Fund
cbanks@gbhem.org



Tammy Gieselmann
Executive Director of Schools, Colleges, and Universities
tgieselmann@gbhem.org



Mia Vasquez
Administrative Specialist
mvasquez@gbhem.org