

2023

# Global Impact Report



**HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY**

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH







Roland Fernandes with Greg Bergquist during the first joint board meeting of Global Ministries and Higher Education and Ministry, held in October 2023. Both boards unanimously affirmed Roland's appointment to become general secretary of both agencies starting July 1, 2024.

Dear Friends in Christ,

For over 150 years, the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry has served as the steward of the intellectual life and the educational mission of The United Methodist Church and its predecessors. Our dedication to fostering a worldwide community of transformative Christian leaders and maintaining high standards in our operations shapes our ongoing efforts to unite individuals in experiences of discernment, learning and leadership for the church, the academy and the world. In 2023, GBHEM showcased the significant impact of these initiatives on the worldwide connection through outstanding services and programs.

GBHEM supported the development of Christian leaders for The United Methodist Church by allocating \$3.8 million in 2023 to scholarships for students pursuing various academic degrees from accredited institutions. Of the awards to those 1,731 students, 45% was distributed to racial-ethnic scholars from 20 countries, 52 United States annual conferences and 22 central conferences. Additionally, the Black College Fund provided \$7.4 million to 11 Historically Black Colleges and Universities to strengthen programs, provide vital infrastructure and keep tuition costs low in support of the more than 13,000 students at these institutions. Some 454 scholarships were awarded to students from 17 countries through our International Grants and Scholarship Program (GRASP).

Our partnership with the 11 regional Leadership, Education and Development (LEAD) Hubs remains central to our efforts to foster diverse collaborative relationships, facilitating the promotion of Wesleyan and Methodist education worldwide. In 2023, through the Central Conference Theological Education Fund, 98 grants, totaling more than \$1.7 million, were awarded to enrich theological education and pastoral formation.

For the past two years, GBHEM and the General Board of Global Ministries have been moving toward greater collaboration and alignment, attending one another's consultations and meetings and bringing together program ministry staff in the areas of scholarships, granting, regional work, shared services, theological reflection, and leadership formation and training. And in October 2023, the board of directors announced that my colleague and friend, Roland Fernandes, would become general secretary of both agencies when I retire in June 2024. I celebrate this decision as another example of the transformation and the evolution of our work and ministry.

As I reflect on my final year as general secretary of GBHEM, I see an agency poised to achieve remarkable contributions in education and ministry, and I extend my gratitude to GBHEM's constituents, staff, board of directors, partners and friends. Their unwavering support, valuable insights and dedication have enabled GBHEM to fulfill its mission and uphold its values.

By embracing the change that God has set before us, as individuals, pastors, agencies and a denomination, we will ensure that the educational mission of the church – making principled Christian leaders for the church, the academy and the world – will always be a vital expression of what it means to be United Methodist.

The Peace of the Lord,

Rev. Greg Bergquist  
 GBHEM General Secretary  
*June 2024*

The passion and enthusiasm evident in every interaction at GBHEM fills me with optimism for a future characterized by accessibility, diversity, inclusivity and equity for all.





# Our Role

Bringing people together to discern, learn and lead for the church and the academy.

## Worldwide Belonging and Access

A commitment to worldwide inclusion, diversity, equity and access.

## Missional Effectiveness

Empowering and equipping Methodist-affiliated institutions to make progress toward our shared mission and ministry goals.

## Operational Excellence

Collaborating and implementing initiatives that are innovative, accessible and cost-conscious and offer value to all constituents with shared mission and values.





“GBHEM scholarships provide equitable access and support to students to realize their educational goals. Education is key to thriving in one’s vocational calling and overall well-being.”

**Allyson Potts**  
Executive Director, Scholarship Engagement



# Financial Impact

## Scholarships

GBHEM administers and awards hundreds of scholarships annually, ranging from \$700 to \$25,000. Student recipients are pursuing undergraduate, graduate and theological degrees from accredited institutions throughout the world. Special focus is placed on seminarians in the United Methodist candidacy process, students enrolled in United Methodist Historically Black Colleges and Universities, active leaders in local churches and those in a ministry track with significant financial need.

In 2023, more than \$3.8 million in scholarships were awarded by GBHEM to 1,731 students in 20 countries, 52 U.S. annual conferences and 22 central conferences. Nearly 45% went to racial-ethnic students.





# Financial Impact

## The Black College Fund

For over 150 years, The United Methodist Church and its predecessors have invested in the education and empowerment of African Americans and other underserved populations. One of the most significant ways The United Methodist Church does that is through the Black College Fund (BCF). The fund proudly supports 11 HBCUs related to the church to strengthen programs, provide vital infrastructure and keep tuition costs low.

The fund offers support in three ways: through unrestricted monthly disbursements, quadrennial capital allotments and the Five Percent Fund, an annual allotment for long-range planning and dream projects. Annually, 96.5% of all funding goes directly to the institutions, with the bulk going for unrestricted use.

More than 70% of BCF students are eligible for Pell Grants, meaning their families hover at the poverty line or earn less than \$50,000. HBCUs are major economic engines and employers in the communities they serve. In addition to on-campus jobs created, they have a major impact on community employment.

“Our 11 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are beacons of hope to the students, faculty, staff and communities they serve. The Black College Fund provides consistent and reliable resources and funding to support capital improvements and special projects, in addition to support that develops transformational leaders. If it were not for HBCUs, many would not have access to a quality education. The Black College Fund is committed to supporting leadership for life.”

### Dr. Crystal E. Banks

Executive Director,  
The Black College Fund and Ethnic Concerns



In 2023, approximately \$7.4 million supported over 13,000 students served at 11 HBCUs.





# Educational Impact

## Clinical Pastoral Education

Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is the most trusted and reliable way to develop not only concrete skills for pastoral care but also heightened self-awareness on the part of those who walk with people in the vulnerable moments of life.

The program is accredited by the ACPE – the highest standard for spiritual care and education – and all faculty members are ACPE certified.

To be accessible to those residing far from traditional CPE centers, online instruction is offered for both groups and individuals, providing pastors the opportunity to develop their skills from anywhere. In 2023, one cohort was a Korean-speaking group.

In 2023, 58 students participated in the CPE program

“Since moving to an accessible, digital platform, programs are being conducted at full capacity where students work together to build the skills to walk with people in their time of need.”

**Rev. Dr. Soomee Kim**

Executive Director, Center for Integrative Pastoral Practice





# Financial Impact

## Central Conference Theological Education Fund Grants

The Central Conference Theological Education Fund (CCTEF) empowers pastoral leaders in their local communities and through a sustained leadership network across theological institutions. CCTEF assists in distributing millions of dollars of financial support annually and administers the application process undertaken by hundreds each year, seeking to strengthen local ministry through theological education.

A grant of \$27,000 provided clinical pastoral education at Africa University and a \$9,000 grant built the capacity of pastors in the Philippines as they serve people in crisis or in difficult situations. An award of \$9,000 was given for sign language in Mozambique, increasing the capacity to connect people in

need with theological teaching. A \$22,000 award provided a fundamental resource for student scholarships in southern Congo, allowing students to pursue their studies in Mulungwishi. \$5,000 supported the expansion of literary resources in Germany, continuing the Wesleyan tradition of developing an academic-practical mission in order to respond the challenges of the world. Enabling contextual and innovative projects such as these makes the CCTEF a vital resource for the church to grow and develop in excellence, combining academic and missional development for the current and future generations of The United Methodist Church within the central conferences.

“The Central Conference Theological Education Fund is intercultural connectionalism in action: the church supporting and resourcing pastoral leaders worldwide, allowing for United Methodist learning and formation to adapt to the unique contextual opportunities and challenges throughout the worldwide connection.”

**Shannon Conklin-Miller**  
Connectional Relations Officer

In 2023, 98 grants, totaling nearly \$1.7 million, were awarded to enrich theological education and pastoral formation.





“In the many areas of chaplaincy work it is often said, ‘No one needs a chaplain until they do.’ In the darkest hours of human spiritual need, there stands the chaplain, ready to pray, providing a warm embrace or soothing words of comfort, being the face of God during a challenging or painful time. The chaplain is the incarnational representative of God in places where God is often forgotten. Yet, God does not forget!”

**Rev. Dr. Herbert Griffin**

Director, United Methodist Endorsing Agency



# Serving Beyond the Local Church

## United Methodist Endorsing Agency

The United Methodist Endorsing Agency (UMEA) has over 500 United Methodist clergy serving in full- or part-time appointments as chaplains or pastoral counselors in caring ministries beyond the local church. Locations include, but are not limited to, the military, hospitals, retirement communities, prisons, workplaces, counseling centers and more. The salaries and other compensation costs of these clergy are covered by their employers, saving the denomination millions of dollars annually. But more importantly, these United Methodist clergy impact countless lives with their ministries.

2023 marks the 81st anniversary of The United Methodist Church’s endorsed chaplaincy community, faithful to God, and faithful to the church and lovers of lost souls.





# Educate Locally, Transform Globally

## Grants and Scholarships Program (GRASP)

Through the Methodist Global Education Fund, GBHEM's Grants and Scholarship Program (GRASP) awards scholarships to students studying at a Methodist-related school, college or university in a United Methodist central conference, providing support to help offset the costs of education for students.

In the 2023-2024 award year, 454 GRASP scholarships were awarded to students from 17 countries.



“GRASP awards scholarships to students pursuing undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, helping bridge gaps in financial resources. GBHEM’s investment supports student leaders who are making a significant impact within their communities, universities and the world.”

**Kimberly Lord**

Senior Director, Global Education, Ministry and Initiatives







# Transformative Global Leadership

## Leadership, Education and Development Hubs

Leadership, Education and Development Hubs (LEAD Hubs) exercise leadership, nurture relationships and promote worldwide connection through innovative processes in education and ministry. As we learn from our brothers and sisters worldwide and reflect on their experiences, we can be more effective as a leading force of the Wesleyan and Methodist branch of Christianity.

GBHEM embodies the United Methodist connectional system through its interagency partnerships, ministerial leadership support, equitable funding strategies and work with more than 15 worldwide and regional associations, 10 regional LEAD Hubs and three senates for Methodist education in Africa, Asia, and North America. Each provides different solutions suited to individual areas.

Our mission in this work is to promote actions that create, support, strengthen and develop global Methodist education, as well as establish partnerships that contribute to the United Methodist commitment to form new leaders who can shape the future and transform the world.

Each LEAD Hub executive director lives and works in their associated country and serves closely with their respective regional associations to address the needs of Methodist-related projects and programs and to promote education and leadership development opportunities within local churches and communities. Decentering our views helps us question ethnocentric perspectives and value new and local/regional understandings.

“To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, we must listen to and empower our communities worldwide, serving as partners in a common vision, collaborating in new projects and investing jointly in their future”

**Dr. Amos Nascimento**

Strategic Lead, Global Education and Ministry & Ecumenical Relations

LEAD Hub Latin America for Spanish-Speaking Areas (Argentina)

LEAD Hub Latin America for Portuguese-Speaking Areas (Brazil)

LEAD Hub Britain

LEAD Hub Africa for French-Speaking Areas (Côte d'Ivoire)

LEAD Hub Europe (Germany)

LEAD Hub Africa for Portuguese-Speaking Areas (Mozambique)

LEAD Hub Philippines and Southeast Asia (Philippines)

LEAD Hub Africa for English-Speaking Areas (South Africa)

LEAD Hub Asia Pacific (South Korea)

LEAD Hub North America (United States)

LEAD Hub Development Education







# Worldwide Educational Partnerships

## Preparing Leaders for a Vital Worldwide Church

Central conferences desire deeply to create methods for contextually appropriate pastoral care education for pastors, chaplains and denominational leaders. GBHEM collaborates with local church and educational leaders to develop an Introduction to Chaplaincy program that was piloted in Mozambique, Côte D'Ivoire, Zimbabwe and South Africa, providing training to over 150 lay and clergy leaders.



The International Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges and Universities (IAMSCU) develops cooperative and supportive relationships among the approximately 1,000 educational institutions in the Methodist tradition worldwide, so institutions can learn from and strengthen each other while sharing resources (e.g., student and faculty exchange). In April 2023, IAMSCU held a conference, "Transforming Lives," in three locations in England: London, Bath/Bristol and Cambridge. The conference celebrated the 275th anniversary of Kingswood School, the first Methodist school founded by John Wesley in 1748. It included a focus on primary and secondary education, higher education and theological education.



In October 2023, representatives from 52 Methodist educational institutions and two regional associations (AAMIHE and AAUMTI) from more than 15 countries, met in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, to create a vision and strengthen partnerships for the future of Methodist education in a Pan-African perspective.







“The University Senate is an outward and visible sign of an inward and inherent commitment to the relationship between a denomination that was birthed with education in its DNA and United Methodist-related schools, colleges, universities and theological schools.”

**Rev. Dr. Tamara K. Gieselman**  
Vice President, Education, North America



See our network of institutions

# U.S. Educational Impact

## Methodism and Higher Education

The United Methodist Church is related to more schools, colleges, universities and theological schools than any other Protestant denomination in the United States. The predecessor bodies of The United Methodist Church were eager to serve the larger society by planting schools and inaugurating an educational mission within Methodism. In this endeavor, they were true to John Wesley's own concern for education and, more specifically, to the institution-building commitments of early American Methodism. American Methodism has always sought to serve the larger community, as well as its own members, through a series of complex United Methodist-related institutions including schools, colleges, universities, theological schools, hospitals and homes to support women, youth and seniors.

Today, the University Senate strengthens the church and academy relationship and models a concern for education in the denomination. Though not a federally recognized accrediting body, the University Senate continues to be charged with the responsibility of reviewing United Methodist-related educational institutions to affirm the high level of excellence historically attributed to United Methodist higher education. Areas of review include church-relatedness, program quality, financial integrity and governance.

The University Senate model in the United States and the Philippines is now being used to develop the African Senate for Methodist Education in partnership with the Africa Association of United Methodist Theological Institutions (AAUMTI) and the Africa Association of Methodist Institutions of Higher Education (AAMIHE), establishing United Methodist standards of excellence on the African continent.

