

IHEC Leadership Oral Presentation

E. LeBron Fairbanks
Education Commissioner
Friday, June 26, 2009

1

The Global System of Nazarene Education

In early March of this year, on a Saturday evening in Manila, the Philippines, I sat in a coffee shop with two SNU alums, Julie and Brian Woolery. Brian is the Asia-Pacific Regional coordinator for Nazarene Youth International. Julie teaches English, and both are graduate students at the Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary in Manila.

During the conversation that evening, the enjoyable discussion shifted to the rather serious probing of caring for others. Julie was a Social Work major at SNU; Brian majored in Theology. Both were resident directors during the last two years of university assignments. They will continue to be leaders in their vocations in the years to come. Just like many of your students!

In the midst of the seemingly heavy Saturday evening conversation, the comment was made, “caring for others is the measure of greatness.” Not brilliance in the classroom, money in the bank, status nor position. But, “caring for others... is the measure of greatness.”

And, this story can be repeated over and over again throughout the schools you lead.

In April, I met an Ethiopian graduate of the Africa Nazarene University, Anteneh Addisu Yimer. Anteneh is presently in a graduate program in leadership and management

in Ethiopia and is teaching in the Horn of Africa extension center in Ethiopia. He talked with me enthusiastically about his ANU courses in Hermeneutics, Historical Books, and Biblical Theology taught by ANU chaplain, Dr. Mike Van Zant, and presently an MVNU faculty member. Anteneh is a “sponge” for anything that would assist him in his teaching in the Horn of Africa extension center. He introduced me to a student of his, a Sudanese, who travels four days each way to attend the modules offered at the training site.

2

As the Church of the Nazarene grows dynamically in so many parts of today’s world, God is matching this growth with the activity of the Holy Spirit in calling persons like Brian and Julie to the ministry of serving others in Jesus’ name. The Spirit of God is reaching into the hearts of men and women of all ages and calling them to places of servant leadership to develop the holiness church in their own cultures.

The Church of the Nazarene is attempting to provide a system of preparation for the Anteneh’s of the denomination and the Sudanese pastors in training and their counterparts throughout the world persons. This system is bigger than our existing academic institutions but it begins in and emerges from the institutions.

The “core” preparation is the living and essential “story” of the Church of the Nazarene. This story begins with the call to holiness of heart and life and the unchanging scriptural basis for this story. This unchanging story is what holds the Nazarene family together.

3

Belief in the divine inspiration of Holy Scripture, the 16 Articles of Faith in the *Manual*, the *mission*, *vision*, and the *core values* of the denomination, and the covenants of Christian character and conduct shape the center of Nazarene education, wherever the school is found. These essentials enable Nazarene servant leaders to emerge in every

culture and in every generation. This Nazarene core is the family resemblance as a church takes shape in diverse cultures. This Nazarene story will hold the church together as it grows in God’s time and in God’s way.

Rev. Sanil Dandge, served until very recently as the principal of the South Asia Nazarene Bible College in India. He was appointed last year as the Field Strategy coordinator for the India field, Church of the Nazarene. Sanil is in a graduate program offered in India through the Nazarene Theological College, Manchester. He has given outstanding leadership to the SANBC, and also serves on the governing board of the Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary.

There is, indeed, a Nazarene “Core” that identifies our universities, colleges, and seminaries as they take shape in diverse cultures. This Nazarene “core,” and story, will increasingly unite and hold the schools together as they mature in God’s time and in God’s way.

Looking Back

4a

In 1989, the General Assembly of the Church of the Nazarene approved an Education Commission report and recommendations creating the International Board of Education and the position of education commissioner. This action of the 1989 General Assembly recognized the scope of the Nazarene education work globally. It was a strategic decision, the benefits of which cannot be overstated. In 1989, Church of the Nazarene schools worldwide enrolled just over 16,400 students.

4b

In 2008, the International Board of Education and the education commissioner serves the global church in advocacy, support, evaluation and networking the 54

undergraduate and graduate level Nazarene institutions located in 35 countries on six continents.

5

These schools enrolled 45,103 students last year on their campuses and in their extension centers. Their assets totaled \$1,055,112, 861. Local church support to these institutions, as reported, totaled \$27,468,445.

The System of Nazarene Education

The Church of the Nazarene is blessed with a worldwide network of education. Many of these institutions serve as hubs from which extension programs of ministerial education are offered at various academic levels and through multiple systems of delivery. The education providers are classified into six categories. The Appendix includes all of the Church of the Nazarene universities, colleges, and seminaries.

6

Graduate Seminaries and Theological Colleges. Schools like Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri, and Nazarene Theological College, Manchester, England.

7

Liberal Arts Universities and Colleges with Graduate Programs. Schools like Africa Nazarene University in Nairobi, Kenya, and MidAmerica Nazarene University in Olathe, Kansas.

8

Undergraduate Liberal Arts Colleges. Schools like the recently dedicated Ambrose University College in Calgary, Canada, and the new Brazil Nazarene College in Campinas, Brazil.

9

Undergraduate Seminaries and Theological Colleges. Seminario Nazareno Mexicano in Mexico City, Mexico, and the Visayan Nazarene Bible College, Cebu City, Philippines.

10

Certificate and Diploma Bible Colleges. Schools like the Nazarene Bible Institute in Amazonas, Peru and the Nazarene Bible Institute in Coban, Guatemala.

11

Specialized Training Schools. Schools like the Nazarene Nurses Training College in Washim, India and the Nazarene College of Nursing in Manzini, Swaziland.

12

The International Board of Education

The resources of all these schools, including the American colleges and universities, are linked together in a great network of support and collaboration under the International Board of Education (IBOE). The IBOE is led by a 14-member Board representing Nazarene education institutions globally. The IBOE Board meets annually. Members of the Board include the Clergy Development director, World Mission director, the education commissioner, and the two education representatives to the General Board. The regional education coordinators from the Africa, Asia-Pacific, Caribbean, Eurasia, Mexico and Central America, South America, and Canada Regions meet with the IBOE and serve as resource to the Board.

The International Board of Education is also a unit in the Global Ministry Center of the denomination. In this role the IBOE functions as the global church advocate for education institutions in the Church of the Nazarene worldwide. In addition, the IBOE refers to the system of schools around the world. The administrator of the Board is the education commissioner.

13

The mission of the International Board of Education, as understood in all three roles, is to serve as a dynamic worldwide consortium of Nazarene universities, colleges, and seminaries to facilitate the mission of the Church of the Nazarene in making Christlike disciples and shaping leaders for local witness and global impact.

14

This mission is accomplished by the IBOE:

- **servicing** as a catalyst for networking, collaboration, and resourcing the IBOE schools globally for excellence in all educational disciplines and practice, especially in regard to ministerial education;
- **providing** connectivity between school needs for personnel and the diverse educational resources of the denomination within and between regions;
- **strengthening** the schools through quality and missional reviews and developing stronger and more effective governing boards for the institutions;
- **envisioning** the future of higher education in the denomination; and
- **assuring** theological and doctrinal coherency throughout the system of Nazarene education.

The IBOE also functions as a consulting and linking agency of ministerial education to fulfill each institutional vision and mission, especially as they relate to clergy preparation. Global theological conferences are coordinated by the International Board of Education and the IBOE facilitates, as requested, regional theological conferences. The Board also serves as facilitator for conversations between universities, colleges and seminaries.

Resource Institute for International Education

The International Board of Education can assign projects to and receive recommendations from the Resource Institute for International Education (RIIE). The RIIE is a Global Ministry Center “think tank” and collaborative clearinghouse for efficient solutions to education needs. The group meets throughout the year between annual meetings of the International Board of Education.

The RIIE is chaired by the education commissioner and consists of the World Mission director, Clergy Development director, Nazarene Theological Seminary president, USA/Canada Mission/Evangelism director, RIIE coordinator, and two Global Ministry Center members appointed by the education commissioner in consultation with the other members.

The Resource Institute for International Education, as the “nuts and bolts” vehicle for the International Board of Education, creates ad hoc committees, as necessary, to follow through on global education initiatives and recommends program development and implementation plans.

The Academy for International Education

For instance, the Academy for International Education (AIE) is a key project of the Resource Institute for International Education and approved by the International Board of Education. The AIE, in collaboration with IBOE school leaders, has been created this year, and launched at this conference, to provide the structure, utilize the

available technology, and coordinate the resources to network and facilitate the work of ministerial education in all IBOE schools!

16

Regional Education Coordinators

Regional education coordinators (RECs) serve as key strategic links between the Global Ministry Center, including the World Mission Department and the International Board of Education, and the IBOE schools within the regions served by the regional education coordinators. In each of the six regions serving the World Mission Department (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Caribbean, Eurasia, Mexico and Central America, and South America), RECs serve under World Mission appointment, report directly to the regional director for the region he/she serves, and may have other regional responsibilities.

The RECs work closely with the International Board of Education in ways already referenced. They attend the annual IBOE meetings, participate with the IBOE in the International Course of Study Committee (ICOSAC), and facilitate institutional mission and quality reviews. They are the chief advocates for education on the regions they serve.

Canada has a regional education coordinator. The ten USA universities, colleges, and seminary relate to the IBOE through the USA/Canada Council of Education, who elects a chair person to lead the Council.

17

Regional Education Councils

IBOE schools are joined together on their regions they serve through regional education councils. The councils serve the education providers on their regions through

networking, collaboration, policy formulation, curriculum and literature development, conference coordination, communication, and providing opportunities for mutual support.

The regional education coordinators usually lead the regional education councils; however, each council is developed and structured based on missional priorities and critical issues of institutions on the region and the strategic plans of the regional director.

Consortia of Nazarene Schools

The International Board of Education seeks to facilitate several consortia of institutions and agencies to further envision the future of Nazarene education. These clusters of schools can more efficiently and effectively coordinate the diverse educational resources of the denomination in response to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In addition to the Academy for International Education, it is anticipated that two collaborative initiatives will be launched in 2009: the Consortium of Undergraduate Bible/Theological Colleges and the Luce Foundation funded, Nazarene Theological Seminary facilitated, Consortium of Nazarene Graduate Seminaries and Theological Colleges.

The IBOE continues to facilitate conversations with leaders of universities, colleges, and seminaries of the Church of the Nazarene globally to pursue ways and means to mutually resource each other in appropriate and meaningful ways. The third global theology conference for the denomination has recently been approved by the Board of General Superintendents for the year 2011. Dr. Ron Benefiel, NTS president, will chair the Planning committee for the conference. More details will be shared by the end of this calendar year.

Collaborative initiatives are especially needed in countries where the church is being blessed with rapid growth and the need of holiness ministerial preparation, pastoral leadership development, discipleship training, and missionary education are crucial in developing Christlike leaders in the nations.

18

Seven Strategic Initiatives for the Education Commissioner

Seven strategic priorities will drive the allocation of time and energy of the education commissioner, given the above context for the assignment.

1. Strengthen the relationship between the mission of IBOE schools and the mission of the denomination;
- 19 2. Connect technologically the IBOE schools for mutual support;
- 20 3. Implement a global faculty network and nurture regional faculty development;
- 21 4. Support regional initiatives for developing laity and clergy for servant leadership;
- 22 5. Nurture and develop stronger and more effective governing boards for these schools;
- 23 6. Shift the quality and missional reviews of IBOE schools to educational leadership on the regions; and
- 24 7. Champion the system of Nazarene higher education globally.

25

Fulfilling these strategic initiatives requires that the education commissioner increase the level of intentional collaboration throughout the global church.

A Proposed Vision Statement for the IBOE

I have been asking the “vision” question regarding the IBOE. Can a vision statement be crafted for the International Board of Education related schools and, at the same time, appropriately apply to each member institution, regardless of the size, location or mission of the college, university or seminary? Although this process will take time to gain a consensus, the following statement could serve as a starting point for our discussions regarding a vision statement for Nazarene higher education:

“Nazarene higher education effectively equips students to:

Care deeply,

Think biblically,

Work competently,

Witness faithfully,

Lead strategically,

Relate ethically,

Live gratefully, and

Study continually.”

Isn't this a strategic vision worthy of our individual and collective pursuit as a intentionally global system of Nazarene education?

The International Board of Education and Member Institutions

The International Board of Education (IBOE) and the above mentioned entities (IBOE, RIIE, AIE) in no way replace what is currently being done at individual Nazarene institutions. Each of the 54 IBOE schools within the system, uniquely and strategically

led by elected leaders and appropriate governing boards, serves as a catalyst for consistent and coherent holiness ministerial preparation true to our heritage and worthy of the education mission of the denomination. We seek no less than the very best level of education possible around the world consistent with the *Manual* expectations for clergy preparation.

The Church of the Nazarene colleges, universities, and seminaries embrace Charles Wesley's plea to "unite the pair so long disjoined, knowledge and vital piety."

28

The late Dr. John A. Knight, who faithfully served the Church of the Nazarene as pastor, teacher, writer, editor of the *Herald of Holiness*, college president, and finally as General Superintendent, often stated, "Holiness, missions, and education are the hallmarks of who we are." He was passionate in his conviction that "education and evangelism walk hand in hand. Without evangelism, education can become rationalistic and sterile. Put them together, and they are a powerful force for changing people and society."

29

Conclusion

For these strategic reasons, a stronger, more intentional and cohesive global system of Nazarene education is emerging as a network of Nazarene institutions worldwide linked together by the International Board of Education. These education institutions are committed to the mission, Articles of Faith, core values, and the covenants of Christian character and conduct affirmations of the denomination AND to each other!

The International Board of Education seeks the very best possible in shaping the emerging servant leaders. Collaboratively and collectively, the Board wants to insure that well trained, highly qualified, culturally sensitive, spiritually mature, and spirit-filled Christians depart from our schools to serve our churches nurtured in the best of the Wesleyan-holiness theological tradition.

For this to happen we really do need to affirm and strengthen the global system of Nazarene education institutions committed to and collaborating with each other if, indeed, we nurture and develop Christlike leaders in the nations. To this vision, the International Board of Education will commit its time, resources, and energy. We can do no less for such a noble purpose.