

Comment: It's A Small World After All

By Michael Arrington, Executive Director, International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities

Our four-year-old grandson took us to Walt Disney World in December, our first visit to the popular theme park in over twenty-five years. We were pleased to note that one of our favorite attractions, "it's a small world," continues to draw large crowds as it celebrates the diversity of our global community.

As we rode through the musical exhibit enjoying the national displays, I realized that we had visited many of the nations as representatives of Baptist colleges.

We last visited Disney World in 1986, the same year the Baptist schools association founded Cooperative Services International Education Consortium (CSIEC), now known as the Consortium for Global Education (CGE). For thousands of Baptist college and university faculty, staff, and students, CGE has provided opportunities for participation in an impressive array of global study programs. I first experienced the life-changing impact of international education programs in 1988 when my family accompanied 16 Ouachita students to Zhengzhou University in central China for a 7-week Chinese language and culture seminar.

CGE will celebrate its 25th anniversary September 19-21, 2012, returning to the site of the first annual meeting at Oklahoma Baptist University. Dr. Carolyn Bishop, the talented and energetic leader of CGE, continues to develop and nurture strategic partnerships with universities in approximately 80 nations. We are indebted to those Baptist university leaders who had the vision and determination to create an international education consortium that enabled Baptist colleges and universities to work together in promoting global studies programs on their campuses.

Dr. Bob Agee, Dr. Daniel Grant, and Dr. Cordell Maddox are



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three former Baptist college presidents who played key roles in the mid-1980s in creating CGE. We should thank them and so many others for their pioneer work in expanding international opportunities for Baptist schools.

The International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities is proud to be the "parent" organization of the Consortium for Global Education. CGE has been very successful in helping internationalize many Baptist college and university campuses.

One notable result of the internationalization of Baptist college and university campuses is a commitment by IABCU member institutions to the development and support of a global organization of Baptist colleges, universities, and seminaries. As one means of accomplishing that goal, IABCU has worked closely with the Baptist World Alliance in establishing and supporting an Affinity Group for Baptist Higher Education.

The Baptist Higher Education Affinity Group met in July 2011 at the BWA Annual Gathering in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Approximately 35 educators from Baptist institutions of higher education met and reacted positively to the establishment of a global organization specifically for Baptist higher education institutions. IABCU will continue to work with and support the Baptist Higher Education Affinity Group during the BWA annual gathering in Santiago, Chile, in July 2012.

We need your prayers and support as we continue transforming IABCU into a viable and valuable international organization dedicated to promoting and assisting Baptist institutions of higher education in every corner of our globe. If you have contact with a Baptist college, university, or seminary, please let them know about IABCU and let us know about them.

May God continue to bless our friends and colleagues in Baptist higher education, wherever on Earth they may be located. Indeed, it's a small world after all. ■

New Baptist College & University Scholars Begin Classwork

The following students in the Baptist College and University Scholars Program at Baylor University entered classes in Fall 2011. Created in 2008, the Baptist College and University Scholar's Program at Baylor University works closely with the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities and Baptist colleges and universities to identify and support potential students for graduate study. The aim is to create a partnership with undergraduate institutions to retain potential doctoral students in Baptist colleges and universities. These students will be prime candidates to return to Baptist institutions as faculty.

Michelle DeH'Homme graduated from the **University of Mary Hardin-Baylor** with a bachelor of science in Chemistry. Michelle was born in Houston, TX, but came to Belton to pursue her undergraduate degree at a place where she could both learn and grow in Christ. She hopes to attain her PhD so that she can one day teach others about the exciting world of chemistry. Michelle maintained a high GPA throughout college while volunteering with the Sigma Pi Chemistry Club, and doing many outreach activities, from working with local community organizations to traveling around the world on mission trips.

Chris Moore is a native of Mt. Olive, North Carolina. He earned his B.A. and M.Div. from **Campbell University**, and later a Th.M. from Duke University. This summer Chris will begin Ph.D. work at Baylor University, and hopes to study Baptist History. While at Campbell, Chris received the B. Donald Keyser Award for outstand-

ing achievement in Church History. Chris has also taught various religion courses for Campbell University and Sampson Community College (Clinton, N.C.).

Nicholas T. Pruitt earned a BA in History from **Wayland Baptist University** in 2007. Nicholas then completed an MA in Church-State Studies from **Baylor University** in 2009. Upon receiving his Masters, he returned to Wayland where he taught for two years as a history adjunct. He is now pursuing a Ph.D. in History at Baylor University. Nicholas's historical interests include twentieth-century American religious history and its relationship to social, cultural, and political trends.

Scott Ryan is a native of North Carolina who majored in Religious Studies with minors in Hellenistic Greek and Visual Art at **Gardner-Webb University**. He was the recipient of the Greek Award and Christian Service Award. Scott is also a recent graduate of the Master of Divinity and Master of Theology programs at Duke University Divinity School, where he received the Excellence in Biblical Studies Award. Throughout his studies, Scott maintained deep involvement in local Baptist churches, led mission trips to Haiti, and participated in other extracurricular activities. Scott is pursuing a PhD in Biblical Studies at Baylor. He plans to focus his research on New Testament and Christian Origins, with particular interests in the apostle Paul's reading of the Jewish Scriptures and the relationship of the Pauline epistles and Greco-Roman and Jewish Apocalyptic literature. ■