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New SBA Dean Has Passion for Others-Focused Leadership

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Ralph Trecartin accepted the position as dean of the Andrews University School of Business Administration and associate provost for the University.

New SBA dean has passion for others-focused leadership

Ralph Trecartin entered Atlantic Union College as a theology major with every intention of becoming a pastor. When he added accounting as a minor, he never saw the change in his future coming.

"I would go from studying Greek to studying about debits and credits and contemplating the types of decisions that would be made as a result," he recalls. "I've always found it very rewarding to build and sell things, and when it was time to leave pastoral ministry and attend the Seminary at Andrews, I chose to walk the road less traveled."

He enrolled in the Master of Business Administration program instead.

"While there, I was asked to teach accounting and so embarked on a life journey that was never expected in my adolescent years," he says.

Once he achieved his Ph.D. in finance, Trecartin spent a number of years trying to think of ways to solve the world's problems, while at the same time enjoying the entrepreneurial aspects of building study abroad programs and moving currencies around the world.

These experiences culminated in Trecartin accepting the position as dean of the Andrews University School of Business Administration and associate provost for the University. He began his new role in January 2017.

Trecartin identifies four areas in his professional life about which he finds himself passionate: student success, high impact educational practices, adventure education and denominational administrative mission.

"Student success should be our number one goal," he says. "This includes all of the exciting elements that are included in the creation of an educational experience that leads to professional success."

In the Adventist context, this includes encouraging a much more holistic worldview through meaningful relationships and lives of service.

"Serving God and man with an eternal framework in mind is the path to success in all areas of life," Trecartin says.

He admits that some would view "administrative passion" as an oxymoron. Yet, he says, there's never a lack of changes taking place in his field, which keeps things interesting and exciting.

"New issues and opportunities need to be addressed with complete dedication and informed thought processes," he says.

Though Trecartin prefers listening, he enjoys teaching immensely. He revels in the opportunities to get to know his students well, engaging in intense dialogues and developing lifelong professional friendships with them.

"Teaching is sort of like parenting," he says. "There is pride in seeing students succeed."

Trecartin sees business administration as a ministry opportunity. He says it is not only continually engaging, but it offers a sense of fulfillment and excitement you might not expect.

"There is a great need for service-minded business professionals in contrast to self-oriented leaders," he says. "In business administration there are untold opportunities to make life better for others and to have an eternal influence."

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