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Presidential Views of Leadership in Seventhday Adventist Higher Education

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DISSERTATION NOTICES

Combie, C. C. (2014). *Presidential views of leadership in Seventh-day Adventist higher education. Ph.D., University of South Florida.*

This qualitative study explored the perceptions of presidential leadership in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) higher education in North America. The perceptions included the identification of leadership competencies and leadership styles that promote the mission of the SDA church in higher education. The study also identified the personal and professional experiences of SDA college and university presidents that contributed to their successful accession to the presidency. The presidents came from the 12 non-medical SDA colleges and universities in the continental United States and Canada.

The three themes that emerged relevant to the perceptions of presidential leadership were succession planning, increased professionalization of the presidency, and increased presidential tenure. One theme relevant to the personal experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency that emerged was classified as significant impact of spousal and familial support on career trajectory. One theme also emerged relevant to the professional experiences that contributed to the successful accession to the presidency: progressively more challenging job experiences. Implications for practice suggest that SDA institutions, their associated governing boards, and church policymakers create and execute strategies to address the lack of qualified presidential aspirants in the pipeline; that recent graduates of doctoral education who are interested in the presidency should seek out varied leadership experiences early on in their careers; and that church officials

should consider formal implementation of a leadership track and consider succession planning within the SDA system.

Crofford, D. C. (2014). *The pastor as leader: Assessment, change, and growth in pastoral leadership style and ability. D.Min., Asbury Theological Seminary.*

Pastors, as church leaders, are called upon to assist the church in navigating the rapid cultural and societal changes of the 21st century. However, many pastors are ill-equipped to do so because they lack the tools necessary to match leadership styles to the ever-changing situations they face. Further, pastors may be unaware of the predominant leadership style from which they currently operate, and/or are unaware that they can learn to lead by adopting alternate styles of leadership.

This study explored the leadership perceptions of a sampling of Nazarene pastors who were predominantly newer in ministry in terms of years of service in the Southwest Ohio District. This qualitative analysis sought to measure their self-reported leadership style and self-described leadership ability both prior to and following a leadership seminar devoted to the development of pastoral leaders.

Through the analysis of e-mail communications throughout the seminar and personal interviews conducted 30 days after its conclusion, the study found that the majority of the pastors self-described their leadership style using labels that indicated a tendency toward a collaborative, team-building approach, as opposed to more dynamic, visionary styles of leadership. Further, the study noted a reluctance to self-describe leadership abilities, preferring instead to define these by prior training they had received. In addition, the results indicated little if