Venezuelan Adventist University Institute: the Development of a Seventh-day Adventist Educational Institution, 1962-1999

Pablo E. Huérfano
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VENEZUELAN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE:
THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST EDUCATIONAL
INSTITUTION, 1962-1999

A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Pablo E. Huérfano
May 2001
ABSTRACT

VENEZUELAN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE:
THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST EDUCATIONAL
INSTITUTION, 1962-1999

by

Pablo E. Huérfano

Chair: John Youngberg
Co-Chair: John Matthews
ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University
School of Education

Title: VENEZUELAN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION, 1962-1999

Name of researcher: Pablo E. Huérfano

Name and degree of faculty chair: John Youngberg, Ed.D.

Date completed: May 2001

Problem

The first and only Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) tertiary-level institution in Venezuela is Venezuelan Adventist University Institute. It was founded initially as a secondary boarding academy in 1962, began offering college level programs in 1990, was accredited by the Seventh-day Adventist Church at the college level in 1995, and achieved status as a university institute under Venezuelan law in 1999. No comprehensive history has been written portraying its development.

Method

The documentary-historical method, based on published and unpublished
material, was used. Sources included books, periodicals, school bulletins, board minutes, school reports, school evaluations, correspondence, interviews, and other documents pertaining to the history, development, and operation of the school. The study is chronologically organized. Spanish materials were translated into English by the writer.

Conclusions

Venezuelan Adventist University Institute (IUNAV) was first established in El Limón in 1962 as a boarding school for the SDA youth of Venezuela. It served as a haven for these youth to obtain an education encompassing manual, intellectual, and spiritual elements. It was established to provide qualified denominational workers and a laity dedicated to service for God and society. The writings of Ellen G. White had considerable influence on the founding, relocation, curriculum, and development of the institution to the end of the twentieth century.

The narrative covers the early beginnings in El Limón from 1962-1966; construction of a new facility in Nirgua and relocation to this new site in 1966; and consolidation of the secondary-level academic and the industrial programs during the 1970s. The decade of the 1980s was characterized by the vision of what the institution could become in meeting the objectives of the founders. The building program and academic initiatives were focused on the goal of achieving college status. The dream of offering higher education as an approved and accredited institution was not easily achieved. Preparation and negotiation continued into the 1990s, and full denominational accreditation was only granted in 1995, while government approval as a university institute was achieved in 1999. Each of the nine senior administrators has made a
substantial and distinctive contribution to the development of the institution.

Achievement of university institute status is a tribute to all these leaders and the teachers and staff who served with them. IUNAV has to a considerable extent achieved the vision of its founders for an exemplary institution of higher Christian learning in Venezuela.
To Magla my wife,
and our sons, Pablo and Jorge
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<tr>
<td>AAA</td>
<td>Adventist Accrediting Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD</td>
<td>Acción Democrática (Democratic Action Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventist</td>
<td>Seventh-day Adventist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CADAFE</td>
<td>Compañía Anónima de Administración de Fomento Eléctrico (Electrical Administration Company)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CANTV</td>
<td>Compañía Anónima Nacional Teléfonos de Venezuela (National Venezuelan Phone Service Company)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLSEVE</td>
<td>Colegio Secundario Adventista Venezolano (Venezuelan Adventist Secondary Academy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPEI</td>
<td>Comité por Organización Política y Electoral Independiente (Independent Committee for Political and Electoral Organization)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORDIPLAN</td>
<td>Oficina de Coordinación y Planeación (Office of Coordination and Planning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNU</td>
<td>Consejo Nacional de Universidades (National University Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVP</td>
<td>Corporación Venezolana de Petróleo (Venezuelan Petroleum Corporation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUPLAN</td>
<td>Oficina de Integración y Planeación de la Educación (Office for the Planning and Integration of Education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAN</td>
<td>Instituto Agrario Nacional (National Agrarian Institute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INCE</td>
<td>Instituto Nacional de Cooperación Educativa (National Institute of Cooperation in Education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
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<tr>
<td>INSTIVOC</td>
<td>Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela (Venezuelan Vocational Academy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTIVEN</td>
<td>Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista (Venezuelan Adventist Ecclesiastical University Institute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUNAV</td>
<td>Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela (Venezuelan Adventist University Institute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPEC</td>
<td>Organización de Países Exportadores de Petróleo (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAA</td>
<td>Prueba de Aptitud Académica (Academic Aptitude Test)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPSU</td>
<td>Oficina de Planeación del Sector Universitario (Office of Planning for the University Sector)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Seventh-day Adventist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSU</td>
<td>Técnico Superior Universitario (University Superior Technician)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCV</td>
<td>Unión Colombo-Venezolana (Colombia-Venezuela Union)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UE</td>
<td>Unidad Educativa (Educational Unit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UVA</td>
<td>Unión Venezolana Antillana (Venezuela-Antilles Union)</td>
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**Board and Committee Minutes**

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<tr>
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<td>Colegio Secundario Venezolano, Junta Directiva (Venezuelan Secondary School Board of Directors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLSEVE Mission</td>
<td>Colegio Secundario Venezolano, Misión Venezolana Oriental (Venezuelan Secondary School, East Venezuela Mission)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Name and Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>INSTIVEN Ejecutiva</td>
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<td>INSTIVOC Administrativa</td>
<td>Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela, Junta Administrativa (Venezuelan Vocational Academy Administrative Committee)</td>
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<td>INSTIVOC Directiva</td>
<td>Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela, Junta Directiva (Venezuelan Vocational Academy Board of Directors)</td>
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<td>INSTIVOC Local</td>
<td>Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela, Junta Local (Venezuelan Vocational Academy Local Executive Board)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUNAV Gobierno</td>
<td>Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela, Junta de Gobierno (Venezuelan Adventist University Institute Board of Governors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCV Acta</td>
<td>Unión Colombo-Venezolana, Actas de la Junta (Colombia-Venezuela Union, Board Minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UVA Acta</td>
<td>Unión Venezolana Antillana, Actas de la Junta (Venezuela-Antilles Union, Board Minutes)</td>
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PREFACE

The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) message entered Venezuela by means of a periodical entitled *El Centinela*, published in Puerto Rico by Ben E. Connerly who was apparently the first SDA minister to cross the south Caribbean to Venezuela. From December 1907 through February 1908, he traveled up the Orinoco River, selling books and subscriptions to his paper. Finally, passing through Caracas before returning to Puerto Rico, he was convinced that the church had to find messengers somewhere for this great field in Venezuela.

In the West Indies Union, Frank G. Lane and Ricardo E. Greenidge sailed from Barbados to La Guaira, Venezuela, in July 1910. This was two years and a half after Connerly ventured up to the capital. Greenidge and his wife set up a hydrotherapy treatment service while Lane evangelized. Eight months of strenuous labor produced the first SDA church in Venezuela, which Lane organized on 26 March 1911.

Among the first Venezuelans who joined the SDA church in Caracas was a lady with teaching experience. This teacher made it possible for Lane’s wife to start a school in Caracas in 1911. But the lack of space and frequent religious persecution led to the failure of this initiative. In 1922 Greenidge moved from Caracas to Camaguán and established a boarding school for the youth in Venezuela. This school became a place where many of the future national leaders of the church were educated. The school was
closed in 1937 and, due to administrative changes in the structure of the church, youth were forced to go to Colombia to receive an Adventist education and missionary training.

In 1962, the Colegio Secundario Adventista Venezolano (COLSEVE) was established in El Limón, Aragua. It was moved to Nirgua, Yaracuy, in 1966 and was renamed Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela (INSTIVOC). It became the Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista (INSTIVEN) after the reorganization of the Colombia-Venezuela Union of the SDA Church into the Colombia Union and the Venezuela-Antilles Union in 1989. Recently, in 1996 the institution was renamed Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela (IUNAV). The institution is listed in the Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook (1999) under the English name “Venezuelan Adventist University.” The author prefers the more literal translation of “Venezuelan Adventist University Institute,” which is a more accurate reflection of the institution’s status.

From the time the institute opened its doors, it has been an important provider of human resources for the SDA church, preparing workers for the whole country of Venezuela. The growth of the institution has been slow but fairly constant throughout the years since its establishment.

Statement of the Problem

There is no comprehensive written history of Venezuelan Adventist University Institute. There is anecdotal information and there are primary source materials relating to the establishment of the institution. However, this information has not been organized in a systematic way or presented in a format that is easily accessible. As a consequence,
there is a dearth of factual information supported by scholarly research on the development and accomplishments of this school.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this dissertation is to present a study of the development of Venezuelan Adventist University Institute from its beginning as a secondary school in 1962 to its establishment as an authorized post-secondary institution in the SDA educational system in 1995, and the Venezuelan tertiary system in 1999.

**Importance of the Study**

This study is important because:

1. There is a need for reliable historical information about the origins and development of Venezuelan Adventist University Institute which will be particularly valuable in the study of local denominational history.

2. This research may provide background information to administrators and trustees of Venezuelan Adventist University Institute for future planning and development of the institution.

3. This study may provide spiritual lessons of God's guidance that will inspire students, teachers, parents, and church members to see Christian education in a new perspective.

**Scope and Delimitation of the Study**

This study is limited to the history of the institution during the years 1962-1999.
Appropriate background history of the development of the SDA church in Venezuela is given to provide context. The period between 1962 and 1999 includes the administration of the following presidents: Antonio Ceballos (1962-1966); Carlos Schmidt (1966-1969); Humberto Hernández (1969-1974); Miguel Angel López (1974-1979); Gustavo Garrido (1979-1983); Iván Omaña (1983-1985); Gamaliel Flórez (1985-1989); Gilberto Bracho (1989-1994); and Fernando Zabala (1994-). These thirty-eight years cover the entire history of the school.

The study is a history of the school from its beginning as a secondary school to the time it achieved the status of university institute it enjoys at the present time. At the time of writing, this institution is firmly established as the major institution for the instruction of SDA church workers for the Venezuela-Antilles Union. The narrative will endeavor to present the most important aspects of the history of the institution, with special attention given to the goals of the school, the formal and nonformal curricula, school growth and development, administrative leadership, and significant events.

This study does not provide detailed information about the accomplishments of the school graduates. Their names are mentioned in appendix C.

**Definition of Terms**

Some terms, that have a special meaning within the SDA context, must be defined:

*Local Church:* The local church is the basic unit in the organization of the SDA church and consists of a group of baptized believers united by their common faith.
Local Conference or Local Mission: The local conference or local mission is the smallest administrative unit of the SDA church. It is made up of local churches in a specified territory.

Union Conference or Union Mission: The union conference or union mission is a unit of the SDA church organization formed by several local conferences or missions.

Division: The division is made up of union conferences or union missions. The divisions are branches of the General Conference, with administrative responsibilities assigned to them in designated geographical areas encompassing extensive international territories. (At the time IUNAV was inaugurated in 1999, there were twelve world divisions.)

General Conference: The General Conference is the highest governing body of the SDA church organization. It includes within its administrative structure all the world divisions, and therefore embraces the unions in all parts of the world.

Inter-American Division: Territory formed by countries with shore line along the Caribbean Sea, excluding the United States. The administrative headquarters of this division is located in Florida, USA.

Colombia-Venezuela Union: Territory formed by the countries of Colombia, Venezuela, and the Netherlands Antilles, administered by the SDA church (1927-1989).

Venezuela-Antilles Union: Territory formed by the countries of Venezuela and the Netherlands Antilles, administered by the SDA church as a unit since 1989.
Methodology

This study utilizes the documentary-historical method of research. Important information regarding Venezuelan Adventist University Institute is contained in books, periodicals, public press articles, school bulletins, board minutes, and school reports. Another valuable source was the interview of participants in the history and operation of the institution. It should be noted that the writer of this dissertation was a living witness of the development of the institution in Nirgua. Nirgua was his home from 1969-93.

Design of the Study

This study adopts a chronological organization and is composed of seven chapters. The first chapter outlines background information on conditions that existed at the time of the founding of the school in 1962. This chapter also includes a description of Venezuela, a consideration of the Venezuelan educational system, and a presentation of the SDA Church in Venezuela.

Chapters 2 through 6 present historical data pertinent to the institution and cover the years 1962 to 1999. Chapter 2 deals with the early beginnings in El Limón, and the work of its first principal, Antonio Ceballos (1962-1966). Chapter 3 covers the relocation and construction stage in Nirgua under the administration of the second principal, Carlos Schmidt (1966-1969). Chapter 4 considers the establishment and growth under the leadership of principals Humberto Hernández and Miguel Angel López (1969-1979). Chapter 5 deals with the period under the leadership of three principals who fostered the vision of the institutional founders to develop a school that would
produce well-qualified denominational employees. These principals, Gustavo Garrido, Iván Omaña, and Gamaliel Flórez (1979-1989), strove to prepare the institution for tertiary-level status. Chapter 6 covers the last two principals, Gilberto Bracho and Fernando Zabala (1989- ), and focuses on the development of the institution as a tertiary educational establishment. The last chapter contains a summary of the findings and the conclusions.

**Review of Literature**

No major historical study of the institution exists. There have been a few published and unpublished papers about the founding and development of the institution. The article in the first yearbook, *Canaima 1968*, presents a two-page history written by teacher Juan José Suárez as the first attempt at writing the history of the Venezuelan Secondary School, later Venezuelan Adventist University Institute.

An unpublished paper, written by Carlos Schupnik in 1984, is probably the best effort to write the history of the institution. The paper was written as a requirement for a course in research methodology at Corporacion Universitaria Adventista.

*The Inter-American Messenger* (1960-74) was an SDA denominational magazine which contained valuable articles that describe activities during the first decade of the institution’s existence. These articles deal with the purchase of the land, the raising of funds, and the move to Nirgua, where the institution is located at the present time.

*Sin Temor al Futuro* by Nathaniel García (1990) is the only book written about the history of the SDA Church and its development in Venezuela. The book has a
complete chapter on the educational work of the church in Venezuela, but it only acknowledges in passing the existence of INSTIVOC. The introduction, written in 1989, makes brief mention of the establishment of INSTIVEN, later Venezuelan Adventist University Institute.

_The Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia_ (1996), under “Venezuela,” and “Venezuelan Adventist Ecclesiastical University,” presents current information about the development of the SDA Church in Venezuela, and particularly Venezuelan Adventist University Institute.

Among the historical dissertations on SDA schools available in the James White Library of Andrews University are: (1) “River Plate College: An Historical Study of a Missionary Institution, 1898-1951,” by Egil Haakon Wensell; and (2) “Indonesia Union College: A Historical Study of a Seventh-day Adventist Institution 1929-1970,” by Rajoaman Nainggolan. Written in the years 1982 and 1984, they were used to broaden my concept of the educational work of the SDA Church around the world.

In the bibliographic essay included in the end matter of this dissertation there is a more detailed examination of the statistical publications of the SDA Church, periodical articles, official documents, administrative minutes, and institutional records which support the research conducted in this dissertation (see bibliographic essay).

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CHAPTER  I

BACKGROUND OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION IN VENEZUELA

Introduction

Over the past five-hundred years, Venezuela has developed from a colonial outpost into a modern country with a developing economy and a moderate standard of living. In the process of this development, democratic ideals have slowly become an important element in the political makeup of the country. Education has also become a primary concern for Venezuelans. Even before democracy blossomed more fully in the late 1950s, the foundations of a strong educational system had been laid. An interesting element in this educational development was the high regard in which private education was held. This allowed for early initiatives in SDA education, and even when the denomination consisted of a small group of persecuted believers, SDA schools attracted many non-SDA students. The blossoming of democracy and the new emphasis that was placed on education coincided with the aspiration of Venezuelan Adventists to establish a strong educational presence in the country.

This chapter presents contextual information regarding the establishment and history of Venezuelan Adventist University. It uses secondary sources to provide the background to events and circumstances that led up to founding of the school.
Republic of Venezuela

Geography

Venezuela is a nation shaped by physical contrasts, where arid mountains fall sharply to the sea and snow-capped peaks rise from hot and humid jungles. The nation is bordered in the east by Guyana, in the west by Colombia, in the south by Brazil, and in the north by the Caribbean Sea (see figure 1). The whole of Venezuela is located in the tropics, extending from one to twelve degrees north. The nation stretches for 928 miles from east to west, and 790 miles from north to south. Its total territory of 352,150 square miles is larger than the combined areas of France and the British Isles. This nation of graphic physical contrasts also exhibits marked cultural distinctions. Its population ranges from jet-set cosmopolitans to primitive Amerindians.¹

Fig. 1. Maps of Venezuela and South America.

The country's main physiographic areas are the Andes, the Llanos, the Maracaibo Basin, and the Guyana Shield. The Andes extend from Colombia in the southwest, and divide into two ranges upon entering Venezuela. These are the Sierra Nevada Range that reaches 16,411 feet at Pico Bolivar in the vicinity of Mérida, and the Coastal Range east of the capital, Caracas. The Sierra Nevada, with its high elevation, has permanent snow fields. The Coastal Range is lower and less rugged, but still exceeds 9,000 feet in places.¹

The Llanos, on the other hand, are the vast plains of Venezuela. They are tropical savannas, green and lush in the wet season, dusty and parched in the dry season. The landscape is flat, with occasional trees. The area is characterized as the great ranching region of Venezuela, but its fertility has been limited by the severity of the dry season from January to March. During this season the breezes are hot and dry, and the days and nights clear. Pastures dry up and all vegetation except the largest trees withers and dies.²

The basin of Lake Maracaibo nestles west of the Sierra Nevada in the depression between these mountains and the Andes in Colombia. Most of the oilfields in Venezuela are centered in the region of Lake Maracaibo. The lake covers an extensive area, has a shallow, flat bottom, and is surrounded by mountains to the east, west, and south. To the north, the lake connects immediately to the Gulf of Venezuela and the Caribbean Sea.³


The Guyana Shield located between the Orinoco River and the Brazilian border is an upland region geographically separated from the Llanos, and makes up 45 percent of the territory of Venezuela. The Shield, largely uninhabited, unexplored, and unexploited, is a wilderness of rainforest, savanna, and mountains. The area is distinguished by trackless forest, mesa lands, and mountains that rise to approximately 9,000 feet. Amidst those strange flat-topped mountains is located the Angel Falls, which plunge over a cliff in an unbroken descent of 2,648 feet, and then continue over rapids for a total descent of 3,212 feet. These falls are the highest in the world.¹

Inhabitants

The Venezuelan population is in general a mixture of Amerindians, blacks, and Spaniards. Today the population is about 67 percent mestizo (mulatto), 21 percent white, 10 percent black, and 2 percent Amerindians. Generally, the whites are established in the greater cities of the highlands, the blacks and mulattos in the coastal lowlands, and the pure Indians in the hinterland. The mestizos reside throughout the country, the pure Indians are disappearing, and the whites are on the increase due to heavy immigration from Europe since the Second World War, mainly from Italy, Spain, and Portugal.²

Sixth in total area among Latin American nations, Venezuela is one of the Western Hemisphere’s least densely inhabited countries. In spite of a low average


population density of sixty-five persons per square mile in 1999, distribution is uneven. The population of 22,803,409\(^1\) is concentrated in the northwest and the mountains along the coast. About 75 percent of the population occupies only 20 percent of the land, generally in the northern mountains and the Maracaibo lowlands.\(^2\)

The population growth rate of 2.5 percent in the 1990s is among the highest in the world, produced by an elevated birth rate of twenty-eight per thousand, and a comparatively low death rate of four per thousand. On average, postwar Venezuela has nearly doubled its population every twenty years. In the mid-1980s, almost 40 percent of the population was under fifteen years of age, and about 70 percent under thirty years of age. The most striking development in Venezuelan demography has been the shift from a largely rural to an overwhelmingly urban population. This change occurred as a result of the process of economic development and modernization caused by the expansion of the oil industry. The 1941 census attested that nearly two-thirds of the population were domiciled in rural territory. By 1950 an astounding demographic redistribution had taken place with the census indicating that more than 53 percent of the population was living in city areas. By 1975 the city population was calculated as high as 82 percent, and that estimate was increased to 85 percent in the late 1980s. Presently, one out of every five Venezuelans lives in Caracas, the capital city\(^3\) (see figure 2).

\(^1\)Ibid.


\(^3\)Ibid., 52-53.
Religion

Approximately 90 percent of Venezuelans are christened in the Roman Catholic faith, but many have little contact with the church thereafter. Protestantism has increased dramatically over the past fifty years due to considerable proselytization by charismatic and evangelical denominations. By the 1990s, Protestants comprised about 5 percent of the population. A Jewish population of a few thousand is concentrated in the main cities. A minuscule number of Indians, especially in the Amazon, persist in their traditional religions, but most indigenous groups have adopted Roman Catholicism. Adherents to several other religions are present in very small numbers. Religious freedom has been upheld since 1836 and is established in the national constitution adopted in 1961.¹

Although it is not an official national church, Roman Catholicism has traditionally maintained very close connections with the government and in reality operates as a

national church. The Catholic Church in Venezuela itself is in fact economically weak. It has limited land holdings and investments, and receives only a small income from offerings. A substantial proportion of its operational costs is paid by the government, through a designated department of the Ministry of Justice.

Education is one of the most significant areas of Roman Catholic involvement in society, and Catholic schools have traditionally instructed the children of the middle and upper classes. Since numerous schools relied on tuition-based income, the costs were comparatively high for the lower income bracket in the population. In the 1920s, when government interest was focused on the few remaining indigenous people groups, Catholicism resumed another of its traditional missionary purposes. Important attention was given to the mass media so that, in every main city, there was a newspaper highlighting the Catholic point of view. In spite of the fact that in the daily experience of most Venezuelans religion is not a major force, the majority would be deeply offended if their connection with Catholicism was questioned.1

Economy

As an oil-producing nation, the Venezuelan economy establishes the country among those with the highest standards of living in Latin America. The gross national domestic product in 1998 was approximately 195 billion dollars, or roughly 8,500 dollars per capita.2 Although the petroleum industry has dominated the Venezuelan economy

1Ibid., 72-73.

since the 1920s, other products such as aluminum, steel, and petrochemicals have diversified the industrial base during recent years.¹

Venezuela holds huge natural resources. The nation is the world’s third greatest exporter of oil and the ninth largest producer of oil. It is estimated that the country has greater untapped oil resources than any other nation in the Western Hemisphere. As a consequence of its immense mineral wealth, by the 1990s Venezuela had become an international leader in the export of iron, coal, aluminum, and steel. In spite of the bountiful natural wealth and other important economic advantages, Venezuela continues to suffer from the debilitating consequences of political corruption and poor economic management. The national political and economic structures consistently reward and benefit only an elite minority.²

Venezuela is rich in natural resources, but poor economic policies over the past three decades have led to rather disappointing economic performance. A temporary growth boom led by international consumer demand for oil occurred during 1973-74. The boom was followed by negative per capita growth each year from 1979-85. In spite of a second round of oil-price increases during 1979-80, the windfall gains of the two oil booms had been squandered by 1985. Even at the height of the oil prices in 1979-80, per capita gross national product was 19 percent below the level of 1972. “This poor performance was caused by policies that were inward looking, highly statist, and focused


²Haggerty, 81.
on highly discretionary allocation of resources by government staff.\textsuperscript{1}

**History**

The Arawak and Carib Indians were the first-known inhabitants of Venezuela. These Indians lived in the area in 1498 when the northern coast of South America was discovered by Columbus on his third voyage to the New World.\textsuperscript{2} On his return to Spain, Columbus reported to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, who had helped finance his voyages, that the area he had recently discovered was the "Earthly Paradise."\textsuperscript{3} By early in the sixteenth century, the main Spanish settlement in Venezuela was Nueva Cádiz, established for exporting pearls, salt, and Indian slaves to Santo Domingo.\textsuperscript{4}

Venezuela's lack of political unification for the first two-and-a-half centuries of colonial domination was largely because it was not economically important to Spain before 1777. What is now Venezuela was formerly a conglomeration of independently ruled provinces. These provinces were governed by neighboring colonies which Spain considered more significant. In 1526 the Venezuelan provinces came under the authority of the *Audiencia* (Court of Justice) of Santo Domingo. By 1550 the provinces were ruled by the Audiencia of Santa Fe de Bogotá, which in 1718 became the Viceroyalty of New


\textsuperscript{3}Crist and Leahy, 57.

\textsuperscript{4}Ibid.
Granada. Under this jurisdiction, and for the rest of the eighteenth century, Venezuela consisted of five provinces: Caracas, Cumaná, Barinas, Guyana, and Mérida de Maracaibo.

Venezuela's most celebrated historical moment occurred during the Spanish American efforts to obtain political freedom at the beginning of the nineteenth century. By 1811 Venezuela became the first colony formally to proclaim its independence.

Venezuela also supplied Latin America with one of its greatest heroes of that era, Simón Bolívar (see figure 3). Bolivar, known as El Libertador (The Liberator), took the leading role in expelling the Spanish colonial authorities not only from Venezuela, but also from Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. Bolivar died in 1830, very discontented because his vision of Latin American unity was thwarted by the intransigence of regional dictators.

Venezuela's republican history may be divided between the dictatorial era prior to 1935 and the stability of its post-1958 democracy. In spite of the fact that the governmental system since 1958 has been marred by contradictions in theory and practice, the 1961 Venezuelan constitution has guaranteed federalism and a balance of political power, and has served well to uphold the democratic system. Primacy may have been given to the administration in Caracas and to the president in particular, and the bureaucratic system may have endured to the benefit of those families with strong

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1Haggerty, 6.

political connections. Nevertheless, progress toward a truly representative democracy has continued.¹

Venezuelan Educational System

The history of Venezuelan education is characterized by a long epoch of practical spontaneity followed by a more recent epoch of intense planning. The earlier period had its advantages in terms of meeting the practical needs of a developing country, but it was a haphazard approach to a national educational system. The recent emphasis on planning has brought more coherence, but there have been difficulties with implementation.

The era of practical spontaneity was connected to the time of dictatorship, while the era of planning has been significant in the first stages of democracy. These epochs may be considered in four phases, the first leading to the initial Education Act in 1870 by Antonio Guzmán Blanco (see figure 4), the second ending with the sterile Vicente Gómez

¹Haggerty, 137.
epoch in 1935, the third terminated by the downfall of Pérez Jiménez in 1958, and the
fourth traversing the age of democracy from 1958 to the present.

Fig. 4: Antonio Guzmán Blanco,
Venezuelan educational leader.

Before 1870

During the colonial period education was controlled by the Catholic Church, and was available only to an elite minority of prospective clerics and enlightened gentlemen. The oldest higher educational institution in Venezuela, the Central University in Caracas, was founded in the colonial period. This university, the most respected in the nation, though now secular, was established initially as a Catholic seminary in 1696 and transformed into the Royal and Pontifical University of Santiago de León de Caracas in 1721.¹

The education offered to the few privileged students was conceived and implemented in the context of an inflexible and hierarchical social pattern that

discriminated between people of letters and people who labored with their hands. The preference for an education that developed students into men of letters, literature, and art over “training” in practical skills became deeply imbedded in the dominant values of society as well. The elevated prestige attached to traditional philosophical studies and the possibilities for wealth that this type of education seemed to make possible were absent from technical studies and ensured that practical courses were absent in the university curricula. From the elementary years onward, there was clear neglect of the vocational needs of the majority of the population. As a result, “education during the colonial period was skimpy, verbalistic, scholastic, and limited to a very small sector of the population.”

Those who participated in the struggle for freedom, as well as those who shaped the new constitutions of the nineteenth century, were stimulated by the liberalism of the American and French Revolutions. Simón Bolívar, who was educated in Europe, was greatly influenced by the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau as well as by the French educational system. This influence contributed to a high level of centralization in the Venezuelan educational system, with a rigid structure of governance and curricula. The system reflected the practices of contemporary French education.

As soon as independence was proclaimed in 1811, Bolívar proceeded with a sequence of decrees legislating mandatory and free primary instruction in the country. In addition, in the province of Caracas for example, all reading teachers were expected to

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2 Haggerty, 70.
read to their students details of the new constitution and to emphasize particularly those aspects that related to the "rights of men." Priests were also commanded to read and explain such issues to their congregations. The climax of this early constitution-making occurred in 1819 with the framing of the Angostura Constitution. Bolívar appointed members to a congress to produce a new constitution. In spite of the fact that this new constitution was eventually rejected, it introduced the popular phrase, "morality and light are our primary needs". This became the Venezuelan educational motto. The motto, along with an image of Bolívar, is present today in most Venezuelan schools.¹

During the forty years following 1830, education was advanced by various decrees concerned mainly with tidying up, defining, or restating the earlier aims. During this period the basic structural foundations already established were consolidated. In 1843, A Code of Public Instruction was promulgated, determining the characteristics of and boundaries designating the partition of education between the elementary, secondary, and university levels. In 1854 education was placed under the existing Ministry of the Interior and Justice, with the consequence that education was not administered as an independent Ministry but as a department of another Ministry. By 1858 a new constitution was written that required Congress to encourage popular education in the sciences, arts, and industrial training. Unfortunately, the long war of 1858-63 intervened

¹Dulia Govea De Carpio, Educación Popular y Formación Docente de la Independencia al 23 de Enero de 1958 (Popular Education and Teacher Formation from Independence to 23 January 1958), Biblioteca de la Academia Nacional de la Historia, no. 126 (Caracas: Estudios, Monografías y Ensayos, 1990), 11.
and not much could be done to implement educational improvements. All those actions and events, however, infused what might be termed a preamble to the first major decree on education, in 1870.¹ This decree was promulgated by Antonio Guzmán Blanco, the Venezuelan president who came to power in 1870.

From 1870 to 1935

Although Antonio Guzmán Blanco was a military dictator, he seemed to have had numerous desirable attributes. His major education decree of 27 June 1870 concerned compulsory and free public instruction. This heralded the beginning of public education in Venezuela. It placed a high priority on education as being a national agenda item on which considerable energy, commitment, and resources should be focused. Of the seventy-six articles in the decree, ten were introductory, seventeen designated government responsibilities, eleven applied to the responsibilities of educational institutions, and thirty-eight considered the issue of finances. The decree required parents with children ages seven and older to ensure that these children attended school. It also mandated that central, state, and municipal governments fulfill their designated obligations in supplying schools, teacher training, and supervision.²

The 1870 decree resulted in the implementation of specific, focused, and more effective efforts. The number of children in school rose from nearly 8,000 to about

¹Burroughs, 20-21.

23,000 in the first five years. The definition and identification of “children in school” was quite arbitrary. The plan as officially announced was a “dream” to place 100,000 children into school. Nevertheless, even by 1921 the recorded figure stood at little more than 55,000. This represented only 25 percent of eligible pupils in the population.¹

The first Ministry of Public Instruction was founded in 1881, followed later by various councils dealing with particular points relating to the instructional endeavor. In due time these councils were incorporated into the newly established Ministry.² In 1897 attention was turned to the creation of a formal model of secondary education. Until that date, emphasis had been focused on elementary education. In spite of the fact that elementary schooling was “compulsory” and free, considerable effort needed to be expended in attracting pupils. Even after 1897, secondary education was not seriously considered as a basic provision for young Venezuelans. During the period 1870-1935, however, the foundational structures for an improved, compulsory, and free secondary educational system were set in place. With a limited degree of success, implementation of these plans also began during these years. The pattern of secondary education, which was laid out in 1897, was a tripartite system of academic, normal, and technical schools

¹Burroughs, 23.

which was pursued only in the *Liceos*\(^1\) program.\(^2\)

The extended period of the Juan Vicente Gómez dictatorship (1909-35) raised difficulties in the area of education. Authoritarian in the extreme, with family members in key positions, and spurred on by his desire to amass a personal fortune, Gómez was not dedicated to improving the lot of the common man, nor had he any intention of educating the public to be better informed and consequently more rebellious. Gómez closed the Central University in Caracas for lengthy periods of time (an action repeated by the dictator who followed him, Pérez Jiménez). This led to student revolts and the spread of tumult. For example, in 1928 a group of students clamored for a democratic government. During this uprising, many students suffered and died. Those who survived later became the leaders of the nation. Two of them, Rómulo Betancourt and Raúl Leoni, became the first two democratic presidents after democracy was established in 1958.\(^3\)

Among Gómez’s achievements was the reestablishment of good relations with the church, reversing the trend of the Guzmán Blanco period. This development led to an increase in church schools and a reinforcement of the perception of the value of private education, which remains to the present time.

**From 1935 to 1958**

Following the death of Gómez in 1935, governmental education reforms were

\(^1\)"*Liceos*" means schools that have either secondary education from grades seven to eleven, or normal and technical schools with grades ten to twelve.

\(^2\)Burroughs, 24.

\(^3\)Ibid., 26-27.
slow to be implemented. In spite of the innovations resulting from the visits of foreign educational specialists in 1936, and a short period of liberal democratic and educational activity from 1945-48, the period did not bring about sustained educational development. The ten years of dictatorship under Marcos Pérez Jiménez which brought this period to a close were, in fact, in many ways counterproductive in terms of the country's educational system. Pérez Jiménez' period of dictatorship ended with forced exile in 1958.¹

In 1936, a Chilean commission was invited to advise the government educational authorities on the reorganization of primary education. The years that followed also saw the foundation of the National Pedagogical Institute, operated for the training of secondary teachers. For over thirty years, this was the only institution of its kind on Venezuelan soil. Admission to the institute was on the basis of successful completion of the secondary or normal school programs. Concerned as it was with teacher training, beginning in 1938 the institute set up a number of rural normal schools. The normal schools were established with the assistance of Cuban missionary teachers and served as feeder schools to the National Pedagogical Institute.²

Despite the push for educational reform during the three short years of democracy in the mid-1940s, during the last ten years of this period, 1948-58, the country experienced a substantial disregard for education under the dictatorship of Pérez Jiménez. The universities were closed at intervals and their operation was subject to political interference. The national budget for education which had reached 12 percent in 1948

²Burroughs, 28.
was reduced to less than 6 percent by the time the dictator was exiled. As a result, in 1958, for every thousand children who began elementary school, only ninety-five finished. Fifteen of these completed secondary school, and only one finished university. In addition, about 40 percent of the total population of the nation was completely illiterate.¹

After 1958

With the coming of democracy in 1958 a new day in education began in Venezuela. This was a high moment for Venezuelan education, and “more than at any other time, this was the moment when extraordinary efforts were expended to benefit the popular masses.”² It was the intention of the new president, Rómulo Betancourt, to meet the educational needs of the citizens and to build for the future of the nation.

In 1956, the second inter-American conference³ for Ministers of Education took place in Lima, Peru. The conference looked for ways to improve the quality of education in Latin America. Recommendations from this conference included coordinated educational planning among all nations on the continent and the establishment of a specific department in the Ministry of Education in each country for this express purpose. As a consequence, one of the first acts of Venezuela’s Betancourt government was to

¹Ibid., 29-30.
²Manuel Fermin, Momentos Históricos de la Educación Venezolana (Historical Moments in Venezuelan Education) (Caracas: Imprenta del Congreso de la República, 1973), 11.
³A conference organized to improve the level of education on the continent.
create, in 1958, a centralized Office of Coordination and Planning (CORDIPLAN). This department was directly responsible for oversight of any government agency involved in economic and social development. As a result, in 1959, educational initiatives were centered in the Office for the Planning and Integration of Education (EDUPLAN), linked with CORDIPLAN but directly responsible to the Minister of Education.¹

The restoration of a democratic government in 1958 brought a notable improvement to the quantity and quality of educational opportunities. Several universities were opened around the country, and innovative educational programs were broadcast on radio and television in an effort to provide new opportunities for learning.

After 1958, the ideals and goals articulated by Guzmán nearly a hundred years earlier began to be realized systematically. Between 1958 and 1980, at least six years of primary school were compulsory and were provided free of charge. In 1980, when the Organic Law of Education came into effect, compulsory preschool education and nine years of basic education were required. The implementation of preschool education reform took longer than originally intended, but the direction and the will to implement the plan had been established.²

In the history of Venezuela, this was the first time there was a genuine attempt to provide open access to education. For students of the upper, middle, and lower social classes who had high aspirations, a secondary academic education became indispensable. As a result, the secondary academic schools which prepared students for universities and 

¹Burroughs, 31.
²Haggerty, 71.
white-collar jobs became more popular than other types of secondary schools. The competition for social prestige that already existed between private and public schools, especially at the secondary level of instruction, was intensified as a consequence of the spread of public education. Even though the public or official schools often obtained greater financial support from the state, "private-school education still carried far more prestige in the minds of many Venezuelans."¹

The blossoming of democracy and the new emphasis that was placed on education coincided with the aspirations of Venezuelan Adventists to establish a strong educational presence in the country. It is to the unfolding of this history that our attention is now turned.

Establishment of the SDA Church in Venezuela

In presenting the origin and progress of Adventism in Venezuela, a brief history of the early pioneers of the movement is helpful for understanding the later development of the church in that country.

Seventh-day Adventist Church

The SDA church "is a worldwide body of more than 10 million Christians who observe Saturday as the Sabbath and expect Jesus' second coming soon."² Adventism developed from the Millerite movement of the 1830s and 40s in North America.

¹Ibid., 72.

William Miller, a farmer from Low Hampton, New York, after his conversion to Jesus Christ in 1816, started a careful and thorough study of the Bible. Based on his interpretation of Dan 8:14, Miller reached the conclusion that the second coming of Jesus Christ to earth should be between 1843-44. Finally Miller and his colleagues settled on the date of 22 October 1844 for the return of Jesus Christ to earth.

The fact that Jesus did not return in 1844 was a bitter experience for the Millerites. This experience became known to Adventists as the “great disappointment.” An estimated fifty thousand who expected Jesus to return on that October day were discouraged, confused, and unable to explain the mistake that had been made. The leaders, including Miller, turned to the Bible in search of an answer. Some set new dates for Christ’s return, pointing to possible errors in the calculations. A small group concluded that their calculations had been correct but that they had predicted the wrong event.¹

Among this small group was Hiram Edson, a Millerite who on 23 October 1844 received an insight that the sanctuary to be purified was not the earth but, according to Dan 8:14, was the sanctuary in heaven. This explanation identified 22 October as the beginning of the atonement day in the heavenly sanctuary, an event prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ to earth.

The view was accepted by James White and Ellen Gould Harmon (later White), members of the Millerite movement who, after the great disappointment, became leaders of a group of Adventists in the late 1840s. This group constituted the embryo of the

¹Ibid., 3.
movement that was later organized as the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Joseph Bates, a former mariner and a preacher of the Millerite awakening, introduced the Biblical idea of the seventh-day Sabbath to these early Adventist believers. The doctrines of these believers, including Sabbath observance, were confirmed by the experiences of Ellen White and by careful group Bible study.

These pioneers of the Adventist movement began their work in Rochester, New York in 1849. There they purchased a printing press to disseminate their views and teachings. In 1855 they moved to Battle Creek, Michigan. At the beginning, the leaders were opposed to organizing a church. In time, however, due to the growing number of adherents to the faith, and to protect the assets of the movement, the name “Seventh-day Adventist” was chosen and the church was legally incorporated in 1860. This was followed by the organization of local conferences in 1862, and the General Conference in 1863.

In the 1860s, healthful living became an important focus of Adventist teachings. This in turn led to the founding in 1866 of the first SDA health institution. In the 1870s the first official SDA educational institutions opened their doors and the first official foreign missionary was commissioned. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, a strong sense of foreign mission began to develop among Adventists. This opened the way for the expansion of the SDA message to Venezuela.

Early Beginnings

The SDA message was first proclaimed in Venezuela early in the twentieth
century. This happened when unclaimed, unaddressed packages of SDA publications were left at a Venezuelan dock by ships that did business from port to port around the Caribbean Sea.¹ These materials generated a first spark of interest.

In December of 1907 Ben E. Connerly, an Adventist minister who printed SDA publications in Puerto Rico, was apparently the first denominational worker to enter Venezuelan territory. He spent several months traveling around the country distributing his publications. He stayed in several Indian villages as well as small towns along the Orinoco River. He vowed that the year 1908 would not pass before Adventism had a representative in that region. He wrote the following appeal:

I found many persons with whom the Spirit of the Lord is working. I readily sold all the books that I had with me, and took subscriptions for *El Centinela* in all the towns, and distributed many tracts. “The harvest is great, but laborers are few.” We must find messengers somewhere for this great field in Venezuela.²

In spite of this, Connerly’s dreams were not realized until 1910. On 1 August 1910, Frank G. Lane became the first SDA minister sent officially to superintend the work of the Venezuela Mission. Lane and his wife, Rose, arrived in La Guaira, the port city of Caracas. They were accompanied by Ricardo E. Greenidge and his wife Rebeca (see figure 5), self-supporting SDA missionaries who came from Barbados to open a treatment room in Caracas. Thus began the SDA medical work in Venezuela. The Lanes started their work by holding evangelistic meetings. As a means of illustrating the


prophecies of Daniel, they used various charts.¹

Manuel Corro (see figure 6), a carpenter who supplied the lumber for pews required for the meetings, became the first convert. In describing the story of how Corro became a Seventh-day Adventist, Rose Lane wrote:

We had been here four months when one day a man came with some lumber. On passing through the house, his eyes fell upon the old prophetic chart, which we had hanging in a conspicuous place. He inquired, "What do these things mean?" Elder Lane at once made an attempt, in broken Spanish, to explain to him, reading from the Spanish Bible.

The man listened attentively, and, saying very little, went away. About two hours later he returned, bringing with him a second man to hear the story. My husband again explained as fully as possible the wonderful truths of God's Word, impressing upon them the importance of studying to know for themselves. They then left, expressing their thanks for what they had heard. The following morning the second man returned with a third, who was anxious to see the wonderful chart, and hear the story connected with it.²

¹ Frank G. Lane and Rose Lane, "Venezuela," Review and Herald, 20 October 1910, 15-16.

² Rose V. Lane, "A Light Kindled in Dark Venezuela," Review and Herald, 9 February 1911, 15.
Corro and ten others constituted the first group to be baptized and accepted into
the SDA church. This group was baptized by Lane on 25 March 1911, in the Anauco
River near Caracas. The next day, 26 March 1911, the first SDA church was established
in Venezuelan territory. This was the first step in the development of the Adventist
denomination in that country, opening the way for the subsequent start of an SDA school
system, and the eventual establishment of Venezuelan Adventist University.¹

In 1915 the Lane family left Venezuela. Santiago A. Oberg, another Adventist
minister, along with his wife, took over leadership as superintendent of the Venezuelan
Mission. Soon after the Oberg family arrived, persecution broke out. The evangelistic
meetings conducted by Oberg were disrupted by missiles thrown through the windows of
the meeting house. As a result, Oberg was expelled from the premises and there seemed
to be no possibility of renting any meeting places for the future.

¹Nathaniel García, Sin Temor al Futuro (Not Afraid of the Future) (Caracas:
Litobrit, 1990), 7.
Adding to an already difficult situation, Pastor Oberg’s wife contracted a tropical illness, and a few months later was forced to leave the country. In spite of the negative conditions, Oberg declared at one point that the Adventist message in Venezuela was “here to stay.”¹

Colporteur Work

In 1917 William E. Baxter, another SDA minister, also accompanied by his wife, arrived in Caracas as the president of the Venezuelan Mission. He found ten faithful SDA members in Caracas. Their first endeavor was to get a hall for holding meetings. That effort was unsuccessful because of clear opposition from the Catholic Church.² Nevertheless, at the end of 1918 Baxter wrote:

We now have one ordained minister, one missionary secretary, and three canvassers. Our desire and prayer is that God will keep us all in health that we may remain here and work for him. Brother R. E. Greenidge began work in April, and in eight months sold and delivered $1,500 worth of books. In August Rafael Lopez and Angel Ojeda arrived from Porto [Puerto] Rico, and their combined deliveries for three months amounted to a little more than $1,800, thus making our book sales for this brief period more than $3,300, gold. We are glad to see these truth-filled books going into the hands of the people and we believe the seed thus sown will yield a harvest of souls.³

The first colporteur institute in Venezuela was held from 9 to 28 May 1919, in the


city of Caracas. Among the colporteurs, the most notable was Rafael López, a self-supporting SDA missionary from Puerto Rico. He pioneered over three hundred miles south of Caracas to Camaguan and converted twenty-one souls to the SDA message to establish a church there by April 1921. Among those baptized were Julio García, who was the first Venezuelan national to be ordained as an SDA minister, and a Lebanese businessman by the name of José Antonio Lamas. It was Lamas, who, in 1962, gave his property in El Limón to open the first campus of what is today Venezuelan Adventist University.

After the Camaguan baptism, López moved to Tachira to continue his colporteur work, leaving his family behind. Feelings of homesickness almost defeated him, but he continued with his work. In the last letter that he wrote to Baxter he said:

There is a religious awakening here in favor of the Bible. Two families are keeping the Sabbath because of studies I gave. I spent a week with them. I cannot spend more. . . . Almighty God helps me, I will continue the struggle for Tachira. I love my wife and children, but I cannot stop building. Tell me, should I bring my family or go to Puerto Rico?

On 25 May 1922, López was murdered while traveling by mule along a deserted mountain road in El Cobre, Tachira, in western Venezuela. The General Conference session in 1922 was stunned by the news. It was surmised that López was murdered.

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1 J. Green, “First Colporteurs’ Institute in Venezuela,” Review and Herald, 18 September 1919, 29.


3 Rafael López to W. E. Baxter, 21 April 1922, from López Memorabilia Collection, L. A. Ramírez, Washington, DC.
because of his evangelistic work, and reported that "López died a martyr’s death on a lonely path in the Venezuelan mountains." The self-sacrifice of López and others like him, and their dedication to the task of spreading the good news of the SDA message in the face of opposition and persecution, ensured that the church in Venezuela was built on a strong foundation.

Later Developments

In 1927 the administration of the SDA church in Venezuela was relocated from the Caribbean Union Mission to the newly organized Colombia-Venezuela Union Mission. The new union with its headquarters in Colombia comprised the countries of Colombia, Venezuela, and the Netherlands Antilles. In 1950, under the leadership of Charles R. Beeler, the Venezuela Mission was divided and reorganized into two missions: the East Venezuela Mission, with headquarters in Caracas, and the West Venezuela Mission, with headquarters in Barquisimeto. The reorganization of the Venezuelan Mission was because of communication difficulties and the need to serve the widespread Adventist membership. The church soon entered a phase of rapid growth in membership in Venezuela as illustrated in table 1.

The small church of only sixteen members in 1921 had grown to 971 members in 1950. By 1960 the two missions reported a combined membership of 2,654, distributed among twenty-six churches. Since then, the SDA church in Venezuela has experienced considerable growth. As a result of this, in 1989 the territory was organized as the

\[1\text{Greenleaf, 1:175.}\]
Venezuela-Antilles Union Mission. In 1992 the West Venezuela Mission was also divided into two fields. Today there are four conferences/missions in the territory of Venezuela with a combined membership of more than eighty thousand.1

Table 1. SDA Growth in Venezuela 1921-99

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Churches</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2,844,618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>3,084,495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>3,491,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>971</td>
<td>4,397,944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2,654</td>
<td>5,053,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>6,896</td>
<td>10,700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>19,414</td>
<td>12,898,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>42,289</td>
<td>18,238,659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>85,033</td>
<td>23,153,970</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In spite of many difficulties during the first decades, the SDA work in Venezuela in recent years has shown rapid growth both in membership and in number of churches. The most rapid rate of growth was experienced in the decade of 1970-1980, when membership increased 175 percent. This church growth has been a significant factor in the founding of the school in El Limón (1962), the creation of the Venezuelan Antillean Union (1989), and the establishment of Venezuelan Adventist University (1989).2


2 Juan Carlos Viera-Rossano, Los Adventistas del Septimo Dia en America Latina: Sus Comienzos; su Crecimiento; sus Desafios (Seventh-day Adventist in Latin America: Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
SDA Educational Philosophy

From its beginning, the SDA church in Venezuela combined medical and educational work along with the preaching of the gospel. Adventist education in Venezuela was therefore influenced by the philosophy of education discussed widely in SDA circles at the time the denomination was becoming established in the country, and by early SDA schools in other parts of the world that were developing at the time.

In the years subsequent to 1844, Adventists believed strongly in the soon coming of the Lord and at first it appeared unnecessary to them for their children to have an extended education. Their main concern was preparing themselves to meet Jesus. Although a number of articles in the early Adventist journals touched on educational matters, there was no initiative to develop a church-sponsored educational system.

First Initiatives

As time went by after the disappointment of 1844, and Christ did not return, a change in attitude about the importance of education began to occur. In 1857, James White wrote about the spiritual education of the Adventist youth. He urged them to separate from the influence of nonbelievers, and counseled Sabbath-keepers to employ consecrated spiritual teachers who, with the help of the parents, could do much in leading their children in the paths of virtue and holiness.¹

Ellen White (see figure 7) was a major influence in guiding Adventist thinking concerning education. In her writings and discourses, she clarified the purposes of Christian education and highlighted a distinctive Adventist philosophy and methodology aimed at achieving the desired goals of a parochial educational system. Between 1872 and 1909 Ellen White wrote a number of articles and books, and delivered numerous speeches concerning education. The first major treatise was entitled “Proper Education.” It was published in 1872, and in it she proposed an education that include physical, mental, moral, and religious components. The article emphasized the importance of manual labor in school industries as an integral component of proper education. In this document she “sets before the church the principles which should govern the education of its youth.”

Fig. 7. Ellen G. White, SDA educational leader.

The first official school operated by the SDA church opened its doors in 1872 under the leadership of Goodloe H. Bell. The curriculum of the first school was oriented toward religion, and Bell manifested deep concern for the spiritual growth of each student. The school program was confirmed by the official leadership of the SDA church, and the president of the General Conference of SDAs expressed his approval by saying:

Here is a school where moral and religious influences are made important. Daily lessons in the Bible itself are given. Lectures upon the most important religious subjects are given daily. The teachers are Christian men, who talk and pray, and labor with their pupils for their well-being. Prayer-meetings of the scholars are held. And already several who came with no religious interest have gone away hopefully converted.¹

Butler's statement presents one of the fundamental ideas prompting Adventist educational endeavor, namely the conversion of the students. This goal was emphasized in the writings of Ellen White in different ways, but perhaps the most important was her statement that the goal of true education is the restoration of the image of God in man. This goal, among all the other aims of Adventist education, has been singled out by some leading SDA scholars as "the primary goal."²

White pointed out that intellectual, physical, and moral aspects should be combined in order to have a well-developed and well-balanced system of education. She argued that daily, systematic labor should be an integral part of the education of youth. Education should include agricultural and manufacturing establishments, where physical

¹George I. Butler, "What Use Shall We Make of Our School?" Review and Herald, 21 July 1874, 44.

and mental faculties might be equally exercised.¹

Educational Organization

The next step in developing the Adventist educational system was the establishment of Battle Creek College in 1874 (see figure 8). In planning the new institution, James and Ellen White favored a country location in order to facilitate the implementation of a manual labor program. However, even the president of the college at that time expressed his apprehension by saying, “I do not know anything about the conducting of such a school, where industries and farming are part of the work.”² This suggested that the new philosophy presented a real challenge to the traditional educational practices of the time.

Fig. 8. Battle Creek College, first SDA college.

¹Ellen G. White, Selections from the Testimonies Concerning the Subject of Education (Battle Creek, MI: College Printing Department, 1886), 27; Ellen G. White, Education (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1952), 15.

Another step towards the evolution of a united SDA educational system was the creation of the office of educational secretary at the General Conference in 1887. The secretary was responsible for the overall supervision of the educational task of the entire denomination. William Warren Prescott, a promising young Adventist minister and administrator, was appointed to leadership in this new position in the church. Prescott called for an examination of current educational practice in Adventist schools and urged the church to follow the principles of education presented in the Bible and in the writings of Ellen White.1

Avondale Experience

In 1891 Ellen White went to Australia to help in establishing there the presence of the SDA church. Among the contributions she made in that country was leading out in the establishment of Avondale College. White wished that the school would serve as a model for the establishment of future Adventist educational institutions around the world. At the time Avondale was founded, White strongly advocated that educational institutions be established at some distance from the cities. The place of industries and manual labor in the educational system she proposed was the “model” for the college in Australia. She spoke and wrote about true education elevating a knowledge of God above everything else. Also, she spoke of the conversion of each student as the primary goal of the school. The study of the Bible as an integral factor in the curriculum was emphasized as a basic component in reaching this goal. Another important goal of education that she

stressed was the motivation of students to become self-sacrificing missionaries to serve the world.¹

The Avondale experience bore witness to the fact that certain principles stand as the foundation of Adventist education. These include rural school location; practical instruction through labor in agriculture or manufacturing enterprises; study of the Bible as a fundamental element in the curriculum to foster wisdom and to facilitate conversion of the students; rejection of some popular and frivolous recreational practices; and strong adherence to a curriculum which supports a balance between mental and physical work.² These principles, partly derived from the Avondale experience, were important influences in planning and developing SDA education in Venezuela, and in the eventual establishment of Venezuelan Adventist University.

SDA Education in Venezuela Before 1962

Since the founding of the first SDA church in Venezuela, the educational work has been an important part of the mission and vision of the leaders and membership.

First School

Among the first Venezuelans to join the church in Caracas was a woman by the name of Samuels, who made it possible for Mrs. Lane to start an elementary school in the capital city in 1911. Frequent religious persecution from the local people led to the

²Ibid., 309.
school being moved on several occasions from one location to another.\textsuperscript{1}

In 1912 a clear reference to this first SDA school in the Venezuelan territory was made by U. Bender who wrote in a letter to the Review and Herald: “Brother Greenidge and wife are making their living by giving treatments, and sister Samuels conducts a school for the children. These workers are of great help to Elder Lane in establishing the work there.”\textsuperscript{2}

Camaguán School

An important follow-up in SDA education in Venezuela was the establishment of the Camaguán school, the first boarding school in Venezuelan territory (see figure 9). In 1922 the Camaguán Training School opened its doors with just two pupils. This event was an initiative of a new convert to the SDA message, José Antonio Lamas (see figure 10). He employed a Venezuelan woman, Catalina Rodríguez, to operate an elementary school at the church in Camaguán. A short time later, the SDA organization decided to send Elder Ricardo Greenidge and his wife as missionaries to care for the school.\textsuperscript{3}

The school grew quickly and in 1924 reported an enrollment of seventy students. By 1929 the school enrollment was close to one hundred. More than 50 percent of these students came from SDA homes. Bible study was the main subject of the entire school curriculum at Camaguán. Though Roman Catholic students attending the school were

\begin{itemize}
  \item Nathaniel García, \textit{Sin Temor al Futuro}, 7.
  \item U. Bender, “From Venezuela,” \textit{Review and Herald}, 11 April 1912, 16.
\end{itemize}
not required to possess copies of the Bible, they could not avoid absorbing biblical knowledge from the instruction given.\textsuperscript{1}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{fig9.png}
\caption{The Camagüán Training School.}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{fig10.png}
\caption{José Antonio Lamas, Venezuelan SDA educational leader.}
\end{figure}

In 1927 plans were formulated to establish several industries in the Camagüán.

\textsuperscript{1}Richard E. Greenidge, "Experiences in Camaguan," \textit{The Inter-American Messenger}, 1 January 1926, 9.
school. Students were given some instruction in agriculture and home economics. They were taught how to care for their bodies so that their minds might better grasp and retain spiritual truth. The value of work in relation to health and morals was stressed, as well as the usefulness of practical skills learned for the service of others.¹

The school provided Christian education for a generation of SDA Venezuelan young people, many of whom became denominational workers. Unfortunately, in 1935 Greenidge died, and for a short while his son, Pastor Luis Greenidge, directed the school. However, about 1937 the school was finally closed. This school, however, set the stage for the later opening of a secondary boarding school in El Limón. The Adventists in Venezuela remembered the school in Camagüan. It served as a motivating passion in the planning of a boarding institution in Venezuela to take its place.²

Other Schools

In 1933 the church of San Cristóbal opened its own school and called Catalina Rodriguez, the same person who had taught at the school in Camagüan, to be the teacher. This school started with ten pupils and soon grew to an enrollment of thirty pupils. Unfortunately, it operated for only about ten years. It was closed due to the poor condition of the building. In 1936, Pastor Luis Greenidge established a school in Caracas and again called Catalina Rodriguez to work with him. The school in Caracas was moved

¹I. M. Gish, “In the Interior of Venezuela,” The Inter-American Messenger, 3 February 1927, 6.

from one area of the city to another until it found a permanent place in Quinta La Pimpinela where it was established in 1956 as Colegio Ricardo Greenidge.

Contemporary with the Caracas school was the Colegio Miguel Angel Granados, in Barquisimeto.¹

Throughout the history of the Adventist church in Venezuela there have been educational institutions in different areas of the territory.² Some of these schools are still operating, while others have been closed. But all of them have contributed to the spread of the Seventh-day Adventist message in Venezuela.

Summary

In this chapter a brief introduction to the geography, history, and people of Venezuela has been given. The development of the Venezuelan educational system has been outlined, and significant turning points in Venezuelan educational history have been noted. The development of the Adventist church and the importance of Adventist schools in the development of the church have also been considered.

Against this background, the advice of Nathaniel García was heeded when he suggested that “special attention should be given to the educational work in El Limón,”³ the first home of the school that later became Venezuelan Adventist University. It was at

¹Nathaniel García, Sin Temor Al Futuro, 39-40.

²These include schools in Acarigua, Aróa, Botucal, Carupano, Caripita, Ciudad Bolívar, Ciudad Ojada, Coro, El Márquez, Guanare, Guarenas, Maracaibo, Maturín, Propatria, San Felipe, San Fernando, Rio Santiago, and Valencia.

³Nathaniel García, Sin Temor al Futuro, 41.
El Limón that the aspirations of Venezuelan Adventists to have their own boarding school and college first began to have their fulfillment and were officially recognized by church and government. It is on the establishment and development of this school that attention will now be focused.
CHAPTER II

EARLY BEGINNINGS (1962-1966)

Introduction

With the coming of democracy to Venezuela in 1958, there was a substantial increase in enrollment in Venezuelan schools. The SDA Church in Venezuela also experienced significant growth in membership. As a consequence, a good opportunity developed to open an Adventist boarding school in Venezuela. After months of preparation and with significant contributions from the Adventist constituency\(^1\), the Colegio Secundario Adventista Venezolano (COLSEVE) opened its doors in October 1962.

The opening of COLSEVE in El Limón was a response to the felt needs of the Venezuelan Adventist community for an Adventist boarding academy. This period was shaped by the leadership of Dr. Antonio Ceballos, school principal from 1962-66. In

\(^1\)Constituency, in this dissertation, is used with two meanings. First, it may be a general reference to the total SDA membership in a given area as is the case in this instance. The second usage is more technical, and refers to the Adventist stakeholders of a given institution. Typically for a tertiary institution this would include the board members, administration and academic faculty of that institution; administrative officials from denominational entities (usually a union conference) under whose jurisdiction the institution operates; and voted representatives from the churches in the local territory as defined by the denomination (usually the union territory). When “constituency” is used in relation to a specific educational institution, this is the definition that should be understood.
addition to the day-to-day administration of a new institution, which was a full-time task in itself, intensive planning and development of the physical plant filled these important early years. This chapter focuses on these early challenges as well as on the sacrificial spirit of the pioneer teachers and staff at the school. The narrative and analysis are supported by the testimony of teachers and students associated with the school in El Limón in those days.

**Context of the Early 1960s**

**Conditions in Venezuela**

January 23, 1958 is a significant turning point in the history of Venezuela. The resignation and exile of General Marcos Pérez Jiménez brought to an end an extended period of almost unbroken dictatorship, and democracy was established. That same year the country celebrated a free election, and the Democratic Action (AD)\(^1\) candidate Rómulo Betancourt won the election to start his presidential term in 1959.

Betancourt formed a government of national unity, but one that excluded all Communists, which alienated some of the radical left of his own party. Positively, however, his unification brought individuals from other parties to his cabinet. With the cooperation of the major parties, Betancourt’s strong commitment to democratic government, and the public support that the government enjoyed after 1959, his government survived a number of crises in the early 1960s. On the left, guerrillas influenced by Cuba’s Fidel Castro harassed the government and, on the right, a number of

\(^1\) AD (Democratic Action Party) is one of the two main political parties that has controlled politics in Venezuela since 1958.
military coups were attempted, but the Betancourt coalition remained stable.

Despite the difficulties, the Betancourt government did manage a number of significant achievements. Administrative corruption was curtailed considerably, and the government resumed the international marketing of petroleum. The profits from petroleum sales were used to support social programs in such areas as agriculture and education, and to develop a modern and diverse economic infrastructure. The Venezuelan Petroleum Corporation (CVP) was created to supervise the petroleum industry, and in 1960 Venezuela led the way in creating the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The democratic constitution of 1961, ensuring civil liberties and democratic process, guaranteed that in the future oil resources would be operated and administered in the best interest of the entire nation.¹

In the context of these new democratic ideals, concern for human rights, and improved educational opportunities, Adventists in Venezuela began to express a need to start a secondary school where young people could receive Christian education.

Educational Background

When the new government came into power, the initial thrust in education was directed at including as many children as possible in the system at the primary level. During the early 1960s, national authorities were hard put to keep the annual rise in primary enrollment sufficient to match proportionally the increase in population at that age level. An increase consistent with population growth was achieved more easily at the

¹Blutstein, 44-45.
secondary level. At the university level the proportional increase exceeded the growth rate of the general population.

During the early 1960s the principal emphasis at all levels was on getting more students enrolled in the schools rather than on the quality of education. The curriculum that was followed in those years dated back to the 1940s, when secondary level academic schooling was preparation for university entrance. A significant element in this curriculum was the complete separation between academic and vocational streams, which made it virtually impossible to transfer between these two main secondary educational systems.

National, state, and municipal government financed and maintained the schools, with the national government providing the largest share of support. The Ministry of Education exercised control over the curriculum, examinations, and teacher accreditation for private as well as public schools. The predominantly Catholic private sector, though small at all levels, played a specially predominant role in the sponsorship of academic secondary schools.¹

With this significant interest and increase in education at all levels, the early 1960s were viewed by the Adventist membership in Venezuela as a window of opportunity to open a secondary school in their country.

Growth of the SDA Church

The SDA Church in Venezuela experienced rapid growth during the same period

that democracy was being established in the decade following 1958. At the beginning of the 1960s, the SDA Church in Venezuela reported a combined membership of 2,654 in twenty-six organized churches in the two local missions. At the time, the Venezuelan population was under seven million, as presented in table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Churches</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1960</td>
<td>2,654</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6,709,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>2,905</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7,523,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>3,194</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7,872,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>3,576</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8,255,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>4,514</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>4,965</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8,772,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the five years between 1960 and 1965, the SDA Church membership in Venezuela almost doubled from 2,654 to 4,965 members. The church expanded to forty organized congregations, while the population reached almost nine million. This means that proportionally, the SDA Church in Venezuela was growing faster than the Venezuelan population. This growth prompted an increasing interest in the opening of a secondary SDA boarding school in Venezuela, and this dream was fulfilled when such a school was established in 1962.
Impetus for a Boarding School

Biennial Congress

The history of COLSEVE had its origins in a biennial session of the East Venezuela Mission celebrated in Caracas the last week of January 1960. Pastor Harold Bohr, president of the East Venezuela Mission, was anxious to carry on an expanding soul-winning program. In the conference sessions the delegates, eager to speed church growth, established goals of at least two evangelistic crusades in each church district.

The worship services of the congress at the National Theater of Caracas were filled for both the Sabbath morning and afternoon services. On Sunday night, the Central Church of Caracas was packed, and dozens responded to the appeal to prepare for church membership. Under this spirit of growth and expansion, a new vision began to develop.

Among the delegates to the congress there was a groundswell of feeling in support of the creation of an SDA secondary boarding school in the Venezuelan territory. Led by Bohr, the president, and Luis S. Camacho, the secretary, the East Venezuela Mission voted in August 1960 in favor of the creation of such a school. This historic vote included an invitation to the West Venezuela Mission to participate in the creation of COLSEVE. The action also recorded the need to raise an initial fund of fifty thousand

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1 To SDA, “Sabbath” means a holy rest-day, observed from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday.

bolivars through the ingathering campaign of 1962.\textsuperscript{1} Ideas for a school soon developed and took shape under the leadership of the administrators of both SDA missions.

\textbf{Search Committee}

Once the plan was accepted, the East Venezuela Mission named a commission to find a place to start the school. After investigating several possible sites, the commission arranged an interview with Elder José Antonio Lamas, a retired SDA minister and Lebanese businessman who had been converted to Adventism in 1921 by Rafael López Miranda.\textsuperscript{2} The commission wished to speak to Lamas about the possibility of using his small farm with its buildings for the project.\textsuperscript{3}

Among the members of the commission who spoke with Lamas was Nathaniel García, an SDA pastor, who had visited El Limón and knew about the buildings that Lamas was constructing there. García, who was well acquainted with Lamas, had joked with him about taking over the buildings as his future "Venezuelan Adventist Dispensary." García knew the good will of this businessman and his love for the educational work of the church. Lamas had donated the building for the first SDA boarding school in Camagúan in 1922,\textsuperscript{4} and now forty years later this same man donated his property with a similar vision in mind. In doing so, he fulfilled the dreams of

\textsuperscript{1}"Ingathering" is a public fund-raising program to solicit financial support for disaster relief and educational projects operated by the SDA Church around the world.

\textsuperscript{2}See chapter 1, on "Colporteur Work."

\textsuperscript{3}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{4}See chapter 1, on "The Camagúan School."
Venezuelan Adventists for a secondary boarding school. Lamas felt that in agreeing to the request of the commission he was responding to the needs of the church and, more significantly, the will of God. “After all,” he used to say, “all he had belonged to the Lord.”

The next Sunday the search committee met in Lamas’ house on Nueva Street and started negotiations. In a description of the meeting, García said:

Elder Lamas was someone who loved Christian education. He was excited about the prospect of developing an Adventist boarding school because he wanted to develop schools wherever he worked. He did not have children and was not a teacher, but he always kept in mind that the youth are the future of God’s Church. This made him enthusiastic about the possibility of a place where young people could be well educated.

The meeting was held in Lamas’ home. Elder Burley, who was treasurer of the Colombia-Venezuela Union, was present as a member of the commission. Burley was concerned that the school be established in a secure and proper manner. He was worried about the ramifications and consequences of any loosely formulated business deal. Because he was Union treasurer he focused his attention keenly on how Union money might be invested and worried about any future responsibilities as a consequence of unwise financial agreements.

The commission presented the situation regarding the proposed school to Lamas, and it was clear that the old man was filled with emotion. He asked everyone present to wait while he went to prepare some fresh orange juice. He wanted the members of the commission to taste the good produce of the land which they were requesting from him.

While Lamas was gone, Burley addressed the commission. “Brothers,” he argued, “we have fallen into a trap set by the devil.” The other members of the commission were surprised and shocked. Burley continued: “Who knows how many sons and grandsons this old man has? Later he will demand we educate them free in payment for the donation of his farm. No brethren, do not fall into this seductive temptation.”

It appears that Burley was confused because he heard the commission members referring to Lamas as “grandpa.” Elder Soto and I [García] had frequently addressed the old man as “Grandpa Lamas,” and Burley had come to the conclusion that Lamas had many children. He may even have thought that we

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1 Nathaniel García, interview by author, 2 November 1999, El Limón, tape recording. García was the educational director of the East Venezuela Mission in 1962.
Soto and García were grandsons. Pedro Ramón González clarified the situation, pointing out that Lamas actually had no children at all. Burley became less agitated and the discussion continued more positively.¹

By the end of the interview Elder Lamas was so enthusiastic about the project that he wanted Luis Camacho, treasurer of the West Venezuela Mission in Caracas, to stay the night with him in order to make an inventory of the property and immediately begin working on legalizing transfer of the title deeds into the name of the SDA organization.²

It should be noted that, even at this early stage in planning the new school and developing the El Limón property, the commission considered an institution at this site to be provisional. There was a strongly felt need to open a school, and an urgency to do so immediately. There was also a recognition that El Limón might meet the needs for a short time, but for the long term a larger property and more appropriate location should still be sought. It was clear that the El Limón property would not allow for the necessary expansion to meet the needs of a rapidly growing SDA membership.³ The provisional nature of the El Limón project did not however dampen the enthusiasm with which the Adventist leaders and church members set about the task of starting their new school.

Opening in El Limón

Leadership of Antonio Ceballos

The next step in the establishment of the school was to find a principal. Dr.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

Antonio Ceballos, formerly a science teacher in the Instituto Colombo-Venezolano (ICOLVEN) located in Colombia, was called and accepted the appointment in 1962. Ceballos worked on the Venezuelan school project for more than eight months in El Limón, Maracay, and Caracas before the school opened. His first major task was to prepare the paper work for the property to be legally owned by the East Venezuela Adventist Mission. Ceballos and his wife, Teresa, were also in charge of preparing the property to be ready to operate as a school. They gathered pertinent data and guidelines from the Ministry of Education and regional office of education in Maracay. They assembled materials for the science laboratory, and searched for all kinds of materials that would be useful in teaching. From the beginning Ceballos was designated as principal of the school. When the school was eventually opened, he also taught mathematics. Teresa Ceballos served as school secretary and registrar¹ (see figure 11).

Fig. 11. Antonio and Teresa Ceballos.

According to Ceballos, this eight month period of preparation before opening the

school was the most challenging of the whole project. There were a myriad of details to work out, challenges to meet, and obstacles to overcome. Ceballos and Teresa, his wife, often lived and slept in their car, traveling from one city to another in an effort to complete the necessary preparatory work required to register the school with the Venezuelan Ministry of Education. Ceballos pointed out that the rigor of this work was so intense that he and his wife were forced to leave their four children with his mother-in-law in another city so as to have more time to devote to completion of the project.

In remembering Ceballos’s leadership, Neria Calderón, the dean of girls’ from 1962-66, pointed to his pastoral care of students and school personnel. She noted that Ceballos was ever ready to serve as an intermediary in matters of student discipline and in conflicts involving teachers and staff. He was a spiritual leader who understood the needs of the youth as well as those of the school employees. Calderón observed that Ceballos was a patient man who wisely led the school through the four years it was located in El Limón. Under his guidance and, in Calderón’s words, under God’s Spirit, the school prospered and grew to meet the needs of the expanding SDA Church.

The decision to call Ceballos to leadership of the El Limon project seems to have been a wise one. He was certainly dedicated to the task to which he was assigned, and willing to exert himself, indeed, to sacrifice himself way beyond the call of normal duty. In the midst of the turmoil and challenges of the first years in at the school, Ceballos was

1 Antonio Ceballos, Interview by author, 26 April 2001, Berrien Springs to Houston, phone.

2 Neria Calderón, interview by author, 30 October 1999, Barquisimeto, tape recording. Calderón was women’s preceptress in the El Limón school from 1962-66.
able to maintain an aura of calmness and dignity. Among his strengths was the polite and caring manner in which he dealt with others, even in matters of disciplinary conflict.\footnote{Ibid.} His colleagues perceived him to be a very sociable person with a positive, upbeat spirit. Staff and students spoke of him as a man with a magnetic personality, a great teacher, and a respected principal and leader.\footnote{Robinson Urdaneta, interview by author, 19 April 2001, Berrien Spring, notes. Urdaneta was a West Venezuelan Mission pastor, at the time el Limón was opened.}

In spite of these positive accolades, Ceballos did come under some criticism. There were those who argued that the very traits seen in such a positive light by some were actually also his greatest weaknesses. It appears that his desire to keep everyone happy, his dislike of confrontation, and his efforts at diplomacy made him indecisive. At times, in seeking to keep the peace, he failed to set a clear direction and it became difficult to know what he really wanted to accomplish. Other critics pointed out that he used to take the side of the students or employees, covering their mistakes and taking personal responsibility even at the risk of being seen in a bad light by his superiors.\footnote{Interpretations based on anonymous interviews, due to the sensitive nature of the information.}

While these criticisms maybe accurate, it must be said that Ceballos' dedication and style of leadership were important factors in facilitating the speedy and successful implementation of the El Limón project. Ceballos did not only build a school. He nurtured a spiritual and academic community of teachers and students whose association with each other was instrumental in bringing about life-changing experiences. The

\footnote{Ibid.}
gentleness of his personality and calmness of his demeanor may at times have resulted in indecisiveness, but his energy and devotion to the task in part made up for this perceived weakness. Moreover, his kindness and consideration built a team of teachers willing, like their mentor, to go the second mile. The amazing fact that none of the original staff left El Limón in those early years of self-sacrificing labor is a notable testimony to Ceballos’ leadership.

Ceballos was helped in his task of leading the school by the wisdom and involvement of the COLSEVE school board. Harold Bohr, president of the East Venezuela Mission, served as chair, and Ceballos himself was secretary. Nathaniel García, Juan José Suárez, A. R. Norcliffe, and Luis Camacho were board members. They met for the first time on 27 February 1962 and took a number of actions related to the remodeling of the El Limón property as well as the development of a budget for the first school year.¹

The original intention was that the chair of the school board would alternate each year between the two Venezuela Missions,² but the reality was that only in the third year of operation did the chairmanship transfer to the West Venezuela Mission. The willingness of Bohr to continue carrying this responsibility suggests a deep commitment from Bohr himself and from the East Venezuela Mission to promote the project and see it through to a successful conclusion³ (see figure 12).

¹COLSEVE Misión Venezolana Oriental, 27 February 1962, 001.
²COLSEVE Escolar, January 1963, 005.
³Ibid., 27 June 1965, 060.
Fig. 12. COLSEVE board members: Antonio Ceballos, Harold Bohr, Miguel Quiroz, and Eduardo Escobar (left to right).

Under the leadership of Ceballos, the preparation for the opening of the school continued throughout the first months of 1962. At a second school board meeting held on 10 May 1962, it was voted to call Juan José Suárez, an ordained Adventist minister, as dean of boys and religion teacher. Suárez's wife, Myriam, was requested to be the treasurer and business teacher of the school. With these two new staff members, the team of teachers for the opening of the school reached a total of four.

To complete the team, Neria Calderón was added as girls' dean and director of food services, and Elias Franco was invited to teach humanities. These six pioneering teachers worked at the school throughout the period that it operated in El Limón. Their loyalty to COLSEVE is evidence of their commitment to the task. Under difficult circumstances, with limited resources, and with the heavy challenges and responsibilities of starting a new institution, these six pioneers were determined to facilitate the

1COLSEVE Misión Venezolana Oriental, 10 May 1962, 002.
successful introduction of post-elementary Adventist education in a boarding school setting in Venezuela.¹

Prior to its opening, Ceballos and his staff promoted the school energetically at many of the SDA churches in Venezuela. Finally after the long months of preparation, COLSEVE opened its doors on 1 October 1962 with fifty-two registered students and six teachers. With the beginning of the first year of school, the dream of Venezuelan Adventists for a boarding academy became a reality² (see figures 13 and 14).

Institutional Objectives

Once the school opened in El Limón, Ceballos and his administration presented the school objectives as recorded in the early school bulletins. They were:

1) To develop in the youth a character trained to confront the problems of life and to resist bad influences.

2) To provide for the students an intellectual education, and a practical preparation in different jobs and professions, that would make them self-supporting, efficient persons, willing to be of service to others.

3) To model for the youth, by maintaining high standards and a consistent Christian influence, the ideal and purpose of becoming powerful agents for good.

4) To prepare the youth to contribute in various avenues of service in the SDA Church, as full-time employees in the organization, or as laity trained to lead out in local church activities to elevate the Christian faith.

5) To proclaim the Holy Gospel preached by Jesus Christ and the apostles, as it is presented in the Holy Bible. In this context we believe, as has been stated by Ellen White: "True education means more than the pursuit of a certain course of study. It means more than a preparation for the life that now is. It has to do with

¹COLSEVE Escolar, 2 July 1963, 014.

Fig. 13. COLSEVE six teachers and fifty-two founder students.

Fig. 14. COLSEVE second-year, students and eight teachers.
the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come.\footnote{1}

These five objectives provided a clear direction for the school in El Limón. They were published not only in the first school bulletin in 1963, but also in the following bulletins in 1964 and 1965.\footnote{2}

Judging by the results in El Limón, it is apparent that during Ceballos’s time these five objectives were met, some fully, and some partially. Among the objectives fulfilled was the first, because the school at that time was like a small family that protected the students from influences that were not consistent with the high standards and principles of the institution. Likewise, the third objective was met by the high standards, good example, and love of the teachers, which motivated the students to live upright lives. The exaltation of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the school family ensured that the fifth objective was also met. The students were exposed on a regular basis to the vision of lives well lived in service to humanity in accordance with the principles of the gospel. Students were challenged to holistic personal development, and encouraged by the promises of eternal happiness to be found in humble self-giving.\footnote{3}

The second objective was only partially met due to the condition of the school in those times. High educational standards were maintained as is evident by the attainment

\footnote{1}{COLSEVE, \textit{Prospecto 1963-1964} (Caracas: 1964), 6-7.}


\footnote{3}{See below in this chapter, on “School Life in El Limón.”}
of the students in national examinations and the respect for COLSEVE exhibited by government educational agencies. But training for skilled labor was limited due to the lack of school industries and the limitations of space on the El Limón campus where the school had its beginning. The fourth objective was designed to prepare students for service in the SDA denominational workforce. The fact is that the school in El Limón trained students only up to the third year of academic secondary school. Ministerial training was not offered in the school in this early stage of its operation. As a result, many students were forced to travel abroad to study ministry or other advanced courses in order to work within the SDA organization. From this point of view, it cannot be argued that the fourth objective was fulfilled. It is true that students became active lay leaders in the church as time progressed, and those who obtained advanced degrees in other institutions built on their experiences and the vision they had gained in El Limón. From this perspective, it can be said that the fourth objective was achieved in the long term.¹

Ceballos set out a vision of what he wanted the school to achieve. It was an ambitious vision, but it set an ideal toward which the administration and teachers at COLSEVE would strive. The point to be made, rather than that some of the objectives were not met, is that so much of a positive nature was achieved in such a short time. The four years that Ceballos spent under challenging circumstances as principal in El Limón proved to be a significant contribution to the development of Adventist education in Venezuela.

¹See below in this chapter, on “Curriculum.”
An analysis of school finances demonstrated progressive growth over the four years of operation in El Limón. This growth is presented in table 3.

Table 3. COLSEVE Balance 1962-66

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>Liabilities</th>
<th>Net Worth</th>
<th>Working Capital*</th>
<th>Liquidity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1962-63</td>
<td>221,561</td>
<td>11,531</td>
<td>210,030</td>
<td>5,615=04%</td>
<td>149%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-64</td>
<td>235,620</td>
<td>1,995</td>
<td>233,625</td>
<td>27,995=18%</td>
<td>1,483%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964-65</td>
<td>239,126</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>238,239</td>
<td>35,560=20%</td>
<td>4,299%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-66</td>
<td>250,503</td>
<td>9,067</td>
<td>241,425</td>
<td>42,187=21%</td>
<td>565%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Working capital is presented as a currency amount as well as a percentage. The percentage was calculated according to guidelines in the Working Policy of the Inter-American Division of the General Conference of Seventh Day Adventists, 1995-1996 edition, 379. The policy recommends a working capital margin of at least 15% of the operational expense of the most recent complete fiscal year.

Due to the purchase of the first eight hectares of land in Nirgua at the end of 1963, the focus of financial attention changed to the proposed new site for the school in 1964. In spite of this, growth in the assets of the El Limón school progressed from an initial 221,561 bolivars in 1962 to 250,503 bolivars in 1966. This increase of thirty thousand bolivars in assets is not indicative of major or rapid expansion and growth over the four-year period under consideration. Nevertheless, when it is remembered that the focus of attention turned to Nirgua in 1964, and that the rate of inflation in Venezuela during the

1COLSEVE, Escolar, 9 January 1964, 019.
same four-year period was less than 7 percent (see appendix D, "cost of Living"), this increase of 12 percent in the assets at El Limón is significant. A campus slated for closure does not usually continue to grow. The fact that the assets at El Limón grew at a rate exceeding inflation attests to the wisdom and care given to financial matters by treasurer Myriam Suárez under the leadership and supervision of Ceballos. It also attests to the commitment of the administrators and members of the Adventist Church in Venezuela. The impetus generated by this project maintained the growth at the school even when the new project was already underway. Enrollment was maintained at a level which allowed the school to operate and expand mainly based on tuition income. It was not necessary for major appropriations to be made to the school by the East Venezuelan Mission even in these early years. The missions could concentrate their funding on the new Nirgua campus.

The school was strongly promoted during the vacation period each year in order to increase enrollment and improve finances. Two teachers were appointed each summer to promote the school in the two Venezuelan Missions. During the second year of operation, another two teachers were offered work in the two Missions during the summer vacation in order to save money for the school budget. Only one teacher remained at the campus in El Limón to take care of the property during the vacation. This frugal approach benefitted the school finances. Once again, this seems to be evidence of

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1Juan J. Suárez, interview by author, 26 April 2001, Berrien Springs to Orlando, phone. Suárez was the boys' dean and school pastor at El Limón

2COLSEVE Escolar, 9 September 1963, 018.
Ceballos's ability to administer the limited funds available with wisdom and careful planning in order to maintain the financial viability of the school.¹

By the second year of operation in El Limón, Ceballos and his administration asked the two Venezuela Missions for equal appropriations to the school budget. Up to this point the major financial contribution had come from the East Venezuela Mission where the school was located. The amount of this contribution was estimated to be twelve thousand bolivars per mission. Most of this money came from ingathering done by the local Venezuelan SDA churches. Once again, the sacrificial spirit of the church members was manifested by their participation in this activity. There appears to have been a groundswell of support to ensure that Christian education would develop and prosper in their native land.²

In spite of the difficulties that the school faced in balancing its budget and meeting commitments, the student debts were allowed to rise to eleven thousand bolivars during the first year. This was reduced dramatically by the second year to only about two thousand bolivars, as presented in table 3, “liabilities.” After a shaky start in this area, Suárez and Ceballos were apparently quick to realize the importance of maintaining firm control over the student debts.

School fees as presented in table 4 did not register a major increase during the four years of operation in El Limón. The administration was well aware that, for the

¹Ibid., 24 June 1964, 031.
²Ibid., 10 April 1963, 006.
parents of many students, 2,500 bolivars a year was a challenging amount to raise.¹

Ceballos was prepared to hold students to their financial commitments in order to develop a solid financial foundation for the school, but he was careful not to raise fees beyond the ability of the parents to pay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Boarding Student</th>
<th>Day Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1963-64</td>
<td>2,350</td>
<td>710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964-65</td>
<td>2,370</td>
<td>710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-66</td>
<td>2,450</td>
<td>710</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From the beginning, the administration implemented strict financial policies² to collect the tuition from parents. This led to the successful operation of the school until

¹See appendix D, where the average monthly income for Venezuela in 1964 is given as 755.50 bolivars.

²For example: (1) When students arrived at the beginning of each school year, they paid a registration fee that included two hundred bolivars as a deposit, which was credited to the student account in the last month of study. (2) At the end of each month the finance office sent a statement of the account to the parents, with the expectation that they would immediately pay the amount. (3) When the student was in debt for an amount greater than his/her deposit, this student was suspended from school activities until payment was made in full. (4) The personal needs of each student were to be cared for by the parents directly. If for any reason the financial office gave money to any student to meet personal needs, it was only on the basis of there being a credit in the student’s account. COLSEVE, Prospecto 1963-1964 (Caracas: 1964), (see the school bulletin, COLSEVE Prospectos 1963-1964, under the section “Cuando y Como Hacer los Pagos” [When and How to Make Payments]).
September 1966, when Mrs. Suárez closed the books at COLSEVE, and the school moved to Nirgua.¹

Curriculum

In the first year of academic operation, the school offered the first two years of secondary level education. The fact that this was possible was in large measure due to the good preparation of the physical plant undertaken by Ceballos to accommodate students in two class levels at the beginning of the school year in 1962. In addition to this, Ceballos was able to motivate the small team of five teachers working with him to accept the challenges of multiple assignments and long hours to meet the diverse needs of the new school.²

By 1963, under Ceballos’s leadership, the school presented a rationale to the school board for implementation of the third year of secondary level studies. This rationale, argued from the perspective of the administration, stressed the importance of meeting the needs of the SDA constituency in Venezuela through expansion of the school program. The following reasons for implementation of an additional year were presented:

1) The school promised the SDA community that students could continue into the third year of secondary level education, 2) the school claimed victory by attracting students from secular schools, so should assume responsibility for not returning these students to secular institutions after two years, 3) some parents transferred their children from secular schools to the SDA school, even though these students had to redo their second year of secondary education, 4) the Adventist community raised twenty-six thousand bolivars in one day to support an additional year of instruction for their children at COLSEVE, 5) the third year of secondary study in

¹COLSEVE Escolar, 22 August 1966, 089.

²Norcliffe, 10.
the Venezuelan educational system is the end of a three-year program during which students have prepared to choose advanced career education in ministry, the humanities, normal, or scientific fields, and 6) the school should add at least a year because the Ministry of Education in Venezuela expects this to be done.1

This rationale for implementation of a third year of secondary school was welcomed by the supervisory organizations in the Adventist Church,2 and immediate approval was given in 1963. This decision benefitted many students from 1963-1966 while the school was in El Limón, and parents were happy to send their children to a third year of secondary instruction.

The decision to increase the class courses by one more year in COLSEVE brought new challenges. More students applied for admission to the boarding school, and adjustments to accommodate them brought more teachers to the school at the beginning of the 1963-64 school year. One of the new teachers hired for the second year of operation was Edgar Escobar, a recent graduate from ICOLVEN who came as religion teacher and dean of men. This released Suárez to take up other campus responsibilities. The other new teacher was Henry Justo Várgas, an experienced Venezuelan teacher whose speciality was history3 (see appendix B, for 1963-64).

The school curriculum in El Limón placed great importance on the study of the Bible, making this subject the central theme around which the entire curriculum was established. At least one period each day was dedicated to the study of religion (Bible) at

1 COLSEVE Escolar, 10 April 1963, 006-7.
2 The Colombia-Venezuela Union and the Inter-American Division of SDA.
3 COLSEVE Escolar, 15 August 1963, 016-17.
each grade level (see table 5). The inclusion of Bible in the curriculum created a fundamental distinction between COLSEVE and the government schools, where no Bible classes were offered. The fact that the curriculum was prescribed by the Ministry of Education meant that Bible courses were additional. This placed an extra burden on teachers and students, but the benefits were considered to outweigh the added responsibilities. In fact, the centrality of the Bible to the curriculum was considered to be an important reason that the school had been established. There are reports that a genuine effort was made to integrate faith and learning at el Limón. Bible principles were not only discussed in Bible class but in a variety of subject settings. In addition, the staff was made up of well-qualified Christian teachers who were intent on implementing a faith-oriented program at the school for its earliest beginnings.¹

Table 5 shows the numbers of forty-minute periods per week in each of the year levels. In the third year of secondary instruction there were forty-five class periods per week. This inflated curriculum was a consequence of satisfying the Ministry of Education as well as the SDA instructional requirements. Each year-level received five periods of instruction in Bible per week. By the third year of operation in 1965-66, the physical education class was increased from one to three periods per week by mandate of the educational authorities. This raised the numbers of periods by two more.² The intensity of this program must certainly have been wearisome to both staff and students, but there is no evidence that there was anything but appreciation for the Christian

¹Neria Calderón, interview.

education that was being offered.

Table 5. COLSEVE Curriculum 1963-64

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1 year</th>
<th>2 year</th>
<th>3 year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bible</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Ed.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic Ed.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual Work</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total periods</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The calendar of the school in El Limón shows two semesters per year, one from September to January and a second from January to July. There were a number of days that were set aside by the Ministry of Education as mandatory public holidays. Rather than take these days as free time, the staff and students prepared cultural programs centered around the significance of each day. A Christmas vacation and two weeks of *

1 For example; October 12 (Columbus Day), December 17 (Death of Bolívar), January 15 (Teachers’ Day), February 12 (Youth Day), April 19 (Claim of Independence Day), June 24 (Independence War Day), July 5 (Independence Day) and July 24 (Bolívar’s Birthday).
prayer were also included in the yearly calendar.¹

The requirements to enter the school² indicate that the administration in El Limón practiced a strict admission policy in terms of lifestyle factors, associated with an open admission policy relative to academic achievement. The concern was for a commitment to Adventist principles more than for evidence of high academic ability. Once admitted, students had to abide by strict rules.³ However, the manner in which Ceballos

¹COLSEVE, Prospecto 1963-64, 5. Weeks of prayer are weeks of spiritual emphasis when speakers are invited to lead the institution in daily devotional meetings and prayer sessions with the purpose of strengthening spiritual commitment.

²The admission process included, among others items of a more technical nature, that candidates should submit a recommendation related to their character and moral standing. The character reference was to be written by a pastor or religious leader. In addition, each student was required to sign a document accepting to abide by school rules. Other policies of interest related to a commitment to fulfill all financial obligations, and the presentation of a certificate giving evidence of previous studies in programs approved by the Ministry of Education. The level of achievement at the previous institution was, of course, important, but it was not the most important criterion for admission. It seems that, as far as possible, Ceballos wanted to provide an Adventist education for all the children of Adventist families. Ibid., 8-9.

³These rules for the El Limon school are outlined here: (1) The school is owned by the SDA organization and operates with the purpose of developing wholesome students. As a consequence, immoral behavior is not tolerated, dissemination of atheistic ideas is prohibited, and anything that lessens a student’s potential for development is frowned upon. (2) Because it is the Lord’s day of rest, recognized by the Bible and observed by the Adventist Church, the Sabbath will be kept at the school. Individuals connected with the school are expected to respect the Sabbath day by refraining from work and frivolous recreation, and by attending spiritual services. (3) The use of tobacco, alcohol, or any kinds of stimulants is strictly prohibited. (4) Personal relationships between teachers and students as well as among students will be maintained at a high level of integrity. (5) Fashion fads should not be followed at the school. Ladies are not permitted to wear make-up, and women’s clothing should be modest and cover the shoulders. (6) Men, whether on-campus or off-campus residents, must wear jacket and tie to religious services. (7) Students, upon arrival at school, must have complete school uniforms. (8) Students may visit Maracay (the closest city) once a month on designated Wednesdays. (9) The school reserves the right to suspend a student at any time if
administered discipline, in agreement with the Adventist philosophy of discipline, favored retention of students. By the manner in which he dealt with students who had contravened school regulations, it was evident that Ceballos espoused a redemptive attitude toward discipline. It was his habit to give a second opportunity whenever possible, or to find alternatives to outright expulsion. For example, Neria Calderón, the dean of girls, was at times advised to suspend students from social activities rather than send them home. Ceballos appeared to have been mindful of the principle penned by Ellen White when she wrote that it was not right to "expel a student until every effort has been put forth for his redemption."\(^1\)

The Ministry of Education played an important role in maintaining the quality of education in the El Limón school. In 1964 three of the eight teachers in El Limón were required by the Ministry to take correspondence courses in order to enhance their teaching skills and to keep current with Ministry guidelines.\(^2\) In addition, the school administration collected from the teachers a monthly curriculum plan.\(^3\) This, along with a ministry policy reducing the work load of each teacher to no more than five subjects at necessary. (10) It is expected that students will maintain a cheerful spirit and positive attitude while enrolled at the school. (11) Radios, tape recorders, flippant reading materials, and guns are not permitted at the school. (12) Any rule adopted by the staff committee during the school year, once it has been announced, will be considered as binding as any of the other rules. Ibid., 13-15.

\(^1\)Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1952), 193. Evidence of Ceballos’s attitude was attested to in various interviews with, for example, Neria Calderón. Calderón, interview.

\(^2\)COLSEVE Escolar, 24 June 1964, 028.

\(^3\)Ibid., 06 July 1964, 033-34.
any given time, was aimed at improving educational quality.

The regulations regarding work load as well as a requirement that certain subjects be taught only by Venezuelan teachers led the El Limón administration on at least one occasion to transfer a subject from one teacher to another to satisfy Ministry of Education requirements. Ceballos recognized his accountability to both the church and the government ministry, and he strove to meet the demands of both in the best interest of the school and the students.

Under the consecrated leadership of Ceballos, and with the careful planning of its curriculum, the course of studies in El Limón was successfully implemented from the beginning. According to Neria Calderón, the quality of teaching and level of student achievement were high, and this was in no small part a consequence of Ceballos’ ability to accept a challenge, formulate an achievable plan, foster a team spirit among his staff, and collaboratively implement the plan. With a dedicated staff guided by an Adventist educational philosophy, and expeditiously motivated by the Ministry of Education requirements, COLSEVE was soon considered to be a pacesetter in Venezuelan education.

**Buildings in El Limón**

Investigations into the acquisition of the property and use of buildings and facilities will help us understand the kinds of sacrifices that the pioneers made to ensure

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1. Ibid., 25 June 1965, 062.

2. Neria Calderón, interview.
the success of the school in El Limón, and will provide a good background to study the life of the school in its early days.

**Donation**

By 1962 Jose Antonio Lamas was developing a farm house in El Limón. He planned to make “Los Pinos” his retirement home, and turn it into a small farm producing chickens, eggs, and fruits. About this time he was contacted by Nathaniel García, and a commission from the East Venezuela Mission arranged to meet Lamas to discuss with him his willingness to donate his farm to the COLSEVE project. He accepted the proposal without hesitation and the same night Elder Camacho took inventory of the property reporting his findings as follows: four roofed buildings with concrete walls, five chicken buildings of several sizes, 1,671 chickens, 1,930 laying hens, forty-eight food troughs, and thirty water troughs. The estimated value of the property was 226,226 bolivars. In compensation for his generosity, the mission decided to add one thousand bolivars monthly to Lamas’s retirement check.¹ Lamas’s self-sacrifice was astonishing.² It made possible the rapid implementation of the plan to start a school by providing the necessary land and buildings, and it served as an example to others to make sacrifices as well.

Lamas was without a doubt dedicated to SDA education, and an important figure


²After he gave the El Limón property to the school, Lamas purchased more property in Maracay and El Limón. At the time of his death in 1978 these properties were also bequeathed to the Adventist Church.
in the establishment of the school in El Limón. However, many others were also strongly committed to the project and made significant sacrifices in time, energy, and money to make it possible for the property in El Limón to be developed.

Campus Layout

A map supplied by Hugo Garcia, a student of the El Limón school from 1963 to 1966, shows the layout of the property and location of the buildings at the time (see figure 15). Inspired by his map, Garcia added these observations:

The school began to operate in what was essentially a chicken farm. There were two buildings for the chickens, and a lot of orange trees. At the main entrance [south side] there was a big gate that allowed vehicles to enter the property. To the right [east] of the gate was the main building with two floors (see figure 16). The administrative offices of the school were on the first floor. This was where the principal and secretary worked. On the same floor were the women’s residence, the cafeteria, and the laundry. On the top floor were three classrooms. These were for school during the week, but one of the classrooms also served as a church on Saturday. It was here that students celebrated the Sabbath by attending Sabbath School service and church services. Behind the main building [to the north] was a house. This was divided so that one side was used by Pastor Antonio Ceballos (who was the general director of the school) and his family. On the other side of the house there were about five rooms used to accommodate some of the boys. To the left of these two buildings [to the west] was an orange grove. Then in the middle [south of the orange grove] there was a chicken building that had been used for cleaning slaughtered chickens. This building was later remodeled and used as the men’s main residence. There was a second chicken house [northwest corner], and in the second year a part of this building was also remodeled as a residence for the young men. The front of this building [south side] had been a storage area for chicken food and farming equipment. One side of this storage space was converted into an office for the dean of men. In front of the second chicken building [to the south, and against the western boundary] was the sports field. The field had no grass and was dusty, but this is where we spent a lot of time playing volleyball, football, and baseball. We enjoyed volleyball the most. The remaining building [southwest corner] was a house used by Pastor Suárez. He was the pastor of the school church, and he taught English and some other subjects. The grounds of the school were only part of a city block and were
not very extensive [approximately 180 x 300 feet].

**North**

- Chicken Building #2
- Orange Trees
- Main Building
- Entrance

**West**

- Sports Field
- Chicken Building #1
- Ceballos House

**South**

- Suarez House
- El Limón School Map
  - By Hugo García
  - (Approximately 180 x 300 Feet)

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Fig. 15. COLSEVE map, by Hugo García.

Fig. 16. El Limón, main building.

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1Hugo García, interview by author, 31 October 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Garcia was a student at COLSEVE from 1963-66.
Changes and Development

The property was put into use as a school in essentially the same condition it was received from Lamas. A few changes were implemented with the idea of making the buildings more functional in terms of the needs of COLSEVE, but all the main structures were retained. Before opening for school activities, an extension was made to the main building for the cafeteria, and part of Ceballos’ house (see figure 15) was divided into small rooms to serve as the men’s residence. In the second year the school expected more students because an additional year of instruction was planned. The section of Ceballos’ house that had been used as the men’s residence (see figure 17) was now to be occupied by the women, and a chicken building was upgraded to be the men’s residence.

![Fig. 17. El Limón, men’s residence.](image)

In 1964, attention was turned to the new property in Nirgua, and no significant changes were made to the buildings and grounds at El Limón from that time on. Finally,

1COLSEVE Missión Venezolana Oriental, 27 February 1962, 001.

2COLSEVE Escolar, 9 September 1963, 018.
in 1965, the administration took a vote to transfer the property to the East Venezuela Mission when the school moved to Nirgua in 1966. The East Venezuela Mission was at liberty to rent or sell the property. They were also under obligation to continue paying the additional pension to Elder Lamas.¹

In the long term, the property has served the East Venezuela Mission well. The buildings were rented out for many years, and then reopened as an SDA school. In 2000, the compound again operates much in the way it did from 1962-66. The school now serves the local community offering both elementary and secondary education. The historical role that this property has played in the development of an Adventist educational system in Venezuela is indeed significant.

School Life in El Limón

The early years of the school were characterized by many social, cultural, and spiritual life activities. Interviews with some of those who attended the school in El Limón make it clear that the interaction among students and with faculty was an important and positive aspect of life in those early years. The memories shared by those who were interviewed, to a significant degree, emphasized social and spiritual events, and the joy that these events brought to the students.

Social Life

The social life of any school is a clear indicator of the standards and values espoused by the institution. An exploration of this facet of activities in El Limón

¹Ibid., 24 August 1965, 068.
provides interesting insights into the school community in its early years.

Among the favorite activities of the students were the banquets. These were organized on a rotational basis. One year the girls hosted the celebration, and the next it was the boys turn.\(^1\) A custom developed around the way in which the banquet was announced. The students tried to think up novel ways to surprise each other in breaking the news about the upcoming events. In sharing memories of the banquet, Rebeca Gómez, a student at El Limón from 1963-66, recalled:

One year when the banquet was given by the ladies, two of the teachers, Mrs. Suárez and Mrs. Ceballos, suggested a dramatic surprise for the boys. The ladies would pretend that the girls' residence was being violated by an unsavory character who had entered during the night. The young ladies were to act as though they were very nervous and agitated because there was a man in their residence. To implement this plan they chose a student called José Cedeño. Cedeño was carefully instructed by the teachers to ensure that he played his role well. The girls took Cedeño to one of the beds in the girls' residence. Unfortunately, they did not take into account how tall Cedeño was. When he lay down under the bed his legs were so long that they stuck out and could not be hidden. When the time came, the ladies started to shout and cry, and the boys came running from their residence to capture the intruder. They burst in carrying all sorts of weapons, and soon came to the room where Cedeño was lying. As soon as they saw his legs sticking out, the boys knew exactly who it was, and the plot laid by the girls was uncovered.\(^2\)

This description by Gómez of the events surrounding one of the banquets illustrates the detailed memories the students still have thirty-five years after the experience. More importantly, her description is a clear depiction of how involved and excited the students and the teachers were about these sorts of social events. Gómez's

\(^1\) Calderón, interview.

\(^2\) Rebeca de Gómez, interview by author, 4 November 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Gómez was a COLSEVE student from 1963-66.
animation in telling the story underscored how much this experience had meant to her, and how she still cherishes its memory. It is evident that the social aspects of school activities in El Limón played an important role in the lives of the students in building a community spirit.¹

Other social activities remembered by the students were the special entertainment programs, the most popular of which was the talent program. This was a time to discover hidden talents and unknown abilities among the students and teachers. In reliving these experiences, Rebeca Gómez once again gave some insight into what life was like in El Limón:

One time, the talent program was advertised with a special feature highlighted. There was to be a piano recital. The students did not know of anybody except one of the teachers who could play the piano, and when the time came for the item the students could not believe that the artist was one of their own schoolmates, a boy by the name of Hugo Garcia. To this very day I have not forgotten the piece of music he played. It made a lasting impression on us because we were taken by surprise at Hugo’s ability. In fact, in the two years I had been at the school, the only pianist I knew about was Mrs. Suárez who played for church. The impact of this special occasion was so great that today I still remember the names of the pieces Hugo played. They were the “Vienna Forest” and “Schubert’s Serenade.”²

¹ Gómez reported another aspect of student life that supports these assertions. Normally, students were assigned cafeteria seating for four weeks at a time with the same group of people, a custom that provided the opportunity to socialize in new groups and make new friends. By the end of each month, students had extended their social circles. Then it was time to move on and create another new set of friends. Occasionally the opportunity was given for free seating, and students could choose to sit wherever they wanted. These occasions were well remembered because then it became clear who were special friends. The banquets, likewise, provided opportunities for students to observe the couples, and this information became a major talking point among the “family” of students and teachers. Social activities were more than the concern of small groups of individuals. They were a part of the growing-up process of the extended family that was the school in El Limón. Ibid.

² Ibid.
In interviewing Gómez and listening to her animated reflections, it was clear that, for her and her fellow students, life in El Limón was much more than going to classes. The most vivid memories were not of subjects learned but of experiences shared. In evaluating the impact of the social activities on the lives of students, the details in the stories were not the important issue. What was important was that these stories were the fabric from which lives had been woven and characters built.

Ceballos used to lead out in a great many of the student activities. Together with Pastor Suárez, Ceballos was a model, example, and guide for the students. One of the social activities that the students thoroughly enjoyed under the leadership of their principal was “marching.” Ceballos had a record with march music, and the students loved to march to the beat. They would gather excitedly in the cafeteria and, following Ceballos’s directions, make all sorts of formations, pair up with and change partners, and generally have a wonderful time getting some good exercise. Students recall that these events were golden opportunities to hold hands with special friends. It appears that the teachers and administrators at El Limón were as concerned about the students’ social development as they were about the academic progress that was being made. In the midst of the activities, Ceballos and Suárez would be found leading the students in both march and dance. Their example was strong and their influence profound.

1“Marching” in Adventist institutions is a social activity in which the leader directs participants in a host of formation activities (lines, squares, circles, marching back through arches formed by other participants, etc.). Leading out effectively requires a fair amount of experience and on-the-spot creativity to direct the participants in an orderly and interesting activity. An inexperienced leader can end up with a multitude of people in a shambles. One of the main attractions of “marching” for the students was that, in the conservative institutions which Adventists have traditionally operated, this was an opportunity for the young people to hold hands with members of the opposite sex, an activity often frowned upon in other circumstances. Marching was therefore one of the highlights of the socialization process.
of their heavy teaching schedules, the teachers made time to get involved in community-building activities that made El Limón a home away from home.

Ceballos was a central figure in the community not only because he was the principal and the academic leader. García’s description of his contribution to school life illustrates how much he was involved as a pace setter in the daily social interaction, bringing together the teachers and the students. He recalls that on one occasion Ceballos asked a group of students to prepare a song which spoke about life at the school. He related the following about this incident:

We tried hard to compose verses for a song, but somehow we failed to come up with any creative ideas. So, in a matter of seconds, Pastor Ceballos composed a song making reference to the way in which Pastor Suárez often used the word “mandraque” to describe any situation that appeared to be without solution. The song became popular among the students, who went round singing [in Spanish]: “Speaking of COLSEVE in the new “Almanaque” [school bulletin or calendar], we will include the popular phrase of “mandraque.” Ceballos was making a clear reference to Pastor Suárez’s phrase.¹

¹This story related by García, along with one told by Gómez, reveals an interesting side to Suárez’s personality. Gómez noted: “Juan José Suárez was a teacher of popular phrases in El Limón. One of the phrases he used frequently was ‘Dejen la Macoya,’ an expression without any apparent meaning. He would say this to couples when he saw them together.” This comment made by Suárez, often in front of other students, was intended to embarrass the couples a little and to give them a gentle reminder to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner taking into account the school rules relating to friendships between the sexes. Gómez added that this phrase was soon very popular among the students who used it on each other incessantly. The picture of Suárez that is gleaned from these stories is one of a kind and fun-loving teacher who had the ability to function as a disciplinarian while still remaining a friend. Another well-remembered teacher was Justo Vargas, who from his first day on campus was so strict that nobody could move or say anything out of turn. Students who were not careful to obey soon heard this comment: “I will deduct a point!” Vargas was nicknamed “Puntico” by the students, which means “little point.” The nickname was not malicious, or given out of fear, but more in fun. All these stories and incidents give the idea that life at El Limón was a pleasant, often joyful experience. Administrators, teachers and students shared together in appropriate merriment and, in this kind of atmosphere, under the wise
Situations like these occurred frequently in the El Limón school. Students mingled with the teachers in the social activities and shared with them the joys and sorrows of their school days. They could share amusing incidents and build relationships, just as they might in a family setting. El Limón was not a stodgy academic boarding school. Strict rules there might be, but these rules were mediated and tempered through the lives of a dedicated administration and teaching staff who were willing to take time to be the friends and counselors of the students who were enrolled.

There was a custom in those early days in El Limón that on public holidays, such as independence day, the students had picnic dinners outside with tables taken from the cafeteria and set with special tablecloths and flowers under the orange trees. The teachers were in charge of presenting a special program to celebrate the day and explain its significance. But the program was more than an educational experience. The boarding students as well as day students were invited, and free seating was allowed to encourage students to sit with their special friends. The teachers tried to make the day memorable for the students, with flowers on the table and songs to inspire and touch hearts. In fact, it would be true to say that one of the purposes the school personnel seemed to have in mind was to make these meals into happy, romantic occasions. These days were called “Oasis” days, and are still well remembered by the students who were there at the time.\(^1\)

The picnics under the orange trees are another example of the concern and involvement leadership of Ceballos, they came to be a close-knit, supportive community. Hugo García, interview; and Rebeca Gómez, interview.

\(^1\)Gilberta de Martínez, interview by author, 4 November 1999, El Limón, tape recording. Martínez was a COLSEVE day student from 1962-65.
the teachers and administrators had for developing social graces among the students and providing for them opportunities to interact as friends and "family."

Occasionally trips to the mountains were planned, to a park called "La Guamita." In those days there was a thriving chicken industry on campus in El Limón (see figure 18). It became a tradition that one or two chickens did not wake up on the day of the mountain trips. Those mysterious disappearances were explained later by the students in stories about their morning "Sancocho" (chicken soup) which they enjoyed and which gave them stamina for the day’s events. It seems that the administration was wise enough, under these circumstances, to recognize the difference between malice and mischief, and to turn a blind eye to the fairly innocent fun of the students. Once again, the concern was much more for the development of an enjoyable community experience, not just a strict and single-faceted academic education.

Fig. 18. El Limón, chicken industry.

1Hugo García, interview.

2Ibid.
The spirit among the students and the atmosphere of the social activities were evidence of the close community that developed at El Limón. There was a positive, caring attitude within the community, and a deep sincerity was evident in the relationships that developed. At the same time, life was not so "straight-laced" that there were no opportunities for some fun, a lot of joy, and even a little healthy mischief. Students who attended during those first years at the school still remember with clarity some of the programs they attended, the friends they made, and the close-knit school family to which they belonged.

Spiritual Life

Teachers and students who were associated with the school in El Limón spoke in glowing terms of those early days. Among their clearest memories was the important role that religion played on campus. Each of the people interviewed spoke exuberantly about the high spiritual tone and the joy of belonging to the little family of Adventists that made up the school at that time. A number of factors contributed to the high spiritual atmosphere on campus.

First among those factors were the two spiritual meetings that were a part of the regular daily school routine. As early as 5:30 each morning, students gathered together to listen to uplifting spiritual music, to sing, and to read from the Bible and appropriate Adventist literature. Through this early morning worship, students were encouraged to start the day with God. The second meeting was around 7:00 in the evening. It was customary to invite staff members and a variety of others to make presentations teaching spiritual lessons at the evening meetings. These meetings were held in the men's and
women's residences under the direction of the preceptor and preceptress.¹

The weeks of prayer were another factor contributing to the high level of spirituality on campus. These weeks of spiritual emphasis were conducted twice a year (see figure 19). The first week of prayer was usually held just before the Christmas break and it is apparent that the purpose was to send the students home spiritually refreshed. The second one was usually held in July, just before the summer break. At this point the students had spent a complete year in the school and it was hoped that the spiritual influences had been internalized in their lives. Using biblical phraseology, it may be said that the second week of prayer served as a time for "reaping the harvest" of souls which had grown to maturity during the preceding months of the school year.

Fig. 19. El Limón, week of prayer.

During the weeks of prayer, the entire school body in El Limón focused their attention on prayer. Boarding students as well as day students participated in these spiritual meetings. The boarding students met regularly in the classrooms each evening.

¹Calderón, interview.
and day students attended morning services with them (see figure 20). Sabbaths were the highlights of the weeks of prayer, with day students coming to join the school community in the church worship services. On regular Sabbaths, many of the day students did not attend church on campus, but weeks of prayer were considered special, and the day students participated along with the boarding students.¹

Fig. 20. El Limón, Bible classroom.

Rebeca Gómez, one of the students at El Limón, recalls that among the most popular weeks of prayer in the first years of school were those conducted by Pastor J. W. Zachrison and Pastor Harold Bohr. Zachrison came from ICOLVEN, and Pastor Harold Bohr was the West Venezuela Mission president at that time. Gómez reports:

Pastor Bohr made a comparison between ancient Israel and the Israel of today. Pastor Zachrison came to the school at the time when a political campaign was being held in Venezuela. The campaign was a run-up to presidential elections, and one of the candidates was a certain Arturo Uslar Pietry. Pietry was a popular figure. He had developed the slogan, “Arturo is the man.” Pastor Zachrison started the first meeting by quoting this slogan and repeating, “Arturo is the man.” At the beginning students were shocked because the occasion was a week of prayer and not a political campaign. They felt that the introduction of political

¹Martínez, interview.
campaigning was inappropriate for a pastor. But Pastor Zachrison developed the sermon and by the end he had changed the phrasing to “Christ is the man.” His creative presentation caught the attention of the students and the meetings throughout the week resulted in a spiritual rededication.¹

A third influence that appeared to increase the level of spirituality at COLSEVE was the sacred music. A number of students from the early days in El Limón commented that the kind of music they sang and to which they listened had a lasting influence in their lives. School services were characterized by the singing of hymns and songs popular to the students, not only the traditional hymns of the SDA hymnal. Among the most popular songs was “Tierras de Palestina,” a song more Hispanic than the usual North American music in the hymbook. The students in El Limón were encouraged to sing these more traditional Hispanic songs in the services in the men’s and women’s residences. The songs they learned on these occasions have, as some have indicated, marked their lives to this day.²

Neria Calderon, the women’s preceptress in El Limón, pointed out that prayer and prayer groups were particularly important in maintaining the level of spirituality. For example, in addition to the prayers said regularly at worships and meals, a time was devoted to prayer each evening at the beginning of study hall. Students and supervising teachers kneeled and participated earnestly in these prayers. Calderon added:

The final examinations conducted at that time were administered by a committee from the Ministry of Education in Venezuela. Students became accustomed to the idea that prayer was an important aspect of daily life, so it was natural for them to seek God’s guidance and divine intervention at the time of these examinations.

¹Gómez, interview.
²Ibid.
God always answered these requests of the students in El Limón. No student from El Limón ever failed one of the public examinations. Moreover, the school won a prestigious award which they held for many years for placing second academically out of all the schools in the country of Venezuela. I believe that the name of God was glorified by the power of prayer in the school.¹

During the final examinations, students followed the custom of reading psalms from the Bible. Many of the students set themselves the goal of learning a special psalm by heart for each examination. Before they took the test they would recite their psalm. This practice, according to the testimony of some students, helped them to do their best in the government examinations.²

A final factor that cannot be ignored in understanding the spiritual impact of the school on the lives of the students was the good example of the teachers. Those who were students in El Limón were quick to point this out.³ The teachers encouraged students with personal advice and testimonies, and students soon began to trust the teachers and looked to them as leaders and guides to whom they could turn in spiritual matters.

The examples of the teachers, the circles of prayer, the weeks of prayer, and the worships were all instrumental in building and maintaining a high level of commitment and spirituality at the El Limón school. Added to the social elements and events previously mentioned, the spiritual tone and activities at the school ensured that a

¹Calderón, interview. The suggestion made by Calderón that the school placed second academically has not been corroborated by other testimony or documentary evidence.
²Gómez, interview.
³For example, Gómez and García, interview.
supportive community of Christian teachers and students soon developed. It became apparent in talking to those who had spent some time at the school in El Limón that they felt it a privilege to have been a part of this community which, in many ways, became to them an extended family.¹ It was from the fabric of life shared in this school that they drew many of their most meaningful and pleasant reminiscences.

Summary

The provisional opening of the school in El Limón in 1962 was a response to the need for a secondary SDA school in Venezuela. The vision and desire for such an institution grew within the Adventist community soon after democracy was established in Venezuela in 1958. The vision was nurtured and supported by the Venezuelan Adventist missions. Dr. Antonio Ceballos was appointed to head up the project.

Ceballos's compassionate spirituality, redemptive educational approach, and gentle but visionary administrative leadership were fundamental to the successful planning and development of the school in El Limón. From 1962, when the land was acquired from Elder José Antonio Lamas, until the school was relocated in 1966, the stamp of Ceballos’s firm but caring guidance may clearly be seen.

The four-year period of Ceballos’s administration was characterized by the self-sacrifice of the teachers and administrators who developed an academic institution of considerable reputation on a chicken farm. Not only were the academic standards high. From interviews with the teachers and students who were associated with COLSEVE, it

¹Hugo Garcia, interview.
was easy to ascertain that there was a strong spirit of camaraderie in the school community. The school in El Limón, though it operated only for a short period of time, made a marked impression on the lives of its students.

As soon as the Venezuela missions acquired a larger and more permanent tract of land in Nirgua to build the school, attention was turned to the new property. Construction of new buildings and preparation for transfer continued between 1964 and 1966 when the institution was eventually relocated from El Limón to Nirgua. This brought to an end the history of COLSEVE. At the new location, the school was named the Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela (INSTIVOC). Carlos Schmidt took over the leadership of the school and its mission of providing Christian education to the SDA youth in Venezuela. It is to his accomplishments as a school builder that attention is turned in the next chapter.
CHAPTER III

RELOCATION AND CONSTRUCTION (1966-1969)

Introduction

While Venezuela was beginning to enjoy the greater freedom democracy brought
to the country in the early 1960s, the church was able to purchase a farm in Nirgua in
1963 to house the Venezuelan SDA boarding school in a larger and more permanent
place. A ceremony to mark possession of the land took place in Nirgua, and plans to
begin construction of the new boarding school were implemented immediately.
Relocation from COLSEVE in El Limón became a high priority.

Carlos Schmidt was called to be in charge of the construction in mid-1964 and,
under his leadership, plans for the new school were prepared. Schmidt’s influence on the
development of the campus was notable, and construction of the new buildings began,
preparing the way for relocation from El Limón. In 1966 the school was officially
relocated to the Nirgua campus and Schmidt took over as chief administrator. Under
Schmidt’s administration (1966-1969) the school experienced a rapid growth in
enrollment and the scope of the academic programs at the secondary level broadened. In
addition, a full elementary program was organized. The first high school graduating class
in 1968 was the harvest of the hard work begun in El Limón. The academic development
of the new campus was matched by the continuing rapid and steady development of the infrastructure and buildings.

**Context of the Late 1960s**

**Government**

In March 1964, for the first time in Venezuelan history, the presidential sash passed from one constitutionally elected chief executive, Rómulo Betancourt (1959-1964), to another, Raúl Leoni (1964-1969). “It was a day of immense pride for the people of Venezuela.”¹ Under this spirit of democracy, the SDA church in Venezuela looked for new opportunities to further expand Christian education.

The economy averaged an annual growth of 5.5 percent during the period of the Leoni administration. This was partly the result of an upswing in petroleum prices, and the trend was sustained by political tranquility as the Democratic Action Party (AD) programs became effective. Leoni continued the Betancourt reform programs designed to open up the country’s interior to agricultural, educational, and industrial development.² The SDA church took advantage of the opportunity afforded by an expanding economy to build the secondary boarding school on a new and more suitable campus.

**Education**

During the Betancourt years there was a large influx of students into the school system, and the quality of education was a major concern inherited by the Leoni

¹Haggerty, 27.
²Ibid., 28.
The Leoni administration started a research program to track the major problems in education through EDUPLAN, an organization founded in 1959 to plan and coordinate government initiatives. The establishment of EDUPLAN was one of the most important decisions relating to education made by the Betancourt government.

As a result of EDUPLAN, systematic, scholarly research was focused on Venezuelan educational problems for the first time in 1966. Two cycles of study at the secondary level were created as a result of this research. The first was called the “Basic Common Cycle” and consisted of three years (7-9) of secondary level education after completion of six years of elementary instruction. The second cycle was the two-year “Diversified Cycle,” (10-11), which had two purposes. The first was to prepare students to continue to university level, and the second to prepare mid-level technicians so much needed in the country. These distinctions were adopted by INSTIVOC soon after the SDA boarding school was relocated from El Limón to Nirgua in 1966. The “Diversified Cycle” was implemented from the start at the Nirgua school. The new policies prescribed by the government soon had a positive effect on the quality and focus of the curriculum in Nirgua.

**SDA Church**

The rapid growth experienced by the SDA Church in the early 1960s continued through the latter part of the decade as can been seen in table 6, according to the official statistics.

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1 See chapter 1, under “After 1958.”

2 Fermin, 218-219.
statistics reported in the SDA yearbooks of 1966-69.

Table 6. SDA Growth in Venezuela 1966-69

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The rapid growth of the SDA church during the early part of the decade played an important role in the founding of the school in El Limón in 1962. It was also an important factor in the impetus to move the school to Nirgua in 1966. In Nirgua there was sufficient land to allow for development to meet the demands of an expanding Adventist constituency for years to come. The growth of the Nirgua school parallels the growth of the SDA church in Venezuela. This vision of the early leaders in what became known by the SDA constituency in Venezuela as the “Nirgua Project” will now be studied in greater detail.

**Nirgua Project**

**Acquisition of the Land**

It appeared in 1962 that COLSEVE, established in El Limón with careful
planning, was developing well in spite of being located in an urban setting. At this time the Colombia-Venezuela Union authorized the two Venezuelan missions to look for a farm with the purpose of purchasing it and transferring the institution in El Limón to a place more in harmony with the Adventist philosophy of education, reflecting the instructions of Ellen G. White to build boarding schools in country areas rather than near to the cities. In addition, with a rapidly growing church membership, the Adventist leadership was concerned about having adequate space for future expansion and development of the institution.

The two Venezuelan missions requested information from most of the SDA churches in Venezuela regarding suitable farmland for sale in their respective areas. Personnel from the mission offices were sent to check the information sent by the church members. There were several possible sites, but each of them was unacceptable for the project because they did not conform to the SDA philosophy governing the choice of an optimum location, nor were they convenient for church members in both Venezuelan missions.

However, this search soon proved fruitful with help from the first two Venezuelan pastors to have been ordained. The men, Luis Camacho and Juan José Suárez, came to

1See chapter 1, under “The Avondale Experience.”


4Nathaniel García, interview.
the town of Las Lagunas, Yaracuy, late in 1962 to help the church members search for land. They found several plots at the bottom of a hill near Nirgua. The mission president inspected this land, and notified the higher authorities who immediately came to check it.¹

In December 1962, the president of the Colombia-Venezuela Union reported that there were plans underway to obtain good fertile farmland in the central part of Venezuela, about 85 kilometers from the country's most important industrial city, Valencia. He said:

This is an ideal location, for not only does Valencia offer a good market for the products of the school's future industries, but its location also makes it possible for the youth of both missions to attend the academy without having to travel great distances.²

The land in Nirgua was composed of small parcels (see figure 21) including some obtained from the National Agrarian Institute (IAN).³ There were numerous owners of these small properties, and the East Venezuela Mission commissioned Víctor Meléndez, an insurance businessman living in Caracas, to conduct the negotiations. Meléndez found all the addresses of the small lot owners, and Miguel Quiroz, the treasurer of the East Venezuela Mission in Caracas, came to legalize the purchase of those small lots. Many SDA church members were enthusiastic about purchasing land for themselves in Nirgua, so prices, which were low at the beginning of the negotiations, soon started increasing.⁴

¹Ibid.
²Norcliffe, 10.
³IAN is a government entity controlling much of the cultivated land in Venezuela.
⁴Nathaniel García, interview.
The purchase of land in Nirgua began in September 1963 when the board of COLSEVE approved the recommendation to acquire the property. The purchases continued throughout most of the next year. In reporting the event, A. H. Riffel, the president of the Colombia-Venezuela Union, said:

Nirgua is a new name in the Colombia-Venezuela Union and in Inter-America. It is located at 3,000 feet altitude in a beautiful valley in Central Venezuela. There the deeds for two adjacent properties were signed, making the first step in establishing a new school. This site was chosen after a long search, careful study, much prayer, and counsel from C. L. Powers, C. O. Franz, and W. J. Brown from the Inter-America Division. These two pieces of property cover 90 acres of level, fertile land beside a river. Among other factors a good road leading to the property, available electricity and telephone service, and a superb climate

1COLSEVE Escolar, 9 September 1963, 018.
helped us decide in favor of this location.\footnote{A. H. Riffel, “Nirgua: A Name in Inter-America,” \textit{The Inter-American Messenger}, January 1964, 10.}

In February 1964 Walton Brown reported that since the time of the initial purchase they had acquired additional property, and there was the possibility of acquiring still more land. He also reported on the commission which came to measure the land from 19-28 November 1963, and suggested a preliminary plan of how the school should be constructed. He reported on the ceremony for “Possession of the Land” which was celebrated on 27 November 1963 (see figure 22), and also mentioned that the most important news was the appointment of Elder Carlos Schmidt as chair, administrator, and builder of the new school.\footnote{Walton J. Brown, “The New Venezuela Secondary School,” \textit{The Inter-American Messenger}, February 1964, 12.}

![Fig. 22. Land possession ceremony.](image)

The two main properties purchased in 1963 were the 5 hectare “Rosa Farm” acquired at a cost of sixteen thousand bolivars, and the 30 hectare “Rumbera Farm” purchased at a cost of forty thousand bolivars. The later additions, purchased in early
1964, were “Natividad Sánchez,” consisting of 2 hectares, and the “Ceveriano Rumbos Farm” with 5 hectares divided in two parcels, namely, “La Sabanita” and “La Veguita.” The combined cost of these properties was fifteen thousand bolivars. Lastly, 10 hectares were added by a donation of IAN in order for the property to be unified in one block, and for the school to benefit from an IAN-sponsored agrarian program model for the region. The total size of the school land was now approximately 52 hectares (see figure 21, which includes details of the individual parcels).

With the acquisition of the Nirgua property, plans were immediately considered to find someone to take care of the land. Assistance was at first obtained from Adventists living in the local community. However, it was soon realized that a professional with experience working on an Adventist school farm was needed, so Mr. Secundino Rodríguez was called from the SDA school in Costa Rica. Rodríguez arrived in 1965 and took charge of overseeing the school farm. He continued as farm manager for most of the next thirty years until his retirement in 1995.

Fund-Raising Campaign

As soon as the land had been purchased, an aggressive plan to raise funds was put

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1 Actas Junta Nirgua, 25 April 1964, 025.
2 INSTIVOC, “Relación de Operaciones, 31 July 1964.”
3 COLSEVE Directiva, 2 August 1964, 039.
4 Actas Junta Nirgua, 15 March 1964, 023.
5 COLSEVE Directiva, 2 August 1964, 039.
into place by the two Venezuela missions. Pastor Glen Henriksen, an expert SDA fund-raiser, was hired full time to find support to build the Nirgua school. This appointment is indicative of the level of commitment that the Venezuela missions had from the beginning to ensure the success of the Nirgua project.¹

Henriksen organized a campaign that was without precedent in the Venezuelan missions. Ines Palacios, a talented singer, joined the fund-raising crusade. The songs and hymns sung by this dedicated Adventist woman were an inspiration to the congregations and helped to establish an atmosphere of commitment to the task at hand, and hope for the future. Henriksen invited the church members to pledge to collect twenty-five "gold cents"² daily for twenty months, and many of the members accepted the challenge. In this way the SDA church hoped to collect 450,000 bolivars as part of the "Two Million Bolivar Project"³ for the Nirgua school.⁴

The Nirgua fund raising committee that was appointed in 1964 included Glen Henriksen, Miguel Quiroz, the two presidents of the Venezuela missions, and four other appointees. In 1965, however, the committee was dissolved⁵ and Henriksen served as a

¹ Actas Junta Nirgua, 15 March 1964, 023.
² "Gold cent" was the official name of the Venezuelan cent. The name does not indicate that the money was made from real gold.
³ The "Two Million Bolivars Project" was another name given to the Nirgua Project.
⁵ COLSEVE Directiva, 24 June 1964, 029.
team member of the Nirgua project itself and a full-time employee of the school. He continued to raise funds for the school project, but his mandate was expanded to include not only the church members but also the general public.¹

Important contributions came from the Creole Foundation.² Initial contacts with this foundation were made by Harold Bohr, and amounts of up to fifty thousand bolivars in a single check were donated by the foundation. Promises were made to give the same amount yearly for three or four years “depending on the wise investment of their gift” (see figure 23).³

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¹INSTIVOC Directiva, 3 January 1965, 048-49.

²The Creole Foundation was sponsored by the North-American Creole Petroleum Corporation, which operated in Venezuela from 1920. The corporation and its foundation closed operations in 1976 with the nationalization of the oil industry in Venezuela. See, Historical Dictionary of Venezuela (1996), s.v. “Creole Petroleum Corporation.”

In spite of the fact that large donations for the Nirgua school construction project came from the public sector, church members continued donating to the project. Employees of the two Venezuelan missions renewed their efforts to obtain promises from church members to make donations to the school. Days were set aside by the missions for special offerings when funds that had been pledged were to be collected. An important contribution to the school was the result of a decision made in 1964 by the SDA world headquarters. This decision earmarked two-thirds of the thirteenth Sabbath offering scheduled to be collected in Adventist churches all round the world in March 1966 to be forwarded to the Nirgua Project. With the money that was steadily coming in from the members, the donations from the public, and finally the promise by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Washington, DC, the “Nirgua Project” was transformed from a dream to a real possibility in the minds of the Adventist members.

Schmidt’s Contribution to the Nirgua Project

At the ceremony held in November 1963 to celebrate the possession of the land for the Nirgua school, it was announced that Carlos Schmidt would be coming to administer the Nirgua project. The Adventist members waited in eager anticipation for Schmidt to arrive. There was a need for a strong leader who could transform a piece of

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1 INSTITOC Directiva, 13 April 1965, 053.
2 Ibid., 9 May 1965, 056.
3 COLSEVE Directiva, 24 June 1964, 029. Once each quarter, a worldwide “Thirteenth Sabbath Offering” is collected, and a percentage of this offering is used to support a special project or projects such as the development of the Nirgua Campus.
land into a school, and it was anticipated that this was something Schmidt would be able to accomplish.

Carlos Schmidt (see figure 24) arrived in Venezuela on 15 June 1964 after a vacation in his native Argentina. He had been secretary and treasurer of the Antillean Union, and had spent many years of his life in educational work in a number of different settings within the Adventist system. He was familiar with the Nirgua School Project and was aware of the needs of the SDA church in Venezuela.

![Fig. 24. Carlos and Loida Schmidt.](image)

In terms of the history of the Nirgua school, Schmidt must be recognized as the person most involved in and responsible for the construction of the new campus. Schmidt’s personality and abilities made him well suited to this task. The man has been described by his colleagues as serious and determined, and one who took earnestly his

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1 Juan J. Suárez, “Nuestra Historia,” 7.

2 Brown, 12.

3 Juan J. Suárez, interview.
responsibility as a steward of the property and finances under his care. A little more bluntly, Schmidt was described as a person who took care of every cent the school used. One individual considered him to be an “Iron Missionary.” This is an interesting observation, revealing that at least to some extent a barrier existed that set the foreign administrator apart from his Venezuelan staff. There seems to have been no overt hostility. In fact, Schmidt and his staff generally worked well together. But the differences between them were apparently felt. Schmidt’s critics suggested he was like a “pioneer Adventist from the 1800s,” overly concerned and strict in matters of rules and regulations. Certainly, the gentle advocacy of the earlier El Limón administration was not Schmidt’s style.

Schmidt’s strengths included his great capacity for sustained hard work. He was also decisive and determined in his judgments and purposes. He enjoyed taking care of the school finances, and was involved in decision-making over the minute details of institutional issues. Schmidt was a “numbers” man. In some situations this may have been a negative commentary relating to an institutional leader. For the Nirgua campus at the time of its early development, Schmidt was an invaluable asset. First, the finances of the new institution were properly organized and well managed; second, plans for the new campus were thoroughly evaluated and carefully prepared; thirdly, allocations of school money were channeled into what would make the most significant improvements; and

1Antonio Ceballos, interview.

2Dulce de Rodriguez, interview by author, 29 Abril 2001, Berrien Springs to San Felipe, phone. Rodriguez was a social sciences teacher during Schmidt administration.
finally, implementation of construction and development plans was thoroughly supervised.

Among his weaknesses pointed out by his colleagues as well as his critics were his poor pedagogical style, which was a source of concern among students. His aptitudes and abilities certainly suited him more to administrative leadership than to the classroom setting.

In summary, Schmidt was not the same kind of gentle and warm leader as his predecessor at COLSEVE, nor was he a classroom academic. He was in fact the kind of decisive individual who could make a solid contribution to the construction project at Nirgua and to the organization of the school finances.

As soon as Schmidt arrived in Nirgua, a house was rented and renovated for his family. His wife was immediately appointed secretary of the Nirgua Project. With the purchase of a desk, chair, typewriter, filing cabinet, and calculator, the Nirgua project began its metamorphosis from dream to reality.

The first thing that Schmidt did was to check the proposed location for the school buildings according to the plan that the commission of foreign SDA leaders made at the time they purchased the land (see figure 25). He started making arrangements to build the school according to the plan, but suddenly changed his mind. In explaining how this change of plan for the school's location came about, Schmidt would tell the following story as reported by Crisólogo Cárdenas:

1 Antonio Ceballos, interview.

2 COLSEVE Directiva, 24 June 1964, 029.
One day he [Schmidt] went to the top of the hill with a truck full of materials for the construction of the school. He was praying for God's intervention to show him the best place for the school. He had stopped the truck on top of the hill and got out. All of a sudden, the truck started rolling back down the hill with nobody at the controls. In the path of the truck were a number of small houses owned by local people, but the truck swerved back and forth among the houses and did not damage any of them. Schmidt considered this experience to be a miraculous sign in answer to his prayer. He immediately began to work on changing the plans regarding the location of the new school buildings, and chose the actual place where the school is today.1

This story illustrates Schmidt's determination. It is not possible to judge the intervention of God in this matter, but it seems apparent that Schmidt was not happy with the plans drawn up earlier or he would not have been agonizing over the best place to build the school. The incident with the vehicle was his cue to make changes, and it seems that he used the story to best advantage to bolster his argument. Simply stated, if he could convince others that God was for him, who could be against him? This is not to

1Crisólogo Cárdenas, interview by author, 12 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Cárdenas was an INSTIVOC student from 1966-73.
suggest that Schmidt’s plan was not a better one. He was, however, rejecting a plan that had been drawn up by his superiors, and had been exhibited widely to promote the project in the Venezuelan churches. Schmidt’s bold personal initiative needed some “pizzaz” to support it, and he found this support in the story of God’s intervention through the runaway truck. In terms of the logical or “natural” reasons for a revised plans (as opposed to the supernatural sign), Schmidt argued that the site change was necessary because the original plans were prepared at the end of 1963 when the school had purchased only the two main farms. In April 1964 two more farms were added, which were closer to the main road. Then, a month later, IAN donated another piece of land. Without question, Schmidt was correct in recognizing that the acquisition of the new land necessitated a reconsideration of the plans.

According to the testimony of Dr. Walton Brown, one of those who had prepared the original plans, it had in fact been recognized that these plans were merely a proposal, and that new land purchases might bring about changes. The first draft of the plans was needed in order to focus the attention of the Adventist constituency away from El Limón on the vision for a new school. They provided a visual aid that could be used to motivate church members to sacrificial giving.

Schmidt’s new master plan was proposed and approved by the board in June 1964 (see figure 26). Schmidt broke the project down into phases and set the following priorities for construction in the first phase: (1) drilling two wells with a water pump in each to supply water to the school, and building a fifty-thousand-gallon water tank; (2)

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1Brown, 12.
construction of a 20 x 35 meter structure for eventual use as an auditorium, to be used provisionally as a place to deposit building materials, a work place, and a school cafeteria; and constructing; (3) two houses for teachers; (4) one student dormitory, and (5) a permanent cafeteria.¹

Fig. 26. Schmidt: New School Plan: 1-4 First Phase, 5-8 Second Phase (1, Water Tank; 2, Auditorium; 3, Houses; 4, Men’s Residence; 5, Cafeteria; 6, Women’s Residence; 7, Classrooms; 8, Industries).

In mid-1964 the first two projects in phase one started simultaneously. An important contribution came from the El Limón school when the roof of the chicken coop

¹COLSEVE Directiva, 24 June 1964, 029.
was dismantled and brought to Nirgua to be the roof of the first building, the new auditorium.¹ The construction of the water tank was completed the same year. Later in the year there was also an agreement made to hire a company to drill two wells to a depth of fifty meters to supply water to the school.²

In accordance with church policy, a request was made by the school board to the higher levels of denominational authority for immediate approval of the new master plan.³ The urgency with which Schmidt was working can be seen in that the building was already going on while the approvals were being processed at the Inter-American Division headquarters.

With an eye to developing an infrastructure to support the building project and eventually the school operation, Schmidt started work on the roads as outlined in the master plan. In addition, three 25 kw. electrical transformers were purchased from the Electrical Administration Company of Venezuela (CADAFE).⁴ The school also applied to the National Venezuelan Phone Service Company (CANTV)⁵ for one line to the property. The administration wisely set about ensuring that an infrastructure was established to support adequately the utility needs of the new operation, as well as transportation and communication needs.

¹COLSEVE Escolar, 6 July 1964, 033.
²INSTIVOC Directiva, October 1964, 046. The Company awarded the contract was PARCO, a specialist in well drilling in the area.
³COLSEVE Directiva, 24 June 1964, 24.
⁴CADAFe is the state-owned Electricity Corporation in Venezuela.
⁵CANTV is the state-owned Phone Company in Venezuela.
When application was made to the division office for approval of the new master plan, some additional requests were included. It had become clear to Schmidt that another student dormitory and two more staff houses were needed. The extra housing was urgently required because of difficulties in transporting employees to the property.\(^1\)

In 1965 Schmidt used the service of the SOTEICA Company to complete the school roads, to dig a canal to dry the lakes on the property, and to prepare the land so that new construction could begin.\(^2\) The first staff house was built next to the road leading to town. It was a duplex used by the master of construction, Juan Tovar.\(^3\) The additional staff houses requested were also started in 1965.

During 1966 Schmidt pushed for rapid progress and completion of the first phase of the construction. Undoubtedly, the most important project of 1966 was the student residence, which had to be ready for the new school year. This year also saw the completion of a duplex, four more staff houses, and the school laundry building.\(^4\)

By the time the school in El Limón was transferred to Nirgua, in October 1966, most of the first phase of construction had been completed. The only building that had not been completed according to the priorities established in the master plan was the school cafeteria. Instead, more staff houses had been built.

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\(^1\)COLSEVE Directiva, 16 September 1964, 043.

\(^2\)INSTIVOC Directiva, 3 January 1965, 048. SOTEICA was a local, private heavy duty machine and construction company.

\(^3\)INSTIVOC Directiva, 13 April 1965, 053.

\(^4\)Ibid., 6 January 1966, 072.
In October 1966, Schmidt became the principal of the school. It was an office he held until his departure in 1969. His added administrative responsibilities now took much of his time, but his passion for construction never left him. He is well remembered by teachers and students as the man who built the school by example. He earned this reputation because of the many times he was seen actually involved in the construction work.¹

Opening in Nirgua

Opening Ceremony

An important celebration and dedication was planned for the reopening and renaming of the El Limón school in Nirgua. The new name would be the Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela (INSTIVOC). The day chosen for the inauguration was Sunday 23 October 1966 (see figure 27).²

Fig. 27. INSTIVOC opening ceremony.

¹Rosa de Franco, interview by author, 29 November 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Franco was the INSTIVOC piano teacher from 1966-68.

²INSTIVOC Directiva, 30 March 1966, 082.
The new campus gave welcome to more than fifteen hundred visitors who came to witness the ceremony. Leaders of the SDA church from the Inter-American Division were present. Among the most important personalities at the event were C. L. Powers, president of the Inter-American Division, and Dr. Walton J. Brown, educational director of the Inter-American Division. The Colombia-Venezuela Union leaders and most of the Church leaders of both Venezuelan missions were also present. In addition, a great number of supporters, donors, and friends from the local community came to celebrate not only the inauguration of a new school but also the immense sacrifice and hard work of so many people in making the project possible.¹

This ceremony started with the national anthem of the Republic of Venezuela sung by a group of students who had transferred from El Limón to Nirgua. The main speech was given by Pastor C. L. Powers from the Inter-America Division. Several local SDA leaders responded to the challenge presented by Powers. Special music was presented by four students from El Limón who were now attending the new school campus. In the main building, the student dormitory, there was an opening ceremony uncovering a bronze plate bearing the following inscription: “Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela, Fundado el 30 de Septiembre de 1963, Inaugurado el 23 de Octubre de 1966” (“Venezuelan Vocational Institute, Founded on 30 September 1963, Inaugurated on 23 October 1966”). The bronze plate was unveiled by Harold Bohr, president of the East Venezuela Mission, and Armando Escobar, president of the West Venezuela Mission of

SDA. Among the guests not affiliated with the Adventist church was Mr. George Hall, president of the Creole Foundation, an important donor to the new school in Nirgua.¹

Monday, 24 October 1966, was the first day of class, and the school opened its doors with an enrollment of 140 students. The student residence hall, which at first also functioned as school offices, classrooms, women's residence on the ground floor, and men's residence on the top floor, was erected with the funds from a worldwide offering of the SDA church collected early in 1966 (see figure 28). A similar building to be constructed as the women’s residence now became the main development priority. A temporary cafeteria was located next to the laundry, also waiting for a permanent site.²

Fig. 28. Nirgua campus, first dormitory building.

Curriculum

As soon as the school began operating in Nirgua in October 1966, a fourth year of

¹Ibid.
²Ibid., 7.
secondary instruction was offered. Most of the students who finished their third year in El Limón were able to continue the fourth year at Nirgua. The official application to offer the fourth year of secondary instruction had been made by the El Limón school in 1966. The authorization request was made to the Inter-American Division through the Colombia-Venezuela Union, and approval was immediate due to the imminent opening of the Nirgua campus.

In the second year the school operated in Nirgua, the administration decided to offer the fourth-year students a choice of two curricular emphases, one in humanities and the other in science. The humanities choice was especially appropriate for students who wished to continue into a ministerial training program at the union college in Colombia. It was made clear from the beginning, however, that the science and humanities options would be offered subject to their being sufficient demand to justify the offering of both.

With the opening in Nirgua, plans were made to offer the fifth and final year of secondary instruction, with the hope that this could be implemented starting the second year of operation at Nirgua. Request for authorization was made to the Ministry of Education in Venezuela, and to the SDA Organization to give to the students the title of

1Juan J. Suárez, “Nuestra Historia,” 7.

2INSTIVOC Directiva, 6 January 1966, 073.


4Antonio Ceballos, Interview.

5INSTIVOC Directiva, 23 October 1966, 091.
Bachiller\textsuperscript{1} in accordance with Venezuelan educational policy. This request was immediately granted by both parties.\textsuperscript{2}

With the first graduating class in 1968, the first fruits of the hard work that had begun in El Limón in 1962 now became a sweet reality. In describing this occasion Sandra Bracho, a student graduating that year, said, "The joy was so great that the students and teachers would never forget this moment."\textsuperscript{3}

Due to adding the fourth and fifth years to the secondary program in Nirgua, the school now needed to implement changes to the curriculum that had been offered at El Limón. The period of study was no longer conducted on a two-semester basis, but became a system of four bimonthly periods. The holidays,\textsuperscript{4} for the most part, remained the same due to mandatory observance of certain public holidays by all Venezuelan schools as outlined by the Ministry of Education. Included in the program at El Limón were two weeks of prayer, which continued at the Nirgua campus.\textsuperscript{5}

Although the academic courses offered at Nirgua were in fact similar to the original program at El Limón, the two extra years of instruction gave the impression that the school curriculum had become much more complex. In Table 7 the new study

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1}This Venezuelan diploma is the equivalent of a high-school diploma in the USA.
\item \textsuperscript{2}It is interesting to note that by 1995 more than 1,200 students had benefitted from this decision. See Javier Villegas, "Mensaje del Director," Canaima 1995, 33.
\item \textsuperscript{3}Sandra Bracho, interview by author, 12 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Bracho was a member of INSTIVOC's first graduating class in 1968.
\item \textsuperscript{4}For example; 12 October, 17 December, 15 February, 19 April, 1 May, 24 June, 5 and 24 July, plus the Christmas and Easter breaks.
\item \textsuperscript{5}INSTIVOC, Prospecto 1966-67, 7.
\end{itemize}

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program is listed by course title and number of 40-minute periods taught per week.¹

Table 7. INSTIVOC Curriculum 1967-68

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<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Periods 32 39 47 43 40 29

Source: INSTIVOC, Prospecto 1967-68, s.v. "Plan de Estudio."

According to this table, the most intensive year of study as determined by total weekly class periods attended was the third year, and the least intensive of the diversified stream was the fourth year humanities. This table shows that at least one period of religious instruction per day continued to be offered at Nirgua and this factor contributed

to the large number of periods of instruction per week, as was also the case at El Limón.

When the structure of the curriculum is considered, and when it is taken into account that government educational authorities prescribed this curriculum, one might be led to conclude that the religious element did not permeate the subject matter in most of the classes. This would not be an accurate assumption. In Nirgua, as in El Limón, learning was integrated with faith by many of the teachers. The Bible was not just added to the curriculum as an afterthought. An informative testimony to this was shared by the current Nirgua City mayor, Ricardo Capella. Capella, who has never been a member of the SDA church, was a student at INSTIVOC from 1967 to 1969. In describing his experiences at INSTIVOC, he said that his values in honesty, public service, and concern for the community were learned in his mathematics class from Freddy Berroteran who taught the subject at that time.¹

With the INSTIVOC curriculum being set by the Venezuelan government, classes in SDA religion and faith added by the administration, and an intensive science track (there was a marked student preference for the science track over the humanities), the Nirgua school had a strong curriculum to offer students. To make this expanded curriculum viable, it was essential to have a full enrollment.

In addition to the secondary level growth, an elementary program was also set up.

Elementary School

It had been decided that once the transfer to Nirgua was complete, an elementary

¹Ricardo Capella, cited by Edgar Brito, interview by author, 7 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording.
school would be started on the new campus. In preparation for this event the administrators in El Limón acquired the services of Guillermina Brito to make all the necessary preparations for opening an elementary school.¹ Due to Ministry of Education requirements that all elementary schools must start in September, it was necessary to start the elementary school before the opening of INSTIVOC in Nirgua.²

At El Limón the local church ran an elementary school, but at Nirgua there was no SDA church to operate such an institution. The motivation to establish an elementary school was the need to provide Christian elementary education to the SDA community that would subsequently move to the area, for example, the children of the secondary teachers in Nirgua. The elementary school would also be a source of prospective secondary level students. Although there was a government elementary school in the local town, SDA leaders envisioned a better future for their children if they could enroll in a school operated according to Adventist principles of education.³

The first year the elementary school operated, Guillermina Brito was the only full-time teacher. She was in charge of most of the grades, but was assisted by Rosa Ramírez, a young music teacher. In recalling her experiences, Brito remembered many students who came from “La Gran Sabana.”⁴ She noted:

A number of those students were older persons who had not completed any grade

¹INSTIVOC Directiva, 6 January 1966, 073.
²Ibid., 30 March 1966, 082.
³COLSEVE Directiva, 24 June 1964, 029.
⁴La Gran Sabana is located in the Guyana Shield, where most of the population are Amerindians. See chapter 1, under “Geography.”
of instruction. Due to their age they received special classes from me, and at the end of the year we took those gentlemen to the state headquarters of the Ministry of Education to take a test. By taking an approved examination they were able to complete the requirements for all the elementary years. We then placed them into the secondary classes. Many of these gentlemen were industrial students who worked most of the day in the construction of the school to pay their board and tuition. They were my best students.¹

At the end of the 1966-67 academic year, Brito resigned to get married.² A new teacher, Luisa Gutiérrez, was called to continue the work in the elementary school. She worked for the school most of the next twenty years until her retirement in 1988. Gutiérrez loved the elementary school as if it was her own, and her ideas influenced many of the improvements in the years to follow. One of the most important was the addition of a playground. As was common among the teachers at El Limón and Nirgua, Gutiérrez offered her time and experience to see the successful fulfillment of the mission to create an elementary school at the Nirgua campus.³

SDA Philosophy

The philosophy of Adventist education is to develop a sound mind and a godly spirit in a healthy body. In order to achieve this goal, certain elements undergirding this Adventist approach to education must be considered. In addition to a quality academic curriculum and a strong spiritual life program, these elements include 1) the ideal of developing boarding schools some distance from the cities, in locations that afford a

¹Guillermina Brito, interview by author, 30 November 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Brito was the first INSTIVOC elementary teacher in 1966-67.

²INSTIVOC Local, 13 July 1967, 107.

³Luisa de Gutiérrez, interview by author, 29 November 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Gutiérrez was elementary teacher of INSTIVOC from 1967-88.
healthy lifestyle free from secular distractions 2) establishing industries and offering opportunities for manual labor in order to teach the dignity and value of labor through productive work, and 3) encouraging productive labor as an alternative to frivolous recreation and entertainment.¹

In evaluating the relocation of the school from El Limón to Nirgua, it is evident that SDA leaders tried to develop a school based on the SDA philosophy of education. The acquisition of a sizeable piece of land in Nirgua facilitated the implementation of this Adventist philosophy. The new campus was located at quite some distance from the nearest major city. In addition, there was sufficient land to develop farm and school industries. Financial records of the time indicate that, when the school relocated to Nirgua, the school budget was supported at a level of up to 65 percent by student earnings generated by work in school construction activities and campus industries.²

A notable event with the move to Nirgua was the renaming of the school. The name was selected from responses to a survey of the Venezuelan churches. A financial award was promised to the person who proposed the name that was finally accepted.³

The name eventually chosen was Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela, and the reason for choosing it was that it had the word, “Vocacional” (‘vocational’). The name tied in

¹See chapter 1, under “The Avondale Experience;” and chapter 6, under “Social Life.”


³“Sandy Silva” was awarded the prize for her suggestion of the name Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela. COLSEVE Directiva, 02 August 1964, 040, and ibid., 28 October 1964, 046.

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admirably with the ideals of the Adventist philosophy of education envisioned in the establishment of this school.

In spite of the fact that the Venezuelan government provided “technical and vocational” tracks in the secondary curriculum as options,¹ the leaders of the Nirgua school advocated the scientific track. Not only was it more popular with students. It also provided a sound preparatory education for entry into college.

This curricular expansion after 1966 did not change the school’s original objectives. The school motto continued the same as it had been since 1962, namely, “to educate the hand, mind and spirit.” The leadership of the late 1960s supported the work-study program at the new Nirgua campus, and took advantage of the opportunity to establish a school that followed the guidelines of an Adventist philosophy.

Schmidt’s Contributions as School Principal

After taking over as head of the school in 1966, along with his almost ceaseless efforts to push forward the construction of the school, Schmidt made another important contribution in preparing teachers to take over the school work. This influenced not only the school but the future of church work in Venezuela by leading the way in preparing local SDA teachers so they would be able to take future leadership of the school. Schmidt was a hard-working, focused and effective chief administrator of the Nirgua school until he left in 1969.

¹See this chapter above, under “Education.”
Need of Teachers

As presented in table 8, compared to the enrollment from 1962-66, enrollment increased dramatically during the years 1966-69. This was largely due to the addition of the elementary school and the final two years of the secondary program on the Nirgua campus. The increases soon made it necessary for the administrators to employ new personnel to operate the school successfully (see figure 29, and appendix 2).

Table 8. COLSEVE-INSTITIVOC Enrollment 1962-69

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1962-63</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-64</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964-65</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-67</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967-68</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From table 8, it can be seen that there was a notable increase of 46 students between 1965-66 and 1966-67, the latter being the first year of operation at Nirgua. Staffing was increased from nine teachers at El Limón in 1965 to twenty-three at Nirgua.

1COLSEVE, "Informe de Apertura S-O: Colegios Secundarios y Superiores Division Interamericana, 1962-66."

2INSTIVOC, "Colegios Secundarios y Superiores, Division Interamericana: Informe de Apertura, 1966-69."
the following year. Five of the original six teachers from the founding of the school in El Limón were included in this number. As the enrollment at Nirgua increased, new teachers were hired.

The Schmidt administration placed great emphasis on having well-qualified teachers. To ensure that the teachers improved professionally, they were sent for upgrading to local universities in Valencia and Caracas to obtain teaching credentials. Two of them, supported financially by INSTIVOC, attended the Pedagogical Institute in Caracas during the summer to pursue degrees.

If it was difficult to find qualified teachers, it was more difficult to find qualified Adventist teachers. Due to this shortage, Schmidt arranged for some Adventist teachers to travel to Nirgua from Caracas one day a week to assist. Many of the teachers during

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1INSTIVOC Directiva, 6 January 1966, 072.
2Ibid., 17 June 1968, 128.
3INSTIVOC Local, 22 August 1966, 089.
4INSTIVOC Directiva, 13 July 1967, 108.
5Ibid., 23 October 1966, 090.
the early days at Nirgua were foreign missionaries who did not have the necessary qualifications to teach in the Venezuelan system. Because the Ministry of Education specified a minimum proportion of teachers with Venezuelan qualifications required in a school, the administration was forced on several occasions to employ non-SDA teachers for specific areas and pay them hourly wages to solve the problem.¹

As a result of the shortage of qualified Adventist teachers with Venezuelan credentials, the Schmidt administration created a policy to meet the future teaching needs of the school. A program was initiated to help high-school graduates who wanted to serve as teachers. These students were sponsored for further studies in local universities following their secondary preparation. Five graduates took advantage of the program in 1968 and two of the students who finished later returned to the Nirgua school and worked as teachers in the 1970s.²

To the Schmidt administration is also attributed the effort to sponsor at least one employee as a student under one of only two sponsorships available at the time in the Colombia-Venezuela Union. This "Bursary Plan" was intended to prepare Adventist teachers from the union by supporting their studies at SDA universities in the USA. With a union-sponsored college in Colombia, the competition faced by Schmidt was tough. Nevertheless, he successfully proposed a candidate. A young teacher named Gilberto Bracho was selected and sent to Andrews University. He later returned to the school in the 1970s and, in the late 1980s, became principal. Bracho, who benefitted from this

¹INSTIVOC, Local, 24 August 1967, 110-111.
²INSTIVOC, Directiva, 20 December 1967, 116-118.
bursary plan, has devoted most of his working life in service to INSTIVOC.¹

Finances

An analysis of the financial situation (the balance sheet) reveals important information pertaining to the development of the Nirgua school. The assets and increases in capital presented in table 9 show the economic status of the school at the time it was relocated. The limited school assets in El Limón were two hundred and fifty thousand bolivars, while in Nirgua this increased to one and a half million bolivars.²

Table 9. INSTIVOC Balance 1966-69

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>Liability</th>
<th>Net Worth</th>
<th>Working Capital</th>
<th>Liquidity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>250,503</td>
<td>9,067</td>
<td>241,425</td>
<td>42,187=21%</td>
<td>565%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>1,590,513</td>
<td>73,674</td>
<td>1,516,834</td>
<td>125,458=16%</td>
<td>270%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>1,887,375</td>
<td>147,399</td>
<td>1,739,976</td>
<td>137,384=17%</td>
<td>193%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1,937,651</td>
<td>72,704</td>
<td>1,864,946</td>
<td>110,064=12%</td>
<td>251%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The assets and capital increase of more than a million bolivars from 1966 to 1967 is explained in part by the relocation of the school to the new campus in Nirgua. The school took over as assets the lands and a number of buildings finished by Schmidt in 1966 during the “Nirgua Project.” But the money presented in this balance did not come easily, and several times Schmidt requested emergency funds from the mission to

¹Ibid., 2 February 1969, 135.

continue financing the building operation.\textsuperscript{1} In spite of the heavy expenditures, the working capital was maintained at above the recommended 15 percent level from 1966-68. In 1969 the index dropped three percentage points below the recommended level, which meant the school was operating on a working capital running at 80 percent of its needs. While this is not the healthiest of financial situations, neither is it the cause for major alarm. More important than the figures for one year are the trends and patterns over an extended period of time.\textsuperscript{2} The financial investment in the property prior to 1966 has been tabulated in table 10.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\caption{Nirgua Investment 1963-66}
\begin{tabular}{llll}
\hline
Year & Money & Purpose & Total Investment \\
\hline
1963 & 83,680 & Land & 83,680 \\
1964 & 168,176 & Phase 1 & 251,856 \\
1965 & 372,914 & Phase 1 & 634,760 \\
1966 & 510,199 & Phase 1 & 1,144,959 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}


Once the school opened in Nirgua, the administrator requested a fixed appropriation based on a percentage of the tithe income as a regular contribution from the two Venezuelan missions. Those percentages were estimated somewhere between 4 and

\textsuperscript{1}\textit{Colegio Adventista de Nirgua, “Informe Financiero,”} 31 August 1964, 041.

\textsuperscript{2}Compare with chapter 2, on “Finances.”
Relying on the support of the missions, Schmidt was able to prepare the budgets presented in table 11 for the three years of his administration.

Table 11. INSTIVOC Budget 1966-69

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Budgeted income from students</th>
<th>Actual expense</th>
<th>Additional SDA Subsidy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966-67</td>
<td>449,654</td>
<td>524,852</td>
<td>74,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967-68</td>
<td>591,070</td>
<td>660,280</td>
<td>69,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>683,000</td>
<td>768,362</td>
<td>85,362</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Despite the fact that the school received a regular subsidy from the SDA organization, most of the operational costs were paid by the students. This subsidy as listed in table 11 ranged from about 10.5 percent to 14 percent of the actual school expenditures. Furthermore, the subsidy as a percentage of total costs declined from the first year, which suggests that from the very beginning Schmidt was working toward the ideal of a school that would be self-sustaining.

In evaluating the school fees at Nirgua during the Schmidt administration, it is clear that there was a significant increase compared to El Limón. Table 12 presents these fees during the time Schmidt was principal. In 1965 they were 2,450 bolivars (see table 4), whereas in 1966 they had gone up to nearly 3,200 bolivars. The inflation rate during the same period was extremely low, so the increase was not a consequence of inflation (see appendix D, 1962-67).

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1INSTIVOC Directiva, 6 January 1966, 071-2.
Table 12: INSTIVOC Fees 1966-1969

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Boarding Student</th>
<th>Day Students</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966-67</td>
<td>3,192</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967-68</td>
<td>3,530</td>
<td>990</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The students were permitted to pay their school fees on a monthly basis as they had done in El Limón, but with a slight difference. Now there were nine rather than ten payment periods.

The school in Nirgua provided four types of work programs during the regular school session for students above the age of fifteen. It also provided a student “Industrial Plan,” designed so students could work during the vacation months at the school. Industrial students were required to be sixteen years old to be enrolled. This plan had three options. The school also reserved the right to admit “industrial” students, in harmony with the mission’s financial contribution to the individual student. The money made in the “industrial plan” was not paid directly to the students. It could only be used

1These plans were: (1) students who did not work in the school, (2) students who worked ten hours per week and earned up to 15 percent of their fees, (3) students who worked twenty hours per week and earned up to 30 percent of fees, and (4) students who worked thirty hours per week and earned up to 45 percent of fees.

2The three different industrial plans were: (1) students who worked from 600-700 hours during the vacation received an estimated 40 percent of school fees, (2) students who worked from 700-800 hours during the vacation received an estimated 45 percent of school fees, and (3) students who worked from 800-1,000 hours during the vacation received 50 percent of their school fees.
to pay tuition for the past year or the year ahead, or it could be transferred to the account of an immediate blood brother or sister.\(^1\) By combining the vacation plan and work during the regular school year, students with no financial support were able to pay their full expenses.

Schmidt's careful planning incorporated increased fees for students in order to expedite development of the school. But he also instituted work-study programs to ensure that those with the greatest financial need would be able to continue studying if they were well motivated and worked conscientiously.

Construction

Phase one of the construction was completed with the opening in Nirgua in 1966. As principal, Schmidt was now responsible for the full operation of the school. However, he never forgot his call to build the Nirgua campus. As soon as he took over leadership of the school, he re-prioritized the construction schedule. In 1967 he focused on completing (1) the women's residence, (2) the cafeteria building, and (3) one set of classrooms. This expansion was in accordance with the master plan.\(^2\) (See figure 26).

The funds for this second phase of construction were obtained from a wide variety of sources, as presented in table 13. With money still coming in, development of the new buildings on the Nirgua campus continued.

The new construction between 1967 and 1969 represented an investment of 585,000 bolivars. Add to this the 1,455,000 bolivars from table 10, and the total


\(^2\)INSTIVOC Directiva, 23 October 1966, 090.
investment in fixed assets almost reached the mark of the “Two Million Bolivars Project,” set as a target when the project began. By the time of Schmidt’s departure from the school in 1969, he had in fact achieved the goals with which he had been challenged when he arrived in 1964.

Table 13. INSTIVOC Construction 1967-69

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building</th>
<th>Started</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women’s residence</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>SDA Org.</td>
<td>265,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First classroom</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>GC</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second classroom</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafeteria</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Creole</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence 3</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pool</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary school</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>SDA Org.</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial building</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>INCE¹</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total                       585,000

Source: Data taken from INSTIVOC Directiva, 1967-69.

It is true that Schmidt himself pushed hard in the area of school construction, but he was helped by key persons who played important roles in the early development of the Nirgua school. One of these persons was Secundino Rodriguez, a Cuban who came from the Adventist school in Costa Rica in March 1965 to take care of the school farm in Nirgua, releasing Schmidt from these concerns and responsibilities.² Another important individual was José Franco. Franco was a carpenter and businessman who, in a spirit of ¹

¹INCE, “Instituto Nacional de Cooperación Educativa” a government educational organization founded in 1959 to advance vocational education in Venezuela.

sacrifice, sold his equipment to the school, accepting payment in installments and without interest. In addition, he accepted appointment as head carpenter, manifesting in this way a dedication that helped to ensure the smooth development of the school during the early phase of construction.\textsuperscript{1} With respect to the physical development of the campus, these individuals served as Schmidt’s right-hand men.

By the time Schmidt left Nirgua, the school seemed to be well-established in enrollment, finances, and physical plant. The school buildings and campus were well developed, and the basic structures of the school were in place.

\textbf{Nirgua School Life in the Early Days}

\textbf{Social Life}

A description of school life in the early days will help the reader to understand better the experience of students at INSTIVOC during the Schmidt administration. Social activities in Nirgua were varied. Among the most popular were sports such as American baseball, which became popular in 1966. This was not only a phenomenon in the school, but among most Venezuelan people. Another popular game among the men was “bolas

\textsuperscript{1}Juan J. Suárez, “Nuestra Historia,” 7.
criollas" (see figure 30) which was played next to the men’s residence.²

Fig. 30. Bolas, popular school game.

Special mention should be given to swimming, a popular activity after the construction of the pool in 1967. There were special schedules for the use of the pool, allotting time to the men, women, and families. Swimming brought a new sport to the campus, and the pool was inaugurated with a festive swimming gala. From that time on swimming became a significant aspect of the social life of the school.³

Another important activity that contributed to the socialization of the students was

¹Bolas is a game that is also known as “Italian Boches.” The game is played using eight large, heavy balls, and one small ball called “mingo.” Four of the large balls are red, and four are green. The object of the game is to throw the large balls in turn to try to place them closest to the mingo. A person or team plays one color, with opponents playing the other. The team that begins places the mingo at a distance of their choice and throws their first ball. The opponents then try to place their first ball closer to the mingo. When a team places a ball closest to the mingo, the other team must throw until they place a ball closer or they run out of balls. The number of balls one team has closest to the mingo are counted and sets are played until one team has a score of eight.


picnics. The students spent time with their special friends in the saman areas on these special days. During the picnics the students had the opportunity to share experiences with fellow students, and thus create good moments for happy memories.

The early traditions of Nirgua school life were shaped by the cultural programs. Among the most notable of these programs was “Venezuela Heroica.” This was an historical drama about the development of Venezuela, featuring the life of Simón Bolivar. Bolivar, who was born in Venezuela, was instrumental in liberating five nations from colonial rule including his native land. The cultural activities were memorable because of their reliance on the considerable talents of the students. Students were involved in acting, playing music, and writing and reading poetry.

Each year the school celebrated many festivals. One of the most popular activities was “Book Week,” to promote better reading habits among students. The week finished with a cultural ceremony and with awards to the best student readers.

Other important factors that shaped the social life in Nirgua were the rules and regulations. The rules increased from twelve points in El Limón to twenty-three articles that placed limits on various aspects of student conduct in Nirgua. For example, the campus was divided into two sections: one for the women and the other for the men. These rules also outlined acceptable behavior in the cafeteria. A new system of

1The “saman” is a large tree with abundant foliage, ideal for providing shelter from the sun. The area where samans grow is the natural garden of the Nirgua School.


3Ibid., 53.

4Ibid., 54.
disciplinary demerits was implemented to control the actions of the students.\textsuperscript{1} To a considerable degree, the social spirit on campus was defined by the increased number of rules implemented at Nirgua. Schmidt's concern for decency and order were reflected in the new social and disciplinary policies. This was different from El Limón where teachers had more contact with the students due to it being a smaller campus. The increased numbers tended to make the Nirgua campus a little less like a family and more like an institution. But attitudes on campus remained positive and there was a strong sense of community. It was still quite possible to know everybody's name and share corporately in the joys and sorrows.

\textbf{Spiritual Life}

The new beginning at Nirgua also brought spiritual renewal. In 1967 Harold Bohr, former East Venezuela Mission president, now the religion teacher at Nirgua, asked the West Venezuela Mission to set a baptismal goal at INSTIVOC. The figure proposed was ten baptisms for the school year. The school accepted the challenge and started to work. At first a baptismal class was started, but the different schedules of the interested people made it impossible to continue. The next step was to create a Sabbath school with an emphasis on preparation for a baptismal class. The plan was accepted and the first baptismal class started with twenty-seven persons registered.\textsuperscript{2}

Students and teachers who were at Nirgua at this time attest to the idea that the

\textsuperscript{1}INSTIVOC, \textit{Prospectos 1966-68}, s.v. "Reglamentos Generales."

\textsuperscript{2}Harold Bohr, "Nirgua Students Accept New Challenges," \textit{The Inter-American Messenger}, September 1967, 8.
Holy Spirit was actively working on the campus in shaping the lives of the students, and that some rough personalities were transformed by the Spirit of the Lord. Week by week, they realized how changes in those persons were taking place. During the last week of prayer in 1967, twenty-two persons were baptized in one day. Most of them were students, and twenty were members of the baptismal class.¹

Teófilo González was among those baptized. He was one of the construction workers building the school. Along with his wife, he had become interested in the message they heard from the pastor and from Schmidt and his wife. Another who became an Adventist after attending the baptismal classes was Andrés Castillo, the school truck driver. The baptismal service came to an end when Pastors Suárez, Ceballos, and Bohr baptized their own children who were also students at Nirgua.²

Another spiritual outreach activity in which students were involved was broadcasting on the local radio station in the city of Nirgua. No charge was made to the school by Radio Horizonte, and the radio broadcasts became an enjoyable witnessing opportunity for the students. On Sabbath afternoons students went out to make follow-up contacts with those who had become interested in Bible study by listening to the radio broadcasts.³

In 1967, an important spiritual activity in which students participated was the annual ingathering campaign. With the aid of the administration and teachers, the

¹Ibid.
²Ibid., 9.
program was a success because the original goal was exceeded by over 150 percent. Forty-two students went to Valencia city, and the students who stayed to work at the school donated their day's income to the ingathering program. Several teachers followed the students example, and on that day the school collected 12,000 bolivars.¹

The missionary emphasis in the Bible classes was another important contributor to the spiritual life at Nirgua that first year. The leaders realized that there were few national Venezuelan workers in the church, so teachers began promoting the idea of mission work to their students. In October 1966 most of the students wanted to work in professions outside of the church system, but by the end of the first year at Nirgua, many of these students had a change of heart and wanted to work in the professions that the church in Venezuela needed.² This is an example of how the mission of the school, as set out at the very beginning in 1962, was being fulfilled.³

Summary

In this chapter we have studied the founding of the school in Nirgua, known also as the “Nirgua Project” and the “Two Million Bolivar Project.” The school was a dream of Venezuelan Adventists who placed their hopes in this project by sacrificing their time and money. Carlos Schmidt took up the responsibility of being the first administrator and led out in the development of the school plant.

Schmidt was strongly committed to ensuring that needed buildings were

¹Bohr, 8-9.
²Ibid., 9.
³See chapter 2, under “Institutional Objectives.”
expeditiously erected on the Nirgua campus. To him is attributed the actual location of
the buildings, the master plan for the future development of the school, and construction
of the main buildings that still exist at the school to the present time.

Of the five years he devoted to Nirgua, two were dedicated only to planning and
preparing the school to open in 1966. After the relocation of the school from El Limón to
the Nirgua campus, Schmidt became the principal, but his main task was still to push
forward the construction of new buildings.

At the time of his departure, a large number of the buildings had been completed.
The money did not always come easily but, by the time he left in 1969, Schmidt had built
a school as planned in 1963, valued at nearly two million bolivars.

This chapter also points to his last three years of administration, and presents his
concern that local teachers be prepared to take care of the school in the future. Finally,
the chapter presents some insights into school life in the early days at Nirgua under the
administration of Schmidt.

On the basis of the strong foundation laid by Schmidt, we will see in the next
chapter the growth and consolidation of the school in the 1970s, and how this was aided
by the petroleum boom in Venezuela.
CHAPTER IV

ESTABLISHMENT AND GROWTH (1969-1979)

Introduction

By 1969, after ten years of democracy, Venezuela had developed a considerable degree of political stability. A major focus of government in the developing democracy was education. The SDA school, founded in the early 1960s, experienced a period of rapid development during its first decade. This was followed by a period of consolidation in the 1970s. The school's growth was aided by the economic expansion experienced by the Venezuelan oil industry after 1973, the rapid growth of the SDA church in the country, as well as the expansion of the school's industries during this decade.

In the 1970s, enrollment at INSTIVOC grew significantly, bringing financial independence and stability to the institution. A minor financial crisis in the early 1970s was followed by strong recovery at the end of the decade. The expansion of the school's industrial program during these years tested the leadership of the two principals, Humberto Hernández (1969-1974) and Miguel Angel López (1974-1979). Despite the fact that some industries failed, others grew rapidly and became firmly established. The stable economy in Venezuela in the 1970s also provided a solid foundation which enabled INSTIVOC to survive the national economic crisis of the 1980s.
Context of the 1970s

Government

The Comité por Organización Política y Electoral Independiente (COPEI), a pro-democracy party, came to power in 1969 after two consecutive governmental periods under the Acción Democrática (AD) party. From this time, a decade of bipartisan rule began in Venezuela, bringing consolidation in democracy and government.¹

According to Karl Lynn, "The 1973 oil price increase was a major turning point in the political economy of the post World War II era."² At this time, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was able to take maximum advantage of the crisis occasioned by the Arab-Israeli War as well as the Arab embargo against the West. As a result, in 1974 the price of a barrel of oil increased from 1.76 US dollars in 1970 to 10.31 US dollars, and government revenues increased by 170 per cent.³ This buoyancy in the Venezuelan economy was an important factor in the growth and stability of INSTIVOC during the 1970s.

Education

The immense revenues from the oil economy allowed for a substantial increase in spending on education in Venezuela. As a result, the government presented a progressive

¹Nacarid Rodríguez, ed., Historia de la Educación Venezolana (History of Venezuelan Education) (Caracas: Universidad Central de Venezuela, 1996), 249.


³Ferguson, 38.
educational plan for this decade in the fourth (1970-1975) and fifth (1976-1980) National Plans. The fourth National Plan called for positive changes in the social system in which education played an important role in strategies for enhancing human development. The fifth National Plan focused on education as central to democracy, recognizing humanity corporately and individually as the innovative agent of change and source of societal development.¹ This philosophy of education “evidenced a decentralization of the school system as primary politic after 1969.”² It was under these major new educational initiatives from the Ministry of Education that the SDA school in Nirgua continued its development.

In a further effort by the Ministry of Education to mitigate the negative effect of the centralized system of the 1960s, a new system of grade promotion was implemented. Changes included introducing such practices as a cumulative grading system for grade-level promotion. It was considered that the accumulation of marks for assignments and tests throughout the year would be less stressful than the earlier policy of total reliance on a final exam. This new evaluation system partially solved the problem of the great numbers of school dropouts.³ It was immediately adopted and used by INSTIVOC during the 1970s.

The educational system of six years of elementary instruction, three years of basic

¹Rodríguez, Historia de la Educación Venezolana, 253-258.

²Nacarid Rodríguez, ed., Temas de Historia de la Educación en Venezuela (Topics in the History of Venezuelan Education) (Caracas: Fundación Gran Mariscal de Ayacucho, 1997), 20.

³Blutstein, 84-86.
secondary instruction, and two years of secondary diversified instruction was continued without change during the 1970s. National statistics indicate that, of those students in the diversified cycle in 1976, 71 percent entered the academic stream, 10.1 percent the normal,¹ and 18.5 percent went into technical education. Of the 71 percent in the academic stream, 81.9 percent chose the science track, and 18.1 chose the humanities.² In its academic stream, INSTIVOC experienced similar trends. Enrollment in the humanities track was much lower than in the science track and, as a consequence, INSTIVOC eventually discontinued the humanities program and opened the normal program in 1977. The normal program was intended to prepare elementary teachers for the SDA denomination.

SDA Church

The SDA church in Venezuela entered a period of unprecedented growth during the 1970s, experiencing a 175 percent increase over ten years. The financial boom in the country at the time was even a factor in facilitating church growth, because it allowed for increased spending on evangelism.³ Table 14 charts this rise in membership from 6,262 in 1969 to 17,779 in 1979.

This significant growth in membership, aided by the good financial situation the

¹The “normal” program was established for the education of elementary teachers.


³Viera-Rossano, 79.
country experienced during this decade as well as the industrial emphasis that school leaders promoted, was mirrored in sustained school development through the 1970s under the leadership of Hernández and López.

Table 14. SDA Growth in Venezuela 1969-79

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Churches</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>6,262</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>10,035,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>6,952</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>10,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>7,547</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>10,600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>8,143</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10,970,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>9,051</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>11,519,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>9,959</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>11,630,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>11,006</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>11,990,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>12,164</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>12,360,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>14,293</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>12,740,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>15,959</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>12,740,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>17,779</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>13,120,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


School Leadership in the 1970s

Hernández Era

On 3 February 1969 the INSTIVOC board voted to invite Dr. Humberto Hernández to be principal. Hernández, his wife Gladis, and their son Humberto Jr. left Cuba in 1962 after the revolution started by Fidel Castro. They initially went to the

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1INSTIVOC Directiva, 3 February 1969, 138.

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Dominican Republic where they stayed briefly before moving on to Puerto Rico. In Puerto Rico, Hernández worked at Antillean Union College. The birth of their two daughters, Dinah and Ruth, took place during their time at Antillean. In April 1969 Hernández received the official invitation from the Colombia-Venezuela Union to be the INSTIVOC school principal, and in August 1969 the Hernández family (see figure 31) arrived at the Nirgua school.¹

![Fig. 31. Hernández family.](image)

With a doctoral degree in education from Universidad de la Habana, Cuba, and with experience as an educational administrator in an Adventist institution in Puerto Rico, Hernández seemed to be the right person to take over leadership of the school. Schmidt had made an outstanding contribution to the physical development of the Nirgua campus, and had put forth concerted efforts to set up an effective academic program.² These efforts needed to be consolidated by an experienced professional educator, and

¹*Canaima 1974*, 2.

²Nathaniel Garcia, interview.
Hernández seemed to have the necessary qualifications and understanding. In his work at
the Nirgua school, he was assisted by a group of experienced teachers from El Limón, one
of whom was Antonio Ceballos. Ceballos served under Hernández as vice-principal. In
addition to the El Limón teachers, there were a number of capable teachers appointed
during the period of Schmidt's administration (see figure 32).¹ A key person on the
Hernández staff was Alberto Guzmán, an experienced SDA pastor and school
administrator² who, during the Hernández era, worked as school treasurer.³ Guzmán was
able to keep the school finances in good shape in spite of the low oil prices at the
beginning of 1970s.⁴ Guzmán is also well remembered by students and teachers as a
dedicated Christian who had the personality and skills to touch the lives of the students.
He joined students in their sport and recreational activities and, in this manner, he was
able to create opportunities to influence their lives.⁵ According to his colleagues he was
more a pastor than an administrator, though his administrative skills were good.⁶

In contrast to his predecessor, Hernández was considered first and foremost to be
a great teacher and skilled academician. His colleagues described him as an individual

¹See appendix B.
²Canaima 1971, 6.
³INSTIVOC Directiva, 13 April 1970, 008.
⁴See this chapter above, on “Government.”
⁵Simón Fernández, interview by author, 29 November 1999, Nirgua, tape
recording. Fernández was an INSTIVOC industrial student from 1968-75.
⁶Antonio Ceballos, interview.
with a “magnetic personality,”¹ and a “positive, happy, and peaceful man.”² His critics on
the contrary evaluated his magnetic and positive personality rather differently. There
were some who saw Hernández as a self-centered and self-sufficient person with a knack
for persuading others to adopt his ideas. Others claimed that he tended to favor the
academic personal, but was not as good at building good relationships with school staff.³

There were a number of challenges faced by Hernández as the new principal. He
needed to complete the unfinished construction projects left by Schmidt, such as the
cafeteria, women’s residence, and industrial buildings. This he was able to accomplish
early during his term of office.⁴

¹Robinson Urdaneta, interview.
²Dulce de Rodíguez, interview.
³Interpretations based on anonymous interviews, due to the sensitive nature of the
information.
⁴INSTIVOC Local, 26 August 1969, 147.
A particularly notable achievement and the most important contribution of Hernández’ administration was the development and implementation of school industries at the beginning of the 1970s. These industries provided opportunities for students to work, learn skills, and help pay their fees. The work-study program was also consistent with the Adventist philosophy of education which the school administration was attempting to implement. Hernández, as a wise academic administrator who understood the Adventist approach to education, made this link between the mental and physical aspects of education central to his vision for the school.

A major challenge faced by the school was the financial crisis of 1971-72 when there was a significantly lower school enrollment. This period was a most trying time in the Hernández years. The crisis of 1971-2 led to the implementation of a rigid policy of suspension for students whose payments were more than two months overdue. These students were not allowed to continue their studies if they were not working for the school during vacation periods. An incentive was given to encourage the settlement of debts by offering a 10 percent discount on outstanding balances if fees were paid in full. School bills paid in full at the beginning of the school year also attracted a 10 percent discount. Nirgua teachers with school debts were encouraged to take out personal loans

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1See below in this chapter, under “Enrollment.”

2When a student was suspended, the parents were notified of the action in order to motivate the parents to settle the bill. Ibid., 9 April 1972, 067.

3Ibid., 24 July 1972, 081.

4INSTIVOC Local, 11 September 1973, 128-29.
through the local SDA mission to pay off their accounts and improve school finances.¹

In an attempt to counter the economic forces leading to a drop in enrollment, school promotion became a priority of the Hernández administration. There was a concerted effort to restore the school enrollment to its earlier levels.² A number of promotion plans³ were implemented to bring new students to the school.

Another initiative taken by Hernández was the purchase of student and teacher insurance coverage after 1969.⁴ The student insurance was intended to cover students in case of major illness,⁵ and the teacher insurance was to protect the property of teachers⁶ as

¹The rationale given in the minutes was “the need of the school for cash.” Ibid., 26 September 1972, 085.

²A “pro-Christian education campaign” was held in both Venezuelan missions. A special school report was prepared and sent to the pastors for distribution in their congregations. INSTIVOC Directiva, 11 February 1973, 098.

³For example: “Grants to Students Who Bring New Students.” This was a substantial grant giving a 50 percent reduction in tuition to anyone who brought at least four new students for the next school year, or a 25 percent tuition grant for bringing at least two new students. The application forms at the time had a space included for the new applicants to identify who had influenced them to enroll at the Nirgua school. INSTIVOC Administrativa, 19 June 1973, 118.

⁴The company awarded this contract was the Royal Caribe de Venezuela. The initial insurance coverage was up to one 100,000 bolivars per claim, on a maximum student body of three hundred. The cost of the entire coverage was just 765 bolivars. INSTIVOC Directiva, 2 June 1969, 139.

⁵This insurance was paid by the student’s parents. INSTIVOC Directiva, 27 October 1970, 022.

⁶This insurance purchase was made at Hernandez’s initiative after the school was robbed of 8,000 bolivars. Ibid., 13 April 1971, 036.
well as provide coverage for staff whose work involved high industrial risk.¹

In spite of the financial difficulties at the school resulting largely from the weakness of the national economy in the early 1970s, Hernández was able to create a sense of security and financial responsibility among the students and the staff members. The firm hand taken in the financial crisis, the continued implementation of plans to build up on-campus industries, and the purchase of student and teacher insurance coverages all helped to build confidence that the school was in good hands and growing toward maturity and responsibility under an administration that cared about its employees and students. In spite of the financial crisis, the school seems to have moved into a period of consolidation. A vital and viable institution was developed on the foundations so well established in the earlier years. This period of consolidation was certainly aided significantly by the good financial situation that the country entered after 1973, following the increase in prices for Venezuelan oil.² However, the manner in which the school was administered under Hernandez was equally significant. He carefully controlled expenditures, and set up a strong school promotion program. In the long term, the promotion program was more significant than the boom economy in developing a sustainable school. In order to help secure the future growth and development of the

¹Fifty percent of this insurance was paid by the employee, and 50 percent by the school. It was purchased in US dollars in one of two categories, either for $5,000 or $10,000 coverage. The annual cost was $5 and $10 respectively. The employees who chose to take advantage of this special coverage were “Juan Bláncoc, Gonzalo Prada, Gilberto Bracho, Neria Calderon, Gustavo Garrido, Leopoldo Peinado, Mario Pérez, Manuel Ramirez, and Marvin Shultz.” INSTIVOC Administrativa, 13 March 1973, 106.

²See this chapter above, on “Government.”
Nirgua institution, Hernández prepared a five-year master plan for the period from 1975-80. This well-prepared strategic plan, which included school industrial development and academic improvements, served as a valuable guide for the incoming administrator, Miguel Angel López.

Hernández remained as school principal until 1974, at which time he left Venezuela to take up work in the SDA school in the Dominican Republic.

López Era

Pastor Miguel Angel López, dean of theology at Instituto Colombo-Venezolano (ICOLVEN), was called to be INSTIVOC principal on 26 March 1974. The invitation was extended to López because of the ability he had demonstrated in educational leadership as dean of the school of theology in the Colombia-Venezuela Union. The López family (see figure 33) moved to Nirgua in October 1974 and lived there until January 1979 when they returned to their native Colombia, to work in ICOLVEN. López, who held a bachelor’s degree from Antillean Adventist University in Puerto Rico, became

1The “1975-1980 Master Plan of Development” included strategies for investment in “the farm, irrigation system, water supply, offices and library, teachers’ houses, laboratories and classrooms, and school church.” The estimated investment was 675,000 bolivars, and the source of income for the same amount coming from: “donations, mission subventions, rents, orange production, and special appropriations.” INSTIVOC Directiva, 10 June 1974, 155.

2Canaima 1974, 2.

3Ibid., 26 March 1974, 148.

4García points out that “until this moment the school had foreign leadership” but, with the coming of López, more local leadership came to the school from the Colombia-Venezuela Union. Nathaniel García, interview.
the third INSTIVOC principal. Olga, his wife, worked as the school nurse.¹

López, according to his colleagues, was considered "a strict person, concerned about standards and appearances,"² and also "smart, and persuasive."³ He had the reputation of always being well dressed. His major strengths lay in his teaching ability, his intuitiveness and creative imagination, and his depth of wisdom in dealing with disciplinary problems. Like Hernández before him, López was criticized by some as being too self-sufficient and self-reliant. He did not find it easy to delegate responsibility, and at times he allowed his personal emotions to become involved in current school affairs and problems. In spite of these failings, even his critics recognized

¹Canaima 1979, 4.

²Gonzalo Pico, interview by author, 26 April 2001, Berrien Springs-Houston, phone. Pico was the men's dean during López' administration.

³Robinson Urdaneta, interview.
in him a man of great responsibility and vision.¹

López’s administrative team was formed by Osman Longa, a Venezuelan physics teacher who worked as vice-principal and was the legal representative of the school to the Ministry of Education, and Luis Camacho, an experienced Colombia-Venezuela Union treasurer. In addition, as INSTIVOC developed into a larger institution in the 1970s, López’ staff reached a total of fifteen full-time teachers, six part-time teachers, seven departmental directors, and two elementary teachers (see figure 34).²

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¹Interpretations based on anonymous interviews, due to the sensitive nature of the information.

²See appendix B.
Bank) to purchase an automated irrigation system for the school farm. While this was a considerable debt to undertake, the rapid returns through increased production justified the investment.

According to his own evaluation and as described in the school minutes, López' approach to developing the industries was to place them “in the hand of God.” The practical outworking of this plan was to implement tithe payments to the SDA church on the profit realized by each industry every year. This approach, though opposed by some, was adopted at the Nirgua school because of the persuasiveness of López. He argued that the blessing of heaven would attend an endeavor dedicated to God’s service.

The manner in which López and his administrative colleagues were leading the institution at this time seems to give evidences that the school was becoming well established and self-sufficient. The school was able to take more responsibility for itself and, for the first time in its history, the money for a school project did not come from special union or division appropriations. Rather, INSTIVOC’s stability and increasing assets were used to secure its further growth by wise use of the property for raising loans to develop the school and its industrial program.

Another notable contribution of the López administration was the creation of Personería Jurídica (legal status) for the school and the approval of a constitution and

1Collateral for the loan of “357,574.50 bolivars from the Banco de Desarrollo de Venezuela” was the “forty hectares of land property, and the 6,500 orange trees to secure the transaction.” The person authorized to negotiate this important transaction was Luis S. Camacho. INSTIVOC Directiva, 16 February 1975, 175, and ibid., 3 June 1975, 179.

2Miguel Angel López, interview by author, 1 May 2001, Berrien Springs to Bucaramanga, Colombia, phone.
bylaws for INSTIVOC.¹ Until 1975 the school property and assets were legally registered only in the USA. The property on which the school was located had been purchased in the name of the General Conference of the SDA Church in Washington, D.C., USA, and until this time remained listed as belonging to the General Conference.² As a result, the school held no official legal status under the Venezuelan government. This situation posed a threat to the long-term security of the school. There were precedents at the time of institutions and lands owned by foreign entities being nationalized. Once a constitution had been voted by the school board in 1975, it was possible to register it with the Venezuelan authorities as a legal document and thus obtain Personeria Juridica (see appendix E). This made it possible to transfer the property title for the Nirgua campus to the name of Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela (INSTIVOC). This gave the school the official status of an independent school governed by the local SDA organization in Venezuela. Once again, an important step had been taken in securing the future of the school and in consolidating its position as a viable and developing institution in its own right.

Another contribution by López was to promote the school church-building project, which was also part of the 1975-80 master plan. López took advantage of the stable financial situation the school reached after the boom in on-campus industrial

¹See appendix E, on these legal documents.

²The authorization to create the “Personeria Juridica” was approved by the school board meeting in February 1975. INSTIVOC Directiva, 16 February 1975, 177. The reason for this action was recorded in separate minutes in June of the same year as the “national trend to take control of foreign properties.” Ibid., 3 June 1975, 180.
development and in the country's economy in the mid-1970s. From 1976-78, 50 percent of the farm income was set apart for the school church project. López's support for the church project resulted in the construction of a church early in the 1980s after his departure. Although 50 percent of the profits from the farm were plowed into this project for a number of years (a proportion that would raise questions in the minds of most business strategists), the church building was completed without adversely affecting the farm industry either in the 1970s or the 1980s.

Emphasis on School Industries in the 1970s

The school growth achieved in the 1970s was in great measure due to the industrial emphasis promoted by the leadership of the school under both Hernández and López, during this decade. New industrial buildings were erected with funds from the Instituto Nacional de Cooperacion Educativa (INCE), and old school industries were consolidated and strengthened during this decade.

Farm Industry

From 1965 the farm industry was led by Secundino Rodríguez, followed by his brother Paulino Rodríguez in the mid-1970s. For a brief interval during this period,

\[1\] Ibid., 197.

\[2\] INSTIVOC Local, 9 October 1969, 149.

\[3\] See chapter 3, under “Construction.”

\[4\] INSTIVOC Local, 11 September 1973, 127.
Moisés Huérfano, a local Adventist member in the community, also looked after the farm industry. In the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, the school farm produced only seasonal products such as tomatoes, potatoes, sweet potatoes, and corn. But in the 1970s, production was changed to citrus, mainly oranges (see figure 35).

While the school and farm administration were looking into changing production from seasonal crops to citrus, the school was given the opportunity to buy a thirty hectare orange farm adjacent to the school grounds. The offer was eventually declined after a careful study by Hernández, Guzmán, and Franco. The idea of a change to citrus came to the fore once again when Yukery, a private citrus company, offered to plant the orange trees and buy the oranges from the school when they were harvested. Although this plan initially seemed like a good idea, the offer was also declined after careful study by

1INSTIVOC Directiva, 15 November 1976, 208-09.
2Nathaniel García, interview. See also, Canaima 1971, 37,38.
3INSTIVOC Local, 14 July 1970, 014.
Secundino Rodríguez. Rodríguez pointed out that it was a disadvantage to the school because of the lack of freedom the school would have in selling the citrus it produced.¹

A new plan was created with strong support from Hernández in which the school would be responsible for the orange plantation without the involvement of private companies. The plan included continuing with the production of seasonal crops while the orange trees were planted and grew to maturity over the subsequent four years.² At the time this plan was developed, the school experienced some difficulties with the private nursery which was to provide the small trees. The possibility and wisdom of growing the orange trees on the school farm came up for discussion again.³ Finally, after this seemingly endless string of delays, the school board approved an advantageous offer to purchase seven thousand orange trees from a nursery. The nursery was willing to

¹INSTIVOC Directiva, 7 January 1971, 031.

²This plan included "planting 8,000 orange and 400 avocado trees, at a total cost of 30,000 bolivars, with additional maintenance expenses of 50,000 bolivars in the four years before the trees would bear fruit." The payment of the 30,000 bolivars was to be made to the nursery in thirty installments, for which the school was responsible. The 50,000 bolivars was to be paid as follows: 10,000 bolivars from the Division; 10,000 bolivars from the Union; and 5,000 bolivars from the two Venezuelan Missions. This would cover 50 percent of the expenses. The remainder was to be paid by the school from profits raised by sale of seasonal crops which would continue to be grown until orange production began four years after planting. INSTIVOC Administrativa, 24 November 1971, 047.

³The changes from the original plan provided "advantages in the selection of the trees, as well as savings on the 30,000 bolivars purchase price." The disadvantages were the delay of one year because it would only be possible to transplant the trees in May 1973 instead of 1972. Ibid., 7 February 1972, 061.
accept a four-year repayment schedule from 1973-76.¹

Hernández realized that an abundant water supply was essential for the citrus project to be a success. This need was met by the construction of a new lake for irrigation purposes, next to the existing one.² Also with an eye to the future of the orchards, in 1974 Hernández acquired the services of Secundino Rodríguez as a consultant for the orange plantation. Rodríguez was employed at this time at the Dominican Republic SDA school.³

Before it was possible to harvest any fruit from the young trees, the López administration supported the planting of fifteen thousand papaya trees in order to provide important income for loan payments and upkeep of the citrus plantation.⁴ In 1977, marigolds were also grown to cover the expenses of the orange orchard.⁵

¹This plan was best because it included the “advantages of a low down payment of 6,000 bolivars, and four additional yearly payments of 6,000 bolivars each.” This differed from the first plan according to which the school had to pay back the 30,000 bolivars in thirty months. The school settled on a deadline with the nursery for a May 1973 planting. INSTIVOC Local, 24 October 1972, 088.

²The new lake project cost 12,000 bolivars, and was funded by a down payment of 5,000 bolivars obtained from selling an old farm water pump. The remaining 7,000 bolivars was to be paid over a period of five years. INSTIVOC Directiva, 17 May 1973, 114.

³INSTIVOC Administrativa, 1 August 1973, 126. On Rodríguez’s early contribution, see chapter 3, under “Construction.”

⁴Ibid., 11 July 1975, 182. On López’s contribution, see this chapter above, under “López Era.”

⁵After a careful study of this project plan, “three hectares were planted with this product.” INSTIVOC Directiva, 2 October 1977, 224.
same year the first oranges were harvested, and sold to citrus businessmen.\(^1\) From this
time on, the orange farm became the leading school industry and its harvests were sold in
advance and directly to the local citrus industries.\(^2\) Among the most important
contributions of this industry is the fact that, since its inception during the 1970s, it has
provided work opportunities for an average of thirty students each year.

Carpentry Industry

In 1966, the carpentry industry came into existence through the self-sacrifice of
José Franco, a local Adventist who sold his valuable carpentry equipment to the school
on an extended payment plan and without interest. Franco then accepted a position as a
denominational employee and joined the Nirgua staff to take care of this industry.\(^3\)
Throughout the rest of the decade the industry operated as a service department to the
school during the construction phase. By 1970, however, the carpentry shop was
reorganized by Franco to develop it into an industry to mass produce wood furniture.\(^4\)

During most of the period from 1970-75, the industry operated by filling orders
made under private contracts with companies interested in wood furniture.\(^5\) To this end,

\(^1\)The first orange harvest was sold to “Antonio Díaz at the price of 90,000

\(^2\)Ibid., 19 June 1977, 217.

\(^3\)On Franco’s contribution, see chapter 3, under “Construction.”

\(^4\)“Authorization was obtained from the Unión Colombo-Venezolana” for this
purpose. INSTIVOC Directiva, 23 November 1969, 152; and, ibid., 13 April 1970, 007.

\(^5\)An example of this type of contract is one drawn up between INSTIVOC and
“Repuestos Stugar de Caracas.” INSTIVOC Directiva, 7 January 1971, 031; and
carpentry equipment was purchased, and mass production of table legs started.\(^1\)

Unfortunately the success of the carpentry shop as a school industry was short-lived, primarily due to poor administration. Reports prepared at the time show that the industry overproduced by 33,780 bolivars in 1974, and that the work was done without sticking to a careful budget.\(^2\)

In order to solve the situation that had developed in the carpentry industry, new control procedures were implemented.\(^3\) These included selling off carpentry machinery deemed "difficult to use."\(^4\) Finally, however, the carpentry shop was closed by López due to the "poor financial situation" of the industry. The remaining equipment was used as it had been at the beginning, as the carpentry shop reverted to being a "service department of the school."\(^5\)

Metal Industry

The metal industry came into existence in 1971 with the appointment of Cruz "Catalino Oropeza," INSTIVOC Administrativa, 10 May 1972, 074.

\(^{1}\)"An initial investment of 7,000 bolivars in woodworking machinery was made. INSTIVOC Administrativa, 10 May 1972, 074. This was followed by additional purchases of more equipment in 1973 for 13,000 bolivars. INSTIVOC Local, 11 September 1973, 128.

\(^{2}\)INSTIVOC Directiva, 14 September 1974, 162.

\(^{3}\)For example: "The production orders must now be approved by the school administration (Hernández, Longa, and Camacho) and then passed on to the production manager (Franco); excess inventory is to be liquidated; production is to be limited to current orders; and a detailed budget is to be created for each new contract." Ibid.

\(^{4}\)INSTIVOC Local, 3 May 1972, 078.

\(^{5}\)Ibid., 16 February 1975, 175.
Blanco, a Venezuelan Adventist who was residing in the USA.\textsuperscript{1} Hernández and the other school administrators wanted to prepare thoroughly for the establishment of the metal industry by appointing a commission. The commission was to find support to develop the metal and the printing industries (discussed later in this chapter) so as to enable them to become operational as soon as possible.\textsuperscript{2}

Early in 1972 a new commission was appointed due to changes in SDA leadership and in school administrative positions to include Luis Camacho. As new school treasurer, Camacho became a member of the commission. He worked with Blanco and reported to the school board. The express purpose of the new group was to develop plans for immediate commencement of the metal industry.\textsuperscript{3} As with carpentry, it was intended that the metal industry would do contract work for local businesses. Among the few projects that were completed was the production of student chairs for the “Corporacion Nacional de Turismo.” This contract was fulfilled in collaboration with the carpentry shop.\textsuperscript{4} Efforts were made to secure contracts from the Department of Public Works in the cities of Barquisimeto, Valencia, and San Carlos, but without success.\textsuperscript{5} One important

\textsuperscript{1}INSTIVOC Local, 27 May 1971, 039.

\textsuperscript{2}The members of this commission were: “R. S. Arismendi, A. Guzmán, H. Borton, and H. Hernández.” Ibid., 24 June 1971, 042.

\textsuperscript{3}The members of this commission were: “G. Castro, J. de Armas, L. Camacho, and H. Hernández.” INSTIVOC Directiva, 6 January 1972, 054.

\textsuperscript{4}INSTIVOC Administrativa, 23 January 1972, 061.

\textsuperscript{5}Ibid.
contract was arranged with "Productos Utiles" for a massive production of metal lockers.\textsuperscript{1} Unfortunately, the distance from the important cities was too great, and the industry failed to attract contracts. As a result, this industry also foundered and was closed in 1973.\textsuperscript{2} The metal industry employees were transferred to the school printing industry.\textsuperscript{3}

\textbf{Printing Industry}

Printing was another industry implemented by Hernández in the early 1970s. The opening of the industry came with the donation of equipment by the Creole Foundation (see figure 36) and the provisional appointment of Harley Borton, a mathematics teacher at INSTIVOC. Borton was to run the industry until a full time expert in the field could be appointed.\textsuperscript{4}

In the meantime, more used printing equipment was purchased after Hernández obtained the assistance of a printing expert to evaluate the equipment for its value and

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{1}When this contract was signed the "school attempted to obtain a two-year agreement for locker production." INSTIVOC Local, 6 July 1972, 078.

\textsuperscript{2}The deadline for closing this industry was "August 1, 1973." Ibid., 28 March 1973, 109.

\textsuperscript{3}Cruz Blanco, for example, "worked in the morning in the printing industry and in the afternoon in the metal industry." INSTIVOC Administrativa, 9 December 1972, 099.

\textsuperscript{4}The limited resources and equipment could not support a full-time person for the industry, and this led to the appointment of "Harvey Borton on a part-time basis." INSTIVOC Directiva, 13 April 1971, 034.
\end{flushleft}
suitability. There was a delay in fully operationalizing the industry due to difficulties in finding an expert to operate the printing press, a demand made by the Creole foundation who donated a substantial amount to the project. After several invitations, the services of Marvin Shultz were obtained and the industry began operating in 1973.

Fig. 36. INSTIVOC printing press donation.

With the appointment of Shultz, a substantive financial plan was developed for the printing industry. The Creole Foundation was the main resource for start-up costs, and policies were implemented to ensure success in the new industry. These policies

1The used printing equipment was purchased from “La Verdad” newspaper in Caracas, and the expert operator of this machinery was “Rodolfo Sánchez, from the ICOLVEN printing industry.” INSTIVOC Local, 27 May 1971, 039.

2The Creole Foundation noted that if the school wished to obtain continued support for this industry it must “appoint an expert in the field of student training as well as someone with marketing skills to ensure the success of an industry so far distant from important cities.” INSTIVOC Directiva, 6 January 1972, 055.

3INSTIVOC Administrativa, 5 December 1972, 090.

4The financial plan proposed an initial investment of “65,000 bolivars.” This was made up of 40,000 bolivars from the Creole donation, 20,000 bolivars from the Inter-
were based on the experiences gained from the failed industries. Later, in 1976, leadership of the printing industry was turned over to Theodore Mohr, another missionary who was a printing expert. Finally, Fernando Guzmán, a union-based mission worker, took over the leadership of the industry in 1979. Guzmán continues with this work to the present time. From 1973 until the present the printing industry has been a source of revenue for the school. It has also been a good source of student income. Moreover, if they so desired, students who learned printing skills at the school were able to market these skills when they left and to provide for themselves a steady source of income.1

Bread Industry

The bread industry was another business initiative that started in the early 1970s. Mr. Camargo, a local Adventist businessman, donated the first bread-making equipment to the school (see figure 37). This offer was immediately accepted by the school board, but under three important conditions: first, the school would administer the industry; second, the right to employ and dismiss students from this industry was school business; and third, an inventory of the equipment was to be made at the time of its arrival to the school.2

American Division, and 5,000 bolivars from the Colombia-Venezuela Union. Examples of the financial policies implemented to secure a solid foundation for the industry and to prevent the accumulation of bad debts included: “50 percent up-front payment is required at the time of the order, with the other 50 percent due at the time of delivery; special clients may be given grace periods of up to thirty days to pay in full; a complete monthly inventory report should be made.” INSTIVOC Directiva, 13 February 101-2.

1Fernando Guzmán, interview by author, 05 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording.

2INSTIVOC Directiva, 27 October 1970, 021.
In 1972 the bread industry was relocated from its original site in the cafeteria to a permanent place next to the school laundry, where there was plenty of space to grow.\footnote{Ibid., 6 January 1972, 056.} Among the pioneers of this industry was Gladys de Camacho, the school treasurer's wife. She developed the industry into one of the most important at the school.\footnote{Ibid., 4 August 1975, 188.} The success of the bread industry in providing revenue for the school and work for the students has continued to the present day.\footnote{David Guamán, interview by author, 05 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. At the time of the interview Guamán was the treasurer of the bread-industry.}

Fig. 37. INSTIVOC bread industry.

Analysis of Campus Industries

Undoubtedly, the 1970s was the decade during which the on-campus industries developed their important role in the school program, crucial to INSTIVOC's operation. Besides the farm, carpentry, metal, printing, and bread industries, already mentioned,
there were other initiatives such as the granola\textsuperscript{1} and honey industries.\textsuperscript{2}

The history of the industrial development of the 1970s is evidence of the clear intent of Hernández and López to develop a school in which students worked as part of their education. The model for this wholistic program was deeply imbedded in the SDA philosophy of education and the founding purposes of INSTIVOC.\textsuperscript{3}

The philosophy of the school continues unchanged, the purpose being to educate the "hand, mind, and spirit." To educate the students in manual arts the school industries played an important role by providing useful work. Among the school's main objectives stated in 1974-76, were: "To develop in the student the concept of the dignity of labor by means of agricultural activities, industries, office and domestic work."\textsuperscript{4} Evidence in the financial records and testimonies from this time confirm that the school in Nirgua provided through its industries opportunities for students to learn manual skills.\textsuperscript{5}

The failure of some industries reveals a weakness in market research and a lack of planning on the part of the administration. In the cases of the carpentry and the metal industries, it was soon apparent that there was not a good market within a reasonable

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{1}This industry was the initiative of Sixto Urdaneta, a local businessman who asked the school for permission to use a "location on the school campus to develop the industry." INSTIVOC Directiva, 17 October 1973, 130.

\textsuperscript{2}This industry was initiated with "ten beehives," and with an initial investment of "4,500 bolivars." Ibid., 24 February 1977, 211.

\textsuperscript{3}See chapter 1, on "Institutional Objectives."

\textsuperscript{4}INSTIVOC Prospecto 1974-1976, 3.

\textsuperscript{5}Hugo García, interview.
\end{quote}
distance for the products that could be made.\textsuperscript{1} The urgency with which Hernández approached the task of setting up industries, and particularly his headlong rush into the metal industry, certainly reveal what at first glance seems like a cavalier attitude. It is certain that a great deal of energy was expended by Hernández and his team on the industrial projects in a short period of time, and that some mistakes were made. Foremost among these were misconceptions about marketing, the absence of defined management structures, and failure to balance production against demand.\textsuperscript{2}

In spite of the mistakes, there can be no doubt that overall, Hernández' initiatives in establishing the industries were much more positive than negative. This is clear as the ongoing development of the school is considered. The school industries which succeeded were those that were more carefully planned from the beginning, specifically the farm, printing, and bread industries.\textsuperscript{3} The successful industries benefitted from experienced leadership chosen in a timely manner. The managers had some expertise in the field in which they were working, and there was, consequently, a more careful approach to investment in the development of the industries and foresight in the marketing of the products.\textsuperscript{4}

\textsuperscript{1}See this chapter, above, under “Carpentry” and “Metal Industry.”


\textsuperscript{3}For example, planning and implementation of the citrus industry on the farm took three full years of planning, and the printing industry took two full years of planning. See this chapter, above, on “Farm Industry,” and “Printing Industry.”

\textsuperscript{4}For example, the farm industry was carefully led by Secundino Rodriguez, an inter-union missionary, who in advance evaluated the advantages of the school marketing
The positive impact of this industrial emphasis for the students at INSTIVOC can be seen by the number of student industrial plans implemented by the school.\(^1\) After all, the purpose of the school industries was to provide students with opportunities to earn income for their school fees.\(^2\) Foremost among the students with poor financial resources were the Venezuelan Indians. Thanks to the opportunities afforded them in the work-study programs of the school, it was possible for them to make their study goals a reality.\(^3\)

**School Consolidation and Growth in the 1970s**

The emphasis on school industries that proved so important in providing the means for some of the students to gain a Christian education was also of considerable significance in developing the identity and stability of the Nirgua school as an institution. In spite of some setbacks, the industries provided a platform for financial independence that allowed the school to strive for excellence in areas more traditionally the work of an educational institution. This resulted in sustained consolidation and growth at INSTIVOC as reflected by improvement in the school finances, enrollment, curriculum, its own oranges.

\(^1\)At least “three industrial plans” were developed, in which students participated by paying their school fees through work. INSTIVOC Directiva, 6 January 1972, 055, 58; INSTIVOC Local, 3 May 1972, 072. For a discussion of these plans, see below under “Finances.”

\(^2\)For example, this was the case of “Oswaldo Betancourt, Maria Reyes, and Omar Fuenmayor,” the first three student employees of the bread industry at the time of its opening in 1970. INSTIVOC Administrativa, 16 November 1970, 025.

\(^3\)For example, in 1970 a plan was developed for the Indians from the “Gran Sabana” and “Guajira” areas. INSTIVOC Directiva, 21 January 1970, 001.
as well as the grounds and physical plant during the 1970s.

Finances

In analyzing the school finances there is evidence of a short period of minor
difficulties at the beginning of the 1970s, followed by a period of considerable school
growth and consolidation. Table 15 presents the financial status of the school in this
decade.

Table 15. INSTIVOC Balance 1969-79

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>Liability</th>
<th>Net Worth</th>
<th>Working Capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1,937,651</td>
<td>72,704</td>
<td>1,864,946</td>
<td>110,064=12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>2,112,441</td>
<td>87,566</td>
<td>1,951,051</td>
<td>164,739=18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>2,012,270</td>
<td>146,450</td>
<td>1,865,820</td>
<td>81,550=07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1,975,550</td>
<td>129,045</td>
<td>1,846,504</td>
<td>65,220=05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>2,122,173</td>
<td>137,241</td>
<td>1,897,592</td>
<td>149,942=12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>2,362,444</td>
<td>163,419</td>
<td>2,081,749</td>
<td>200,406=13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>2,726,586</td>
<td>252,529</td>
<td>2,474,057</td>
<td>363,998=20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>3,007,887</td>
<td>226,887</td>
<td>2,449,792</td>
<td>599,092=28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>3,442,973</td>
<td>192,404</td>
<td>3,250,569</td>
<td>444,633=20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>3,807,023</td>
<td>185,222</td>
<td>3,621,801</td>
<td>1,118,761=42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>3,890,038</td>
<td>220,998</td>
<td>3,669,050</td>
<td>1,281,995=38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The table indicates that the financial crisis began in 1971, even before the drop in
registration which occurred in 1972 when the finances were at their worst. The school
assets were reduced by 100,000 bolivars from 2,112,441 in 1970 to 2,012,270 in 1971,
which represents a 5 percent loss of assets in one year. Added to this was an additional 2
percent loss in 1972. Due to the decline in student numbers and in finances, and because of commitments to the development of industries, the school was forced to reduce personnel for the first time in its history. Decisive action by the administration protected the institution and started it on the road to recovery in 1973.¹

The Venezuelan economy, dominated by the oil price, seems to have played an important role in the difficult financial times experienced by the school. In 1971-72, when oil prices were very low, the capacity of students to pay their fees was limited and resulted in dropouts.² But as soon as the oil prices rose and the Venezuelan economy improved in 1973, a significant recovery in finances and enrollment occurred at the school. Assets rose from 1,975,550 bolivars in 1972 to 3,890,038 bolivars in 1979, which represents an increment close to 100 percent in seven years with an average inflation rate of about 7 percent per year and with the currency stable at about 4.3 bolivars against the US dollar throughout this period (see appendix D). The improved finances were a major determinant factor in the school's independence, stability, and consolidation toward the end of the 1970s.

It is also evident from table 15 that the school's liquidity fell dramatically from 288 percent in 1970 to 156 percent in 1971. Although liquidity reached its lowest point for the decade in 1972, a liquidity of 153 percent is not evidence of a major financial

¹For example, “the principal’s secretary was reduced to half time, the registrar’s and librarian’s responsibilities were combined, an assistant cook was no longer employed, the metal industry was closed, and the position of the farm director was suspended for a short period.” INSTIVOC Directiva, 13 February 1973, 100.

²See this chapter, on “Government.”
problem. In fact, the school can hardly be said to have faced a crisis because, for every bolivar that the school owed, they had 1.53 bolivars in hand. Many institutions would consider this situation an economic boom rather than a financial pinch. Similar trends may be perceived in the working capital which reached its lowest point of only 5 percent in 1972. This is 10 percent below the level recommenced by the SDA church, and meant that the institution was operating with only one-third of the working capital that it should have held. If this index had continued at this level it would have been cause for grave concern and would have meant that the institution was in serious financial difficulties. The rapid upward trend over the next two years to 1974, and the high levels of working capital maintained throughout the rest of the decade, are indicative of an institution that was both blessed and well managed.¹

To be sure, the weakness of the national economy, inflation, and the drop in enrollment were cause for serious concern. The future must have appeared uncertain to the administrators, and they acted to avert major problems. While the improved national economy was the main reason for the recovery in 1973-74, the fiscal policies implemented at the school allowed the institution to enjoy the maximum benefit when the upturn occurred. The steady improvement in liquidity throughout the decade, until it peaked at over 700 percent in 1978, and a working capital surpassing 40 percent are clear evidences of the recovery in school finance.

An analysis of the school fees during this decade reflects an increase throughout the 1970s that kept pace with inflation which, in those days, averaged no more than 7

¹Compare with chapter 2, under “Finances.”
percent annually (see financial appendix 1969-79). At the same time there is evidence that an increase in the school fees was not the approach taken by Hernández to solve the financial difficulties. For example, in 1969 the yearly fee for boarding students was 3,740 bolivars\(^1\) and five years later it was only 4,960 bolivars.\(^2\) This rate of increase was below the 7 percent rate of inflation.

Hernández also developed three additional industrial plans for students with poor financial resources, by which they could work in order to pay off part for their school fees.\(^3\) These plans represented new opportunities for more students to enroll in the school and contributed to the consolidation and growth of INSTIVOC in the 1970s. At no other

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\(^1\)This amount of 3,740 bolivars was calculated by multiplying nine payments of the 360 bolivar monthly fee, and adding the 500 bolivar registration fee. INSTIVOC Directiva, 2 February 1969, 137.

\(^2\)The 4,960 bolivars was the total of ten monthly payments of 440 bolivars, plus the 520 bolivar registration fee. INSTIVOC Prospecto 1974-1976, 15.

\(^3\)In plan I, “the student worked for a full year and saved money in a school account for the following school year.” This plan required the approval of the Venezuelan mission from which the student came, because at the end of the year a supporting contribution of 750 bolivars was paid to the school by that mission. INSTIVOC Local, 3 May 1972, 072. Plan II was created to aid students who worked during the three-month vacation period. This aid was estimated at 300 bolivars. Examples of students in this plan were “Teolinda Acosta, Samuel Fernández, Simon Fernandez, Carmen Leon, Miguel Mata, Nelson Mata, Nelson Montiel, Luis Morales, Eufracio Oropeza, Lino Páez, Roberto Peinado, América Plasencia, Alonzo Reyes, José Ríos, and Mireya Salinas.” INSTIVOC Administrativa, 31 October 1973, 132-3. And Plan III was created to aid students who worked a full twenty hours per week. This aid was 100 bolivars per month. An example of the implementation of this plan was the aid for March 1973. The following students benefitted: “Idubina Aponte, Oswaldo Characo, José Garrido, Miguel Mata, Nélson Montiel, Eufracio Oropeza, Alonso Reyes, José Ríos, Mireya Salinas, José Viscaya, Viviana Bolivar, Simón Fernández, Carmen González, Nelson Mata, Julián Narváez, Ada Pérez, Andrés Ríos, Obed Rodriguez, and Emilio Torrealba.” INSTIVOC Administrativa, 10 April 1973, 112.
time in the school's history was there a more notable effort made to help students of low
income to have the opportunity of obtaining a Christian education.

Enrollment

Table 16 presents the school enrollment in the 1970s during the Hernández and
López administrations. There was a notable increase in the enrollment from 237 students
in 1969 to 432 students in 1979. In spite of declining student numbers in the early 1970s,
the trend was upward throughout the decade, with an increase of nearly 100 percent over
the ten-year period. Once again, the evidence is indicative of sustained and notable
growth, with enrollment mirroring the achievements of the institution in financial and
industrial development.

Table 16. INSTIVOC Enrollment 1969-79

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969-1970</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1971</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-1972</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972-1973</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-1974</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974-1975</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-1976</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-1977</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-1978</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-1979</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The statistical data regarding elementary enrollment come from
"Informe Estadistico de los Planteles," a report made to the Ministry of
Education in Venezuela, 7 November 1977. The secondary school data
come from "Informe de Educacion de la Escuela a la Union: Escuelas
Secundarias 1969-79."
The dramatic fall of 114 students in enrollment in 1972 coincided with the price slump in the oil industry, and the consequent impact on the ability of parents to pay their children's school fees. Concerns over the low enrollment seem to have been the major cause for staff reductions by Hernández in 1973-74.¹

Table 16 also shows a consistent recovery trend in the enrollment from 1973-79. This recovery was aided by concerted efforts at school promotion implemented by Hernández in the first half of the decade, and by the opportunities given to students working in the new school industries throughout the decade. The industries developed initially by Hernández were well managed and successful under López. These factors, along with the improved national economy, facilitated the strong growth after mid-1970.

Curriculum and Academic Development

The school curriculum in the 1970s was another factor that contributed to the growth and consolidation of the Nirgua school. The curricular structure of six years elementary education, followed by a basic secondary cycle of three years, and a diversified cycle of two years was kept intact by the Ministry of Education during this decade.² In spite of the fact that the science track in the secondary diversified cycle was the most popular among students, the Hernández and López administrations continued the

¹See above in this chapter, under “Hernández Era.”

²See above in this chapter, under “Education.”
humanities track as well until 1977 (see appendix C).1

From the early 1970s Hernández was interested in offering a secondary normal program to prepare elementary teachers with a Venezuelan degree to enable them to work in the elementary schools that were operated by a number of local SDA churches in the Venezuela missions. Interest in this program increased once the elementary building was finished because it could now serve as a laboratory school for practice teaching.2 To this end Hernández appointed a commission to present the project to the Venezuelan Ministry of Education.3 After receiving approval for this new school program, it was promoted among the local SDA churches in Venezuela,4 and finally in 1977 López closed down the humanities track and established the normal program. Lopez also appointed Genoveva Veloz (later de Viscaya), an experienced Venezuelan teacher, to be in charge of the new program.5

The curriculum was governed by Ministry of Education guidelines established for secondary education in Venezuela. As a private institution, INSTIVOC had the legal right to include religious courses and to employ SDA teacher to foster integration of faith and

1INSTIVOC, “Graduation Record 1970-78.”

2INSTIVOC Directiva, 27 October 1970, 021.

3The members were “H. Hernández, Juan J. Suárez, and A. García.” INSTIVOC Local, 2 March 1972, 065.

4INSTIVOC Directiva, 17 May 1973, 134.

5The appointment of Genoveva Veloz followed the refusal of Maria Lobo to accept the appointment. Ibid., 5 September 1978, 234.
learning in the curriculum, and the administration took full advantage of this privilege.\textsuperscript{1}

Students entered the three-year normal program after completing the ninth grade, so graduation from this program was equivalent to high-school completion.\textsuperscript{2}

The normal course was in harmony with the philosophy and purposes of Adventist education as practiced around the world and with the goals established for the El Limón school and later, INSTIVOC. The normal program would help to prepare teachers for the Adventist educational system developing in Venezuela, specifically at the elementary level. In addition, this program anticipated the development of college-level degrees and certificates. INSTIVOC was growing into an institution that was more able to meet the needs of the Venezuelan SDA church.\textsuperscript{3}

The solid academic development of the 1970s motivated Hernández to look into the possibility of offering professional programs on the school campus. There was interest particularly in offering a first year of theological studies as an extension of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1}"Normas que Regulan la Supervisión y Control de Planteles Privados, República de Venezuela, Ministerio de Educación, Dirección General Sectorial de Educación Básica y Media Diversificada," Caracas, January 1978, 1 (Rules and Regulations on the Supervision and Control of Private Institutions, Ministry of Education, General Direction of the Basic and Middle Diversified Levels, Caracas, January 1978, 1).
\item \textsuperscript{2}Admission to the normal course was discontinued in 1980. The Ministry of Education requirements for certification of elementary teachers were changed, and a baccalaureate degree rather than a high-school normal diploma was required. Students who began the program in 1979 completed their course in 1982 as the third and final class of secondary graduates from INSTIVOC with an elementary teaching emphasis. See appendix C, where the graduates are listed.
\item \textsuperscript{3}INSTIVOC Directiva, 19 June 1977, 215.
\end{itemize}
Instituto Colombo-Venezolano (ICOLVEN), and a committee was appointed to study the possibility. After careful investigation, an official petition was submitted along with a course description to Unión Colombo-Venezolana (UCV) and ICOLVEN in 1971. The project was abandoned due to lack of interest and involvement from ICOLVEN. As the senior school in the union, there was little incentive for ICOLVEN to collaborate. The immediate consequence for the college in Columbia would have been the loss of enrollment sustained because the Venezuelans no longer needed to come to the ICOLVEN campus for all of their tertiary studies. Because the prospects for cooperation in this venture were so weak, no further efforts were made to collaborate on higher level courses until 1977. In 1977, however, López raised the question regarding at least a first-year college theological program on the Nirgua campus. López continued to focus on this issue, and asked for the intervention of the Columbia-Venezuela Union and the Inter-American Division (IAD), but no concrete result were obtained.

An important inclusion in the school curriculum during the 1970s was the

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1A study was done and “presented to the visiting committee of the Inter-American Division.” INSTIVOC Directiva, 13 April 1970, 008.

2The members of this committee were; “H. Hernández, A. Plata, A. Ceballos, V. Martínez, R. Urdaneta.” Ibid., 7 January 1971, 030.

3The petition also included a copy of the curriculum for this first year of the program, which was “based on the ICOLVEN curriculum” of the time. Ibid., 13 April 1971, 035.

4The request was again made to ICOLVEN “to offer the first year of the theology program on the INSTIVOC campus as soon as possible.” Ibid., 31 May 1977, 214.

5Ibid., 12 June 1978, 231.
implementation of the industrial courses, as envisioned by the school leaders when they named the school “Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela” (INSTIVOC). The vocational courses first implemented by Hernández were tied in with the industrial development taking place in the school at the same time. These courses provided training in the manual arts as an important element in maintaining an Adventist philosophy of education. Implementation of these courses was also a response to private and public contributors who donated industrial equipment to the school with the purpose of providing opportunities for work and training to the students. Hernández and his successor, López, pointed out the importance of courses such as “carpentry, agriculture, graphic arts, and domestic science” as part of the school curriculum.

In 1976, industrial training became an integral part of the courses at the school. The inclusion of these studies in the curriculum was an attempt to follow the counsel of Ellen White. A minimum of five weekly unpaid hours of labor was required of all INSTIVOC students. The five unpaid hours of work required of each student did not detract from the paid work-study program, which continued to provide employment opportunities for those students with special financial needs.

In addition to the work program, every secondary boarding student was now

1“Vocacional” indicates that students had the opportunity to learn a job skill as part of their educational experience.


3Ibid., 3 June 1975, 180 (for one example of the perceptions of the principals).

4INSTIVOC, Prospecto, 15.
required to take an industrial education course at each grade level. This course was a considerable burden on the students who, in addition to the required national curriculum, were now receiving instruction in Bible and industrial education. To ensure that the instruction was of a genuinely practical nature, the López administration organized the creation of a school garden. An agronomist was appointed to be in charge of the new department and to teach formal courses in agriculture. The impact of these decisions has continued to the present, and today agricultural courses remain an integral part of the school curriculum. The wisdom of adding this burden to the heavy loads of both staff and students by this addition to the curriculum may have been questioned by some, but the consensus of opinion was that the extra effort was worthwhile and in keeping with the principles undergirding an Adventist education. The attitude was that, if the students were not involved in this constructive educational experience, they might be wasting time on frivolous or unwholesome pursuits. It must also be said that, as busy as the students might have been, they still found time for other activities—like sports—beyond the formal curriculum.

The school program in its entirety demonstrated a well-balanced and wholistic approach to education. Integration of faith and learning continued as an important pedagogical focus throughout the 1970s. The appointment of qualified and consecrated Christian teachers was the key to this endeavor. The teachers at INSTIVOC were generally adept at using teaching methodologies that were congruent with biblical

1 The new department leader was Jorge Pacheco. Ibid., 11 June 1978, 230.

2 Ibid., 18 May 1976, 204.
principles of learning. In addition, these teachers were not hesitant to include examples from Biblical literature in their classrooms. Most subjects were taught using Bible illustrations and principles. The exemplary lives of the teachers were also a powerful influence on many students.¹

In analyzing the academic aspect of the school in this decade it is evident that the school continued to need the services of Venezuelan-certified teachers with Seventh-day Adventist credentials.² For that reason Hernández took a decisive step toward building a strong academic program reliant upon loyal Venezuelan teachers who were well versed in Adventist educational philosophy. He arranged to send three of the most promising teachers to study at SDA universities in the United States of America: Gilberto Bracho, a chemistry teacher;³ Gustavo Garrido, a literature teacher;⁴ and Osman Longa, a physics teacher.⁵ Upon completion of their studies, all three of these men returned to Venezuela and continued working for the Nirgua school. Two of them later became school principals.⁶

¹Observations based on the personal experience of the author, who was a student at Nirgua from 1973-85.

²This need was partly satisfied by employing non-Adventist teachers with Venezuelan certification from the local community. INSTIVOC Local, 14 July 1970, 015.


⁴INSTIVOC Directiva, 22 January 1970, 002.

⁵Ibid., 3 June 1975, 180.

⁶These were Gustavo Garrido (1979-83), and Gilberto Bracho (1989-1994). See chapters 5 and 6.
Important steps were also taken during this decade to improve the pedagogical skills of those teachers who continued to serve at INSTIVOC. These teachers were encouraged to take correspondence courses for improving teacher effectiveness\(^1\) and a correspondence course in "Science and Religion" offered by River Plate College, an Adventist institution in Argentina.\(^2\) López encouraged the teachers to take courses in Venezuelan universities provided that their study schedule did not conflict with their teaching responsibilities.\(^3\) These initiatives underscore the fact that both Hernández and López planned carefully to develop local Venezuelan teachers and future leaders for INSTIVOC.

Grounds and Facilities

During the 1970s the main focus of physical development was on school industries. As a consequence, the decade saw little development of the grounds and facilities except for those projects involving the school farm and the construction of industrial buildings. One area in which there was further development was the construction of additional teacher housing due to the increase in the school staff.\(^4\)

\(^1\)This course was “coordinated by Antonio Ceballos, and recommended to Venezuelan teachers.” INSTIVOC Directiva, 6 January 1972, 053.

\(^2\)This course was coordinated by Miguel Angel López, and 50 percent of the school fees were paid by the school, with the other 50 percent being the contribution of the teacher. INSTIVOC Administrativa, 8 January 1975, 174.

\(^3\)Ibid., 27 January 1976, 198.

\(^4\)For example, the houses were “built with funds from the Inter-American Division to house missionary workers at the school.” INSTIVOC Local, 11 September 1973, 127; ibid., 28 November 1973, 136-7.
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17 presents other important projects completed in the 1970s.

The nature of the projects presented in Table 17 is evidence that during the 1970s the school was consolidating its resources rather than pursuing rapid physical development. Emphasis was placed on taking maximum advantage of the school facilities already in place rather than building newer or larger facilities. This represents a clear departure from the emphasis on school construction during the 1960s.

Table 17. INSTIVOC Construction in the 1970s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Completion</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Inauguration of Cafeteria Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Relocation of Administrative Offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Asphalting of School Roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Elementary School Fence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Auditorium Extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Men's Bathrooms Additions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Women's Residence Wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Orange Farm Fence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Elementary Classroom Addition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data taken from INSTIVOC Administrativa, 1970-78.

School Life in the 1970s

The development and consolidation of INSTIVOC in the 1970s is also seen in the daily life at the school. Understanding the campus dynamics at the time gives valuable insights into the progress made by the school toward being a strong and stable academic community. Some informative testimonies have been collected from the students and teachers of those days.
Social Life

Social life in the 1970s was shaped by the good spirit of students and teachers, recorded in response to a wide variety of activities such as daily sports, school trips, and Saturday night activities.¹

From the beginning of the decade, Hernández placed a great deal of emphasis on building sports facilities to motivate social interaction among teachers and students.² Important projects related to this objective were the construction of a men’s basketball court with money donated by the East Venezuela Mission in 1971,³ followed by the construction of a women’s volleyball court next to the women’s residence in 1972.⁴ These courts became important places in the daily lives of the students, and it was common practice for teachers to join students in their sports.

Another important project provided areas where student socialization was facilitated. The residence hall preceptor and preceptress built recreational parks next to the men’s and women’s dormitories. This in turn led to the construction of a ping-pong court next to the men’s residence in 1973. Money for the project was collected by the preceptor from the students’ parents.⁵ This was followed by similar initiatives in the

¹Benilde Almérída, interview by author, 30 November 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Almérída was a student from 1969-71.
²On Hernández’ promotion of sport, see chapter 6, under “Social Life.”
³INSTIVOC Directiva, 27 October 1970, 022.
⁴INSTIVOC Administrativa, 7 February 1972, 061.
⁵This project was led by Leopoldo Peinado, the men’s preceptor. Ibid., 20 March 1973, 108.
women’s residence in 1974. Also during the 1970s, new sports facilities were added to the existing soccer field, and a swimming pool was opened. These developments provided students with a wider variety of options for recreational activity. It is apparent that the INSTIVOC administration was intent on (1) facilitating interaction between students and teachers, (2) helping students to participate in wholesome activities during their free time, and (3) ensuring that physical activity was part of the recreational program. This physical activity, along with student work requirements, study, and spiritual enrichment, was part of the emphasis on a balanced and well-rounded education in accordance with Adventist educational philosophy.

The Saturday night activities seem to have been among the most prominent and well-remembered events. Omaña, a student at INSTIVOC from 1969-73, commented that the “martial marches” were considered to be among the best and most enjoyable student activities of the 1970s. This is the same sort of comment made by the students at El Limón prior to the transfer to the Nirgua campus.

There were differences, however. At El Limón in the 1960s there were smaller numbers of students than on the Nirgua campus, even in the early years of the 1970s. An immediate consequence of these larger numbers was the tendency for wholesome recreation to be replaced by more passive activities such as Saturday night movies. For this purpose the school purchased a sixteen millimeter movie projector in which

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1Ibid., 29 April 1974, 151.

2For example, Jorge Omaña, interview by author, 30 November 1999, Nirgua, tape recording.
Hollywood type movies were presented. Hernández recommended that the viewing of movies be restricted to one every two months when it became clear how these popular entertainments were detracting from other more valuable aspects of campus social life and recreation. But movies remained a favorite, to the extent that in 1976 López supported the purchase of a professional movie projector to improve the quality of the sound and picture.

The annual school-sponsored beach trip (see figure 38) was one of the highlights of the school calendar. This social event was supported by Hernández, and the entire school family went to the beach for a full day. The logistics of transporting all the students and teachers resulted in a massive caravan of buses setting off in convoy filled with crowds of excited participants. Memories from the beach trips are also still fresh in the minds of many students. As some pointed out, on this day everything was informal, and there was a festive atmosphere. The teachers interacted with students on a much more equal footing, as friends enjoying a shared experience. The less formal dress, the picnic food, and the friendly atmosphere of the school family enjoying a beach outing together were what made these events so memorable.

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1The movie projector was limited to “the custody and operation of Antonio Ceballos.” INSTIVOC Administrativa, 20 December 1970, 051.

2Ibid., 10 May 1972, 074; and INSTIVOC Directiva, 18 May 1976, 203.

3Almerida, interview.

4The idea was developed to “release the cafeteria from responsibility for preparing food on beach days so that they too could enjoy the beach trip.” Day students were also invited to participate in the meal plan and join in with the trip. INSTIVOC Administrativa, 22 May 1972, 074.
Another important activity developed by Hernández was the annual festival day (see figure 39). This day was distinguished by alumni and special friends coming to the school. The festivities included music, recreational activities, and a food fair. Each nation or region of the country represented in the student body had the opportunity to sell their special culinary delights. The day was full of dynamic and fun-filled activities that people were loath to miss. As Cárdenas stated in summary of these events: “The fair was the big event of those days at the school.”

One of the traditions developed in the 1960s continued into the 1970s. This was the staging of cultural programs in which theatrical sketches and plays about the patriot leaders of the nation were presented. New activities such as an open house were also initiated by Hernández. On the occasion of the open house, students prepared their bedrooms and participated in a contest to find the best rooms in the men’s and women’s residences. Students were always excited as they waited to see which rooms would win

1Cárdenas, interview.
first, second, and third prizes in each of the dormitories.¹

Fig. 39. INSTIVOC school-day festival

The 1970s were different from the 1960s with the development of the practice of graduation and the institutional traditions that became a part of these celebrations. The students soon grew to consider it an “immense privilege” to be part of the graduation class.² Hernández implemented activities such as a graduation class project, intended to build attachments to the school among students who would soon complete their program of studies at INSTIVOC. At the same time, the project was intended to make a contribution to the school. Among the most notable of the graduation projects in the

¹Eufracio Oropeza, interview by author, 30 November 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Oropeza was a student from 1969-75.

²Almérida, interview.
1970s were those of 1973\textsuperscript{1} and 1974\textsuperscript{2} which added beauty and class to the campus entrance.

In reviewing the social life of the 1970s, great credit should be given to the innovations that Hernández introduced. He seemed to be a leader with great ideas and the ability to implement them. He developed the yearly fair, the all-day beach trip, the open house, and the school graduation projects. These innovations, along with the new sports and social facilities on campus, are examples of how the school was growing and maturing in the area of social activities and recreation during this decade.\textsuperscript{3} This growth was an important counterpart to the growth in student enrollment, financial consolidation, and industrial development that took place in the 1970s. The social events were among the most important activities for maintaining a sense of "family" in the rapidly growing institution. For students and staff alike, there was a sense of the value of holding onto this spirit of community as the school grew larger.

Spiritual Life

The spiritual life of the 1970s was shaped by a renewed spiritual agenda in the school produced by the frequent weeks of prayer led by Hernández and López. There was a change in emphasis in the 1970s. During the 1960s a great deal of effort was put into

\textsuperscript{1}This project was the construction of the "main gate of the school." INSTIVOC Administrativa, 16 March 1973, 107.

\textsuperscript{2}This project was the construction of "gardens along the avenue from the main gate to the school." Ibid., 17 February 1974, 143.

\textsuperscript{3}On Hernández’ promotion of sport, see chapter 6, under “Social life.”
making use of student talent as preachers, whereas the 1970s saw an emphasis on invitations to prominent pastors and leaders as speakers.¹

The weeks of prayer continued to be the most powerful tool to set the spiritual tone in the school. Among the weeks of prayer best remembered by students was the one presented by Pastor J. W. Zachrison. According to Eufracio Oropeza, a student from 1969-75, “several students, at this particular week of prayer, saw a manifestation of the face of Jesus over the house of the administrator.” Motivated by this event, the students themselves started a follow-up week of prayer right away, and many students surrendered their lives to Jesus Christ. These included Oropeza who at the time of this writing, is a pastor in Venezuela.²

Another important innovation of the 1970s in terms of student involvement in spiritual activities came from Ivan Omaña. Omaña was the assistant pastor for the school church. His idea was to organize a church choir (see figure 40). The performances of the school choir became well known among the Adventist churches in Venezuela because it became a custom for the choir to go on promotion trips to the main cities.³ Singing in the choir and participation in the promotion tours developed among students a spirit of involvement and service in positive Christian activities. The tours also enhanced the community spirit and school ethos, and built a sense of the importance of Christian education among the students, parents, and even the general church membership.

¹Oropeza, interview.
²Ibid.
³Jorge Omaña, interview, also, INSTIVOC Administrativa, 6 June 1972, 075.
The ingathering campaign continued to be an important church-related activity in the yearly calendar as it had been in the 1960s, and the collaboration of students and teachers strengthened the bonds between the two groups, building a strong sense of Christian community.¹

A campus activity new to the 1970s was the creation of a “Colporteur Club.”² This club worked together with those involved in the Saturday afternoon community visitation program. The club members made follow-up calls to homes that had been visited on Saturday afternoons. The Saturday visits often included distribution of free church literature and missionary magazines. On Sundays the colporteurs went out to try to sell denominational books and magazines to homes where some interest had been shown.³

¹INSTIVOC Administrativa, 9 April 1972, 067.

²“The Colporteur Club” is a student-supported organization which enroll students involved in selling health and Christian books. This activity is supported by the Adventist organization and helps students find resources to pay school fees.

³Ibid.
Hernández and López reported that the teachers' retreats implemented in this decade became an important source in setting the teachers' spiritual tone before the school reopened each year. The focus of these retreats was to clarify the purpose of Christian education to the school staff. Among the important personalities invited to share their spiritual and educational insights at these retreats were Charles E. Taylor, the Inter-American Division educational director at the time. Taylor made two visits to the Nirgua campus for this purpose in the 1970s.

It is evident that the teachers as well as the students were involved in a broad range of missionary endeavors. During this decade, the staff did not limit their spiritual leadership only to their students. A number of teachers prepared and presented evangelistic crusades and worked toward the opening of a local SDA church in the town of Nirgua. Alternative ways of witnessing were also used, such as a plan to give financial assistance to the Nirgua nursing home.

In spite of numerous spiritual activities implemented by Hernández and López in order to set a high spiritual tone at the school, the lack of a church building on the campus remained a major drawback. The idea of building a church on campus became a priority in this decade. In response to the felt need, López presented the school's concern to the

1 INSTIVOC Local, 24 June 1971, 042.
2 INSTIVOC Directiva, 10 June 1974, 154.
3 For this purpose an evangelist from ICOLVEN was invited, and the "costs were covered by the school." INSTIVOC Administrativa, 11 November 1971, 047.
4 An allocation of "200 bolivars" was made for this project. Ibid., 12 March 1974, 145.
union for its consideration. He followed up on the school church project by appointing a school employee to devote 50 percent of his time to raising funds for the church project. Half of the estimated budget for this building, which exceeded 600,000 bolivars, was collected by the López administration in 1978. To start the project, blueprints were acquired from the Costa Rica SDA Union College.

The period of the López administration saw massive efforts and energy put forth to reach the financial goals needed to build a church on the Nirgua campus. Although much of this energy was generated by the work and enthusiasm of López, the church building was constructed only in the late 1970s and early 1980s after his departure. However, the efforts to build the church were as much a blessing to the school community before 1980 as the church building has been since the early 1980s.

During the 1970s Hernández and López focused on a number of programs and initiatives that were instrumental in developing a quality program and a secure operation. The spiritual aspects of these developments were of paramount importance. INSTIVOC was not intended just to be a good school. The Adventist philosophy of education was uppermost in the minds of the administrators of the time, and so the spiritual component of campus life was an area in which they strove for excellence. The impact upon the students and the important life choices that these students made was significant. This has

1INSTIVOC Directiva, 28 January 1974, 142.
2López appointed José Franco for this work. Ibid., 12 September 1974, 160.
3INSTIVOC Directiva, 4 August 1975, 188.
4Ibid., 14 December 1978, 236.
been demonstrated by the review of the spiritual activities in which they were involved, and by the reflections of some of these students in interviews held with them.

**Summary**

The 1970s were key years in the development of INSTIVOC. During this decade the school experienced important growth in finances and enrollment, leading INSTIVOC into an important period of consolidation. This consolidation came as a result of the leadership of Hernández and López who seemed devoted to an industrial emphasis in the school as a key element in meeting their educational goals. These administrators were both determined, in accordance with Adventist educational philosophy, to provide a wholesome and wholistic education available to any dedicated and determined Adventist student, even to those with low-incomes. The work-study program and the inclusion of industrial education in the curriculum were important aspects of this strategy.

School growth did not come easily, and a period of relative financial difficulty in 1972-73 tested the leadership of Hernández in his ability to reverse the situation. This chapter also presents the turning point from an emphasis on school construction to a concern for aesthetics and campus beautification. In addition, this was a time for ensuring that the various elements of the school program were well supported and that the overall operation of the buildings and upkeep of the grounds were maintained.

This chapter has emphasized the manner in which the school program was strengthened, and how the existing facilities and programs were supported. The primary sources on which the chapter is based demonstrate a significant shift in focus from
construction and development to consolidation and support. The history of this vital
eriod in the life of INSTIVOC is illustrated and enlivened by a number of interesting
testimonies of students and teachers from this time.

At the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s the leadership of the Nirgua
school was turned over to Venezuelan nationals, whose vision for the future included a
search for academic maturity that would allow for the development of college-level
curricula. This is the subject of the next chapter.
CHAPTER V

LOOKING FOR MATURITY (1979-1989)

Introduction

In the 1980s, Venezuelan democracy maintained and developed its strength as the two main parties continued to share power. The SDA school in Nirgua searched for new challenges by exploring academic needs and opportunities and offering expanded options to the youth of the church. The first-year theological program was the earliest excursion into the field of tertiary education. The program proposal was well supported by the school leaders and led to a formal petition being presented to the Ministry of Education requesting permission to open the Instituto Universitario Eclesiastico Adventista (INSTIVEN) in 1986. This event was an important milestone in the long search for an academic maturity that would allow the institution to deliver college level instruction and so meet the challenge of one of its founding purposes: to prepare qualified human resources for the Venezuelan Adventist Church.

This period was shaped by the leadership of three school principals: Gustavo Garrido (1979-1983), Ivan Omaña (1983-1985), and Gamaliel Flórez (1985-1989). The quest to offer college instruction was an initiative during the preparatory period in which the school buildings were modernized and preparatory work was done on proposed
academic curricula. The fact that college status was not achieved until the 1990s does not diminish the importance of the steps taken towards this end in the 1980s. It is to this period of intensive groundwork in preparation for achieving college status that this chapter is devoted.

**Context of the 1980s**

**Government**

During the 1980s, as in the previous decade, the presidential office was shared in turn by the leadership of the two main political parties in Venezuela. The period of COPEI\(^1\) leadership under Luis Herrera (1979-1983) was followed by the AD\(^2\) government of Jaime Lusinchi (1983-1989). The two main parties captured almost 90 percent of the vote, and a bipartisan governmental coalition continued to lead the nation during this decade.

Early in his term of office, President Herrera announced his austere approach to national fiscal management. Concerned about inflationary trends, he cut subsidies that encouraged consumer spending and raised interest rates to encourage saving. However, the elimination of price controls contributed to the rise in inflation from 1979-83 (see appendix D, on inflation rate) and, exacerbated by the low petroleum prices in the early 1980s, unemployment rose to 20 percent by 1983.\(^3\) The financial difficulties that the

\(^1\)See chapter 3, under "Government."

\(^2\)See chapter 2, under "Government."

\(^3\)Haggerty, 35-36.
country experienced in the early 1980s were reflected in the enrollment trends at
INSTIVOC during this decade.

Lusinchi attempted to reverse the economic crisis of 1983 by devaluing the
currency, establishing a multi-tier exchange-rate system, implementing greater import
protections, giving increased attention to the country’s agriculture industry by aiming at
self-sufficiency in food production, and, in contrast to his predecessor, by the generous
use of producer and consumer subsidies. These measures brought about modest growth
from 1985-88. By 1989, however, the economy could no longer support such high rates
of subsidy, strapped as it was by an increasing foreign debt burden. The revenue structure
remained excessively dependent on oil income, and this lack of diversity militated against
a more even and healthy distribution of wealth.¹

Education

The “Ley Orgánica de Educación” (Organic Law of Education) of 26 July 1980
was a high point in the twenty-two years of democracy enjoyed by Venezuela since 1958.
This law was a compendium of the best statutes relating to education that had been
enacted during the early years of the young democracy. The levels of education
established by this law were: pre-school, basic, middle diversified, and professional-
higher.² Undergraduate- and graduate-level tertiary education had been

¹Ibid, 84-85.

²Pre-school was one year of kindergarten; basic education was grades one to nine;
middle diversified was grade ten and eleven; and professional-higher related to the
university years encompassing associate and baccalaureate degree programs.
differentiated by laws enacted as early as 1968.¹

Compulsory, free instruction was required in the first two levels (pre-school and basic education). This meant that state-supported compulsory education was extended from six years to nine years. The nine years of basic education were further subdivided into three levels of three years each. The first level emphasized mathematics and language, the second emphasized nationality and social identity, and the third level emphasized science and career orientation. The Ministry of Education mandated incorporation of the three levels in the basic educational curriculum by 1985.² To meet these requirements, the SDA school in Nirgua adopted the changes in 1985 and added "Unidad Educativa" to its official name, thus U.E. INSTIVOC.

The middle diversified curriculum (grades ten to eleven) was largely unchanged and continued to be a formal preparation for the universities or university institutes. Nevertheless, a new system for placement of students in post-secondary educational institutions was implemented. Candidates were required to take the "Prueba de Aptitud Academica."³ The test has been administered at INSTIVOC since 1984 in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Education, which still remain in effect. The

¹Institutions were distinguished from each other as, for example, universities, university pedagogic institutes, university polytechnic institutes, technology institutes, military academies, specialized graduate institutions for educational formation and research, and advanced graduate institutes for cultural and national development.

²Nacarid Rodríguez, Historia de la Educación Venezolana, 272-276.

³"Prueba de Aptitud Academica" is a mandatory national test taken by senior-high-school students in Venezuela to provide academic information and student preferences to universities in the national and private educational sectors.
revisions in educational law in the 1980s did not significantly alter the role of the Venezuelan government and Ministry of Education in the operation of private schools, and these bodies continued to influence the Nirgua curriculum significantly. The curricula revisions at the secondary level were completed by the middle of the decade and attention was then focused on plans to offer post-secondary instruction on the Nirgua campus.

SDA Church

The membership growth of the SDA Church in Venezuela during the 1980s is presented in table 18. Membership increased from 17,779 in 1979 to a total of 39,720 in 1989. This represents growth of over 100 percent through the decade. The sustained growth of Adventism was an important factor in INSTIVOC’s search to provide further opportunities for SDA youth in post-secondary instructional programs.

The rapid growth of the SDA church in Venezuela during the 1980s, and a military conflict in 1986 between Colombia and Venezuela, resulted in a reorganization of denominational administrative structures involving these two nations. A new “Unión Venezolana Antillana” (UVA) was created in 1989, ending the oversight of the SDA church in Venezuela by the headquarters office in Colombia. During the last half of the 1980s it was becoming clear that there would eventually be a need for an Adventist seminary in Venezuela, and as the decade came to a close this need became a priority for the school leadership.1

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Table 18. SDA Growth in Venezuela 1979-89

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Churches</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>17,779</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>14,587,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>19,414</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>15,091,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>20,780</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>15,480,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>23,004</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>15,879,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>24,479</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>16,288,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>25,721</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>16,708,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>28,254</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>17,138,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>31,135</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>17,587,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>33,781</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>18,047,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>36,620</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>18,520,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>39,720</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>19,004,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


School Leadership in the 1980s

The administration of INSTIVOC in the 1980s was characterized by a change to local leadership after two decades of mostly foreign principals. Gustavo Garrido, Iván Omaha, and Gamaliel Flórez continued the search for ways to extend the academic program and to modernize the campus in order to host a post-secondary program.

Garrido Era

The principal who served as leader of the school when it entered the 1980s was Pastor Gustavo Garrido (1979-1983). Garrido, who was called initially as a literature
teacher in 1967, became one of the school's most prominent and capable instructors. As a result, he was sponsored to Andrews University in the mid-1970s. His most important contribution came after December 1978 when he was asked by the school board to be the fourth principal of INSTIVOC. At the time, Garrido's wife, Magaly, served as school librarian. The couple had two children and, during the years their father was principal, both the son and daughter attended the Nirgua school (see figure 41).

Fig. 41. Garrido family.

Garrido has been variously described by his colleagues as an "ideal Christian man," an "introvert," and a man of "few words." In spite of his apparent reticence, one

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1INSTIVOC Local, 30 August 1967, 112.

2Ibid., 14 December 1978, 237.

3Canaima 1973, 1.

4Gonzalo Pico, interview. Pico was the boys' dean during the Garrido years.

5Dulce De Rodriguez, interview. Rodriguez was an English teacher at the time of the Garrido Administration.
of his major strengths was his capacity to inspire confidence. Garrido’s colleagues trusted him and knew that he would listen to their concerns. In addition, they could rely on the fact that he would not divulge information that they shared with him. He was patient, caring, and self-controlled. Garrido’s respect for others inspired in them a respect for him. And very importantly, Garrido was a Christian scholar, a man who loved education, and believed in its ability to transform lives.

Garrido’s critics focus on the introspective aspects of his personality, suggesting that his performance as leader was negatively impacted by his reserve. Garrido was not a forceful individual and was seen as slow to make decisions. His serious personality and lack of charisma meant that the students did not consider him a popular leader.¹

Garrido was assisted by “Professor” Gilberto Bracho,² another prominent teacher who was appointed at this time as school vice-principal,³ and by a staff of dedicated teachers appointed during previous administrations (see figure 42 and appendix C).⁴

¹Interpretations based on anonymous interviews, due to the sensitive nature of the information.

²Although Bracho did not receive the title of professor in terms of an institutional academic policy, this title has been used for him for many years as a sign of respect. He is neither a doctor nor a pastor, and therefore students and staff have felt it appropriate to refer to him as professor.

³INSTIVOC Directiva, 14 December 1978, 337. Except for a study leave to Andrews University in the mid-1970s, Bracho served as a science teacher after his appointment at the school in 1967.

⁴For example; “Franklin Caicedo, David Poloche, Magaly de Garrido, José Viscaya, Oliva de Flórez, Mercedes Gómez, Moisés Huérzano, Iván Omaña, Gonzalo Pico, Evelyn de Omaña, Hugo García, Leonardo Suéscún, Noel Ramírez, Bertha Fermin, Gustavo Garrido, Genoveva de Viscaya, Esperanza de Pico, Juan Rodríguez, Neria Calderón, Ted Mohr, Luisa de Gutiérrez, Elizabeth de Rivas, and Juana de Pacheco.”
Among the most prominent persons on Garrido’s staff was Gonzalo Parada, who was responsible for school finances at this time. Parada’s dedication, financial skills, and leadership in developing the buildings and other physical aspects of the campus made him one of the most appreciated and respected treasurers in the history of the school.

In 1983, Garrido left the Nirgua school and was appointed pastor of an Adventist congregation in the West Venezuela Mission. When the “Unión Venezolana Antillana” was organized in 1989, he became the union educational leader until 1994 when he passed away.¹

The Garrido era was characterized by a positive push toward offering post-secondary instruction in the school. Garrido’s energy, commitment, and personal involvement are a testimony to the deep-felt desire he had for transforming the secondary school into an Adventist “junior college.” He himself presented the

¹Dulce de Rodríguez, “In Memoriam,” Canaima 1994, 16.
request to the Inter-American Division in 1982.¹

The most visible legacy of the Garrido era is a consequence of the strong emphasis placed on improving the physical facilities at the school by building a church, a library and a new administration building. The church construction project, which occupied most of his years as school administrator, became a special concern for him. He was able to see this project through to completion before he left the school.²

Among Garrido's other contributions was an improvement in employee-hiring practices. In order to avoid legal problems that had occurred following the dismissal of some employees, he established clear policies relating to staff with "missionary credentials" and those who were "contract workers." He created a ten-month employment agreement between the school and contract teachers,³ and supported the implementation of full-benefit payment packages as required by the Venezuelan Ministry of Labor.⁴

Finally, Garrido is also credited with the modernization of school equipment at the dawn of the computer age.⁵ He was instrumental in acquiring the first computers on

¹INSTIVOC Directiva, 23 March 1982, 022. The early initiatives to introduce tertiary education on the Nirgua campus are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

²INSTIVOC Directiva, 18 October 1982, 032.

³Ibid., 11 September 1980, 263.

⁴Examples of those who were classified as "contract workers" were; "Lucelly Ramírez, Bertilde de Fermín, José Córdenas, Ramón Fermín, Agueda de Córdenas, César Gallegos, Inés de Figueroa." INSTIVOC Directiva, 01 August 1981, 012. These contract workers had received pay-packages lower than those for individuals with missionary credentials, and their years of work were not counted toward SDA retirement benefits.

⁵INSTIVOC Directiva, 22 December 1981, 019.
campus to update and maintain student records. He left the school in 1983 at the end of a period of intensive, visionary, and effective leadership. Following an outstanding career as school teacher and administrator, he took up duties as a district clergyman, and Iván Omaña took over the leadership at INSTIVOC.

Omaña Era

Dr. Iván Omaña came to the school for the first time in 1968 as boys’ dormitory dean and assistant pastor. He went to Puerto Rico from 1970-74, returning to INSTIVOC in 1974 as the school pastor. In 1978 he left the school to take up responsibilities as a departmental director in the West Venezuela Mission. In 1983 he returned to INSTIVOC for the third time, now as school principal, a position in which he served for less than two years. Omaña and his wife, Evelyn had three boys during their years at Nirgua (see figure 43).

Fig. 43. Omaña family.

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1Ibid., 13 December 1982, 078.

2Ivan Omaña, interview by author, 1 December 1999, Barquisimento, tape recording. Omaña worked at INSTIVOC as men's dean, church pastor, and principal, for more than eight years, then served as president of the school board for over ten years.
Omáňa's commitment to the school extended beyond his years as principal. Later on, for more than eleven years, he served as president of "Unión Venezolana Antillana" and was chairman of the school board from 1989-2000.\(^1\) His qualities of spiritual leadership were noteworthy and, in a vote of thanks recorded in the school minutes at the time of his departure, it was noted that he was a leader who "elevated the spirituality of the school."\(^2\) At the time of this writing, Omáňa continues his service to the church as the first Venezuelan to be appointed to a leadership position in the Inter-American Division headquarters.

Omáňa was considered by his colleagues to be at the same time both "spontaneous and consecrated."\(^3\) He was also described as "positive and persuasive."\(^4\) Among his major strengths were his skill in fostering positive relationships, his charismatic leadership style, and his pastoral demeanor. Omáňa was also a good role model of family love and devotion.

Omáňa's abilities as a charismatic leader stemmed from his concern for people. Criticisms raised against Omáňa center on this concern of his for relationships. His pastoral attitudes were seen by some as sentimentalism. In the context of an Adventist

\(^1\)Ibid.

\(^2\)INSTIVOC Directiva, 2 January 1985, 078.

\(^3\)Dulce de Rodríguez, interview. Rodríguez was an English teacher during the Omáňa administration.

\(^4\)Robinson Urdaneta, interview. Urdaneta was a Venezuelan pastor and SDA mission director during the Omáňa Administration.
workforce that—sadly—tends to place work above family, Omaña has been criticized for making family concerns his first priority. Though it is a sad reflection on the “driven” Adventist lifestyle, this particular criticism of Omaña was more than a concern about time spent with his family as opposed to time spent at work. Omaña was not a slacker. The criticisms hints at family favoritism, and also partiality toward friends. Finally, to some it appeared that Omaña was overly ambitious for high office in the SDA church.¹

During his short period as school principal, in addition to the regular staff and teachers (see figure 44, and appendix C),² Omaña had a capable administrative team led by Simón Perdomo who served as vice-principal, and David Poloche, an INSTIVOC alumnus, who was school treasurer.³

Among Omaña’s most important contributions was the completion of the library and administration building started by Garrido. The new building was inaugurated by Omaña in 1984. The completion of this building gave the school the physical structures it

¹Interpretations based on anonymous interviews, due to the sensitive nature of the information.

²For example; “Simón Perdomo, David Poloche, Abel Linares, Gustavo Alvarez, Inmaculada de Gallardo, Eduardo Gómez, Evelyn de Omaña, Eufracio Oropeza, Mercedes Gómez, Evélia de Rodríguez, Gamaliel Flórez, Eduardo Gallardo, Carmen de Oliveros, Jorge Pacheco, Juan Reyes, Dulce de Rodríguez, Rubiela de Reyes, Arleny Guevara, Emilio Oliveros, Nancy Montilla, Oliva de Flórez, José Salinas, Secundino Rodríguez, Fernando Guzmán, Carmen de Guzmán, Luisa de Gutiérrez, Belkis de Alvarez, and Juanita de Pacheco.” Taken from appendix C, 1984-1985.

³David Poloche, interview by author, 1 December 1999, Barquisimentos, tape recording. Poloche was an INSTIVOC student during the 1970s, and INSTIVOC school treasurer for most of the 1980s.
needed to operate post-secondary programs on the campus.¹

In addition to ensuring that the physical facilities were ready for a tertiary-level program, Omaha strongly supported the first-year theology program initiated by Garrido. Omaha attempted to extend the program from one year to two by pointing out that, in addition to the prohibitive travel costs, it was difficult at that time for Venezuelans to get student visas for travel to Colombia for the purpose of ministerial training.²

Finally, Omaha’s commitment to transform the secondary school into a college was manifested by his appeal to develop curricula in “computers, music, graphic arts, secretarial studies, and agriculture.” He pointed out that these programs were in great demand by students as well as being of interest to the Ministry of Education.³ In 1985 Omaha left the school in response to an invitation to become secretary of the Unión

¹With the construction of the library and administration offices, the school classrooms, student residences, cafeteria, and industrial buildings, the school presented a well developed physical plant. INSTIVOC Directiva, 4 May 1983, 045.

²Ibid., 28 February 1984, 058.

³Ibid., 15 May 1984, 061.
Colombo-Venezolana (UCV). He was succeeded as INSTIVOC principal by Pastor Gamaliel Flórez.

Flórez Era

Gamaliel Flórez, who was the church school pastor from 1978-84, became Omaña's successor in 1985. He seemed to be the right person for the position because he was well informed about the school operations. His experience as a school teacher and pastor gave continuity to the Omaña projects at the school. Flórez was married to Oliva. The couple had three children who were all raised in Nirgua (see figure 45).

Fig. 45. Flórez family.

Co-workers have characterized Flórez as being "formal and correct" in his approach and leadership style. At the same time he was highly regarded as a Christian and a man of integrity. Like Omaña before him, Flórez projected himself as a pastor.

1 Ibid., 9 December 1984. 076.
2 Dulce de Rodríguez, interview. Rodríguez was a Spanish teacher during the Flórez administration.
As a leader, Florez was very calm and dignified.

Florez' critics suggested that he did not have clear goals for his term as school principal. In looking at his record, this criticism appears a little hard to justify. He was instrumental in submitting the first application for tertiary-level status to the Ministry of Education. A concern that cannot so easily be countered is one that suggests his appointment as principal was based more on family connections than on a proven track record of educational leadership. At the time of his appointment as school principal, Flórez' father was president of the Columbia-Venezuela Union.¹

The Flórez administrative team was made up of Simón Perdomo, the vice-principal, and David Poloche, the school treasurer.² There was also by this time a strong core of qualified, well-experienced, and long-serving teachers in the school (see figure 46 and appendix C).³

Flórez, like his predecessor, steadfastly envisioned and eagerly planned for the offering of accredited post-secondary instruction on the Nirgua campus. The Flórez administration (1985-1988) moved forward in its goal to transform the school into a

¹Interpretations based on anonymous interviews, due to the sensitive nature of the information.
²Ibid.
³For example; “Simón Perdomo, David Poloche, Abel Linares, Gustavo Alvarez, Inmaculada de Gallardo, Eufracio Oroveza, Mónica de Ibañez, David Manrique, Eduardo Gallardo, Carmen de Oliveros, Jorge Pacheco, Dulce de Rodríguez, Adanay Smart, Noel Ramirez, Charles Smart, Julia de Campos, Carmen de Guzmán, Fabio García, Ebert Madgdaleno, Néelson Avila, Emilio Oliveros, Margarita de Linarez, Celia Silva, Julián Narváez, Nancy Montilla, Oliva de Flórez.” This group of experienced teachers is taken from Appendix C, 1986-87.
college by implementing the first formal study to document the plans and preparations for tertiary-level education. An accreditation proposal for the creation of "Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista" (INSTIVEN) was developed and submitted to the Ministry of Education in 1986.

The "INSTIVEN Project," as it became known, was the most important contribution Flórez made to the development of the Nirgua school. The fulfillment of the vision took much longer than Flórez would have hoped, but the action that he took signaled an important point of departure. The fact is that he set in motion a formal process that would eventually lead to a tertiary academic program fully approved by the Venezuelan government, and this was an important step in the journey toward institutional maturity. The proposal was presented to the Ministry of Education in 1986.

1INSTIVOC Administrativa, 16 April 1986, 102. The development of INSTIVEN is discussed more fully below in this chapter.

2Ibid., 6 August 1986, 108; and “Proyecto de Creación Instituto Universitario Adventista (INSTIVEN): Estudio Técnico,” 1 August 1986.
The official response was given in 1989, by which time Flórez had already left the school.

During his time as principal, Flórez saw the necessity of employing assistant deans for the boys' residences. Due to the closure of the first-year theology program on the Nirgua campus,¹ it had become difficult to find mature students to assist in running the residence halls. To overcome this problem, Flórez employed recent ministerial graduates from the Instituto Colombo-Venezolano. Working in harmony with the two Venezuelan missions, the school provided ministerial internship opportunities for recent graduates returning to their homeland from study programs in Colombia. The missions actually provided the salaries for these interns.²

Keeping the school facilities well maintained and used to full capacity seemed to be an important issue to Flórez. The campus was frequently requested as a venue to hold spiritual retreats among the SDA churches, and Flórez initiated procedures to avoid misunderstandings with the visitors. Instead of oral agreements, which may have been in order when the campus and the church organizations were smaller, he introduced policies outlining procedures for visitors on campus. If facilities were to be used for conventions, financial arrangements were to be finalized ahead of time.³ In this way, Flórez ensured that dealings with on-campus visitors were done in a professional way. This made the facility an attractive venue for many functions.

¹See below in this chapter, under “First Year of Theology.”

²Ibid., 17 June 1987, 131.

³Gamaliel Flórez, interview by author, 1 May 2001, Berrien Springs to Medellin, phone.
Finally, it is evident that Flórez was a person who loved to recognize his employees. He also thought it was important to honor persons who had made significant contributions to the development of the school. He organized a celebration for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the school and created an award to bestow on school “fundadores” (founders). He left his post as principal with high expectations that the school would receive approval from the Ministry of Education to begin offering post-secondary instruction. In an interview with Flórez, he commented that, in looking back, he feels he should have stayed on a little longer as principal to help expedite the development toward tertiary-level status. Apparently the government rejection of the proposal for post-secondary status in 1989 still hangs heavy upon his heart.

After his departure in 1988, Flórez became the education director of the West Venezuelan Mission. At the time of this writing he continues to work for the Adventist organization as the president of Colombia Adventist University in the city of Medellin, Colombia. The fact that he now holds this position is a positive reflection upon his leadership and accomplishments while he was at Nirgua.

School Modernization and Growth in the 1980s

Following the industrial emphasis of the 1970s, in the 1980s the physical plant of the Nirgua school was significantly expanded and modernized through two important projects. These were the construction of the campus church, and the building of a library

\[1\] The “fundadores” awards required school board approval. Award recipients received a “medal and a scroll.” INSTIVOC Administrativa, 2 December 1986, 119.

\[2\] Gamailiel Flórez, interview.
and administration complex. The projects were challenges for the school finances, but they were important in upgrading the campus in preparation for the development of the university institute project during this decade.

Church Building

The idea of constructing a church building originated in the mid-1970s. In 1974 firm steps toward realizing the dream of a campus church were taken by allocating 50 percent of the workload of José Franco, the carpenter, to raising funds for this project.¹ As soon as Franco was placed in charge, the first master plan of the church building was created to be used as a visual aid to raise funds.²

Half of the funds needed were collected within three years and involved portions of the farm industry profit.³ By 1978, with 300,000 bolivars available, the first phase of construction was approved. This included completion of the foundations and walls. Garrido supported the idea of copying the architectural plans of the church at Central America Union College because of the beauty and capacity of that building. The plans were acquired and adapted. Construction began in 1979.⁴

By 1980 the initial funds were exhausted, and the first phase of the building

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¹INSTIVOC Directiva, 12 September 1974, 161

²The total project was “estimated at 600,000 bolivars, with an initial foundational phase estimated at 160,000 bolivars.” Ibid., 4 August 1975, 188.

³See above, chapter 4, under “López Era.”

⁴Approval was given by the school board to “spend up to 100,000 bolivars on materials to begin construction of the church.” INSTIVOC Directiva, 14 December 1978, 236-7.
project was completed. The second phase included the roof structure. Work on this phase was started at the beginning of 1980. At the same time Garrido presented the dilemma of the lack of funds to the Venezuelan missions, and sought their approval for a fund-raising program in the most prominent SDA churches in the territory. As they had done in the 1960s, the Adventist membership responded to this challenge with sacrificial giving.

In 1981, inflation in Venezuela rose to over 20 percent (see appendix D) affecting the ability of the school to pay for the church building project. As a consequence, the Garrido administration had to use some of the school's reserve funds to complete the church building. There were some delays, and several tentative dates were set for the inauguration of the church in anticipation of the culmination of the venture. Finally, on Sunday, 31 January 1982, a massive congregation of more than one thousand people was present at the inauguration ceremony (see figure 47). Along with the local membership and school family, the congregation was made up of friends and benefactors of the school as well as visitors from many of the SDA churches that had supported the project through the years.

With completion of this important building, the school had a house of prayer representative of its Christian heritage. This enhanced the spiritual elements of school

1The company awarded the roof construction contract was “Taller Coteco.” Ibid., 29 January 1980, 255.


life by providing a focal point for the worship of God and the enrichment of religious experience. While a church building is not a requirement for the implementation of an Adventist educational philosophy, having a physical church structure on the Nirgua campus has become a strong symbolic reminder of the spiritual element that is so important to the wholistic approach of an Adventist education. The church has not only been a reminder of the need to consider the heart as well as the head and the hand in a balanced educational system. It has also played an important role in focusing the vision of the school leaders on the need to establish a seminary to provide pastoral leadership for the churches in Venezuela.

![INSTIVOC church building](Fig. 47. INSTIVOC church building.)

Library and Administration Building

The other project that changed the campus layout in the 1980s was the library and administration building. Since 1966, when the school moved to the Nirgua campus, the

1That is, the mental, physical, and spiritual elements. See chapter 1, “SDA Educational Philosophy.”
administrative offices had been located in temporary space in various school buildings. From 1966-71 they were in the men’s residence.\(^1\) From 1971-78 they were housed on the second floor of the women’s residence.\(^2\) And from 1978-84 the offices operated out of the typing room in what is today the back end of the gymnasium (see appendix K).\(^3\)

Through all these years the library also changed locations, from time to time being housed in such places as a spare classroom or an outlying industrial building.

In 1981, the Garrido administration approved plans for a three-story building to house permanently the hitherto nomadic administrative offices and library. A location between the classrooms and the main school road was chosen.\(^4\)

In 1982, an important decision was made to entrust the project to the capable hands of José Franco,\(^5\) and the construction began. When construction funds from the school were exhausted, Franco offered to finance the project over a thirty-month period with interest-free payments.\(^6\) Franco’s good will was stretched to the limit by the difficult financial situation into which the national economy was soon plunged. Omaña, who had recently taken over as principal, approved an emergency plan to pay back the loan to

\(^1\)Rosa Franco, interview.

\(^2\)INSTIVOC Directiva, 7 January 1971, 030.

\(^3\)Ibid., 14 December 1978, 237. For more details on layout plans, see appendix K.

\(^4\)Ibid., 14 May 1981, 006.

\(^5\)José Franco at this time was no longer a school employee. He was an independent contractor.

\(^6\)INSTIVOC Directiva, 13 December 1982, 036.
Franco within eighteen months instead of the thirty as stated in the original contract.\textsuperscript{1}

Finally, in 1984, the administration and library building was finished, and on 29 July, Omaña presided over the inaugural ceremony of this important addition to the campus.\textsuperscript{2} The building became a symbol of the modernity of the school, and served as inspiration for further improving the physical plant in preparation for the college project submitted to the Ministry of Education (see figure 48).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{library_administration_building.png}
\caption{INSTIVOC library and administration building.}
\end{figure}

Other Building Projects

In addition to the two main projects that occupied the attention of the administrative teams of the early 1980s, there was also a series of minor projects, listed in table 19, which contributed to improving the school facilities.

The purpose of these construction projects was mainly to increase the capacity and improve conditions in the school’s existing buildings and operations. The guest rooms,

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid., 4 May 1983, 045.
\textsuperscript{2}Ibid., 15 May 1984, 061.
printing facilities, laundry, and children’s rooms in the church all enhanced the quality of
campus life and service. The new teachers’ houses and garbage incinerator took care of
needs resulting from expanded institutional operations. One other project worthy of
mention was the laying of walkways on campus. Though this project was not of the same
magnitude as some of the others that were undertaken, it resulted in a much more
beautiful school campus. INSTIVOC was taking on the appearance of a mature and
established campus with facilities that could support a higher educational initiative.

Table 19. INSTIVOC Construction in the 1980s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Construction of guest room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Construction of a garbage incinerator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Construction of sidewalks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Expansion of the print shop facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Construction of teachers’ residences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Construction of new school laundry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Construction of children’s church rooms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data taken from INSTIVOC Directiva, 1981-88.

School Finances

In analyzing the school finances presented in table 20, it is evident that the
financial crisis that overtook Venezuela in the 1980s had a strong impact on the Nirgua
school finances. The most readily noticeable change was a reduction in enrollment.1 At
the same time it is important to note the considerable success that treasurers such as Prada

1See below in this chapter, “School Enrollment.”
and Poloche had in dealing with the crisis and operating the school in spite of the difficult financial circumstances.

Table 20. INSTIVOC Balance 1979-89

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>Liability</th>
<th>Net Worth</th>
<th>Working Capital</th>
<th>Liquidity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>3,890,038</td>
<td>220,998</td>
<td>3,669,050</td>
<td>1,281,995=38%</td>
<td>680%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>4,286,918</td>
<td>618,545</td>
<td>3,668,373</td>
<td>1,407,883=35%</td>
<td>328%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>5,018,377</td>
<td>919,430</td>
<td>4,098,947</td>
<td>1,878,400=37%</td>
<td>304%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>5,986,035</td>
<td>1,282,083</td>
<td>4,703,951</td>
<td>2,548,374=44%</td>
<td>299%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>5,619,956</td>
<td>881,703</td>
<td>4,738,252</td>
<td>2,329,403=36%</td>
<td>364%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>5,162,992</td>
<td>579,149</td>
<td>4,583,842</td>
<td>2,248,294=28%</td>
<td>488%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>5,539,231</td>
<td>743,376</td>
<td>4,795,855</td>
<td>2,655,837=32%</td>
<td>457%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>8,022,052</td>
<td>1,043,744</td>
<td>6,978,308</td>
<td>5,444,830=35%</td>
<td>621%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>9,468,915</td>
<td>2,021,772</td>
<td>7,447,143</td>
<td>4,327,404=21%</td>
<td>314%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no available data for the years 1986-87.

The parallel between these figures from the Nirgua school and the national financial crisis is notable. The major devaluation of the Venezuelan currency which took place in 1983 seemed to act directly in eroding the school’s finances. The reduction in assets in table 20 points to 1983-84 as the worst period for the school. Assets fell from 5,986,035 bolivars in 1982 to a 5,162,992 bolivars in 1984. However, while these years were difficult for the school leaders, for the decade as a whole there is an overall growth of 100 percent in assets and net worth as reported in this table.

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1See above in this chapter, under “Government.” Also, appendix D.

2Ibid.
In analyzing school liquidity in this decade, it is evident that the school was impacted negatively by the national crisis. Liquidity at INSTIVOC reached its lowest point in 1982, at 299 percent. However, this high liquidity reveals that the school administration maintained careful control during this difficult period. At no time were the finances allowed to go so low that there was not enough money to cover obligations.

Working capital is an indicator of the capacity of an institution to face the future. During the 1980s there are no negative indices reported in table 20 relating to the Nirgua working capital. In contrast to liquidity, the working capital increased every year from 1979-82, and this positive trend was retained to the end of the decade. The indices as reported are a demonstration of the wisdom of the administrators and treasurers at Nirgua during this financially difficult decade. It is important, however, to recognize that the positive picture presented in table 20 must be balanced by the financial information about the Venezuelan economy presented in appendix D. When the rate of inflation during the 1980s, the cost of living index, and the value of the bolivar against the US dollar are taken into account, the apparent positive financial growth of the decade is seen in a much more modest and realistic light. As an example, using just the inflation rate of 688 percent during the decade for comparison, the increase in working capital of only 337 percent looks rather weak. In the context of the crumbling national economy of the time, even the more modest figures remain remarkably positive.

In summary, it is evident not only from this report but also from the school minutes,¹ that the national financial crisis of the 1980s played a negative role in school

¹For example; INSTIVOC Directiva, 2 January 1985, 078.
finances. It is also clear that this negative impact was controlled by the school treasurers, and the school maintained its equilibrium in spite of the national crisis.

School Enrollment

School enrollment during the 1980s correlated fairly closely with the indicators reflecting the poor national economy during this decade. There was a decrease from 441 students in 1979 to 371 students in 1989. For the decade as a whole, even though there was no growth in student numbers, after 1981 there was also no dramatic fall. An interesting and significant addition to the statistics for this decade is the inclusion of post-secondary enrollment figures. Tertiary-level students were enrolled in the first-year theology program offered at INSTIVOC between 1983 and 1986. See table 21.

Table 21. INSTIVOC Enrollment 1979-89

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Theology</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984-85</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986-87</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987-88</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-89</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: INSTIVOC, “Informe de Apertura de Colegios de Enseñanza Media, a la Unión Colombo-Venezolana, 1979-89.”

The national financial crisis of the 1980s did play an important role in the drop in
enrollment. This was especially true at the secondary level where the loss was almost 100 students, decreasing from 385 to 288 in the decade. To reverse the enrollment situation, Flórez developed a plan to bring in new students. On this plan, the local church paid 30 percent of a student's school fees, the school paid 30 percent, and the students, by work and the financial support of their families, covered the remaining 40 percent.  

In spite of the fact that a strong school promotion program in the local SDA churches was carried out by teachers, and old methods of school promotion such as school choir crusades were used, the strong recession that Venezuela entered in the 1980s was difficult to counteract. Inflation, resulting from the devaluation of the currency in the early 1980s (see appendix D), led to significant increases in school fees. Records of the period show that a yearly school fee of 14,650 bolivars in 1984 had increased by over 100 percent in a matter of four years to 29,150 bolivars in 1987. Even though the increase appears monumental, it was in fact about equivalent to the inflation rate in the country in those days (see appendix D). In spite of the lower school enrollment in the 1980s, Garrido, Omaña, and Flórez saw this time as appropriate for the preparation and implementation of new programs with the ultimate goal of offering accredited post-secondary instruction.

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1Ibid., 21 May 1987, 126.

2Ibid.

3Ibid., 2 August 1984, 069-70.

Search for Academic Maturity in the 1980s

The secondary school program had developed well for more than fourteen years, and the change from the humanities track to an education track was a success in the 1970s. The initial dream of the school’s founders, however, was to prepare students to be full-time workers in the SDA organization. This implied the inclusion of at least a ministerial training program at the school. With this goal in mind, concrete steps were taken in the 1980s toward offering post-secondary instruction on the school campus. These included the first initiative in opening a tertiary-level theology program and the creation of a college project to prepare the institution for national accreditation.

First Year of Theology

The reasons for the limited number of years that the first-year theology program was offered at Nirgua in the 1980s dated back to the 1970s. At that time, responsibility was placed on the Hernández administration to do the necessary research into the possibility of offering the first year of theology at the Nirgua campus. It was proposed that a request be submitted to the Adventist Accrediting Association of Schools Colleges and Universities through the Inter-American Division.

Hernández’s findings supported the idea of tertiary-level education on the Nirgua campus. An official report was submitted by INSTIVOC to the Unión Colombo-Venezolana (UCV) and to Instituto Colombo-Venezolano (ICOLVEN). The report

1See chapter 4, “Curricular and Academic Development.”

2INSTIVOC Directiva, 13 April 1970, 008.
included a request to implement an extension course under the direction of ICOLVEN on the INSTIVOC campus. The original petition in 1971 was supported with a curriculum plan for three quarters that included courses such as, "grammar and composition, English, health principles, introduction to Christian education, introduction to the Old and New Testaments, introduction to the spirit of prophecy, and typing."\(^1\)

Due to the lack of response from the UCV, which seemed to indicate a lack of interest, the project was abandoned until 1977. At this time López made a request to ICOLVEN to re-study the possibility of offering the first year of theology at the Nirgua campus as "soon as possible."\(^2\)

In 1979, Garrido, recognizing the lack of progress in this initiative, created a rationale in support of offering the first year of theology at INSTIVOC. Among the most important arguments presented was the difficulty Venezuelan students had in successfully registering in Venezuelan universities for programs that were already full to capacity. This forced students to lose between one and two years of study before they gained entrance to a university. The rationale argued that if these students took one year of religious studies or theology in an ICOLVEN extension program on the Nirgua campus, the experience would provide them with a solid Adventist foundation once they entered secular programs of study in the Venezuelan university system at a later date. In addition, an exposure to the study of theology would also provide a good opportunity for students to think about ministerial work. It might be expected that some individuals

\(^1\)Ibid., 13 April 1971, 035.

\(^2\)Ibid., 31 May 1977, 214.
would become interested enough to continue in the theology program and go on to Colombia to complete four-year degree. A final argument included in Garrido’s rationale was that the first-year theology program would provide students who had already completed the normal program an opportunity to fulfill the Adventist requirements for certification to teach in Venezuelan SDA schools.

This rationale was presented by Garrido, recorded by the board, and taken seriously by denominational authorities. A plan was drawn up to offer the first year of the theology program on the Nirgua campus beginning in 1982. Finally UCV appointed Pastor Eduardo Gómez as the extension program coordinator. Gómez, who was an experienced SDA pastor and teacher from ICOLVEN, went to Nirgua to facilitate the improvement of academic and library resources before the opening of the program. In October 1982, with an enrollment of seventeen students, the first year of the theology program was offered on the Nirgua campus for the first time. This important step in the development of the school heralded a change in focus that would absorb a considerable amount of time and energy over the next fifteen years. The Nirgua campus was now set upon the challenging pathway to becoming a tertiary-level institution.

Emmer Chacón was one of those first seventeen students. When interviewed about his experiences as a pioneer theology student at INSTIVOC, an enquiry was made

1Government-approved secondary-level program preparing high-school students to be elementary teachers upon graduation.

2INSTIVOC Directiva, 30 July 1979, 248.

3Ibid., 23 March 1982, 021.
as to his reason for enrolling. Chacón replied that it was because he had not been accepted by any Venezuelan university. He decided to take the one-year theology program so as not to lose a year of school. However, he was inspired by the example of his dedicated teachers to continue with the theology program, and today he is an ordained pastor and a theology teacher at Venezuelan Adventist University Institute.¹

Among the difficulties the program faced in the years that followed was the challenge of finding well-qualified teachers. In 1983, the school requested a retired SDA missionary to be a teacher in the program. This was an open call² circulated throughout the Inter-American Division, and it appeared that it was impossible to find one pastor who was willing to come to the Nirgua campus.³ The vacancies had to be filled by local teacher-pastors already at INSTIVOC.

In 1984, Omaha reported a variety of reasons to add a second year to the theology program. Among the most important were the high fees charged to study in Colombia, and the difficulty of getting student visas for Colombia. These difficulties developed in the minds of potential students a negative impression about the prospects for degree completion in Colombia, with the result that many Venezuelan youth did not pursue their interest in continuing theological instruction. The idea of studies so far from home and at such high cost meant that there were few who would accept the challenge. As a

¹Emmer Chacón, interview by author, 5 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording.

²Denominational polices governing requests for personnel allow for “open” calls (service requests to be fulfilled by any qualified person who may be found), or calls to specifically named individuals.

³INSTIVOC Directiva, 4 May 1983, 047. No invitees were willing to come.
consequence, many of the ministers employed by the Venezuelan missions were foreigners.\textsuperscript{1} This situation was far from ideal.

In spite of Omaña's well-reasoned and impassioned plea for approval to offer the second year of the theological program on the Nirgua campus, his voice was not heard. No second-year program was forthcoming, and in fact the coordinator was asked to return to Colombia to teach theology at the main union institution. This placed an intolerable burden on the local administration to maintain an academic affiliation with little support from the governing institution, and eventually the program was closed in 1986. It appeared to the Nirgua administration that their sister institution, ICOLVEN, was hardly interested in establishing any alternatives to their own on-campus program. From this point on, the INSTIVOC administration considered that it was necessary to work diligently for government approval to offer a full ministerial training program independent of the Colombian school. The idea gained momentum in the time of Flórez and, with the close of the first year of the theology program, there was a strong impetus to draft an official petition to the Venezuelan government requesting authorization to open an SDA Venezuelan seminary. This initiative was known as the "INSTIVEN project."\textsuperscript{2}

\textbf{INSTIVEN Project}

The development of the INSTIVEN project dates back to the early 1980s, when Garrido named the first commission to study the possibility of developing the secondary education program.

\textsuperscript{1}\textit{Ibid.,} 28 February 1984, 058.

\textsuperscript{2}\textit{Ibid.,} 16 April 1986, 102.
school into a college. At this time Gilberto Bracho, the school vice-principal, was
nominated as president of the commission.¹

The commission presented a report favoring the commencement of courses other
than theology due to the willingness of Unión Colombo-Venezolana to grant permission
to offer the first year of a theology program on the campus at that time.² Among
important regulations that came to the attention of the commission at this time was the
government requirement that a Venezuelan college should be led by an experienced
Venezuelan college teacher. With this new perspective, a plan was developed to allow
Garrido, Nirgua school principal at the time, to obtain experience in a teaching position at
a public college in Venezuela. This would prepare the way for SDA leadership of an
SDA college when the time came.³

The next step was to appointed Garrido as president of a new commission.⁴ This
commission was to develop and conduct a survey among the students at Adventist
schools in Venezuela to track their interests in terms of preferred areas of study in
preparation for their careers. This information would be used as supporting data in the

¹The commission members were: “Arturo Weishein, Nathaniel Garcia, Gustavo

²INSTIVOC Directiva, 21 August 1981, 012.

³Ibid., 013.

⁴The commission members were: “Gustavo Garrido, Gilberto Bracho, Gonzalo
Prada, Leopoldo Peinado, Benilde Almerida, and Vicente Smart.” Ibid., 7 October 1981,
015.
petition to the Venezuelan government for approval of college status.1 By 1983 Garrido had completed the enquiries and tracked the interest of the students. The school board took an action to approve the development of plans for an undergraduate educational institution with four years of tertiary level instruction being focused on "computer science and education."2

Omáña, the successor of Garrido, continued to advocate the creation of these programs. He felt sure there would be high student demand for computer science, and he was well aware of the genuine need of the SDA organization in Venezuela for well-prepared educators. It is evident from the board minutes that the proposed "educational program" did not enjoy full approval by the Ministry of Education, and for that reason in 1984 Omáña supported including other curricular emphases in the project, such as "music, computer sciences, graphic arts, secretarial science, and agriculture."3

The process was at an impasse in 1985. So Flórez, Omáña's successor, appointed yet another commission to ensure the success of the college project. The members of this commission were SDA teachers working in Venezuelan colleges, and their task was to create an academic master plan that would meet with the approval of the Ministry of Education. Up to this point in time there had been little progress toward agreement between the Nirgua administration and the Ministry of Education about the structure and

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1INSTIVOC Directiva, 7 October 1981, 015.

2Ibid., 4 May 1983, 047.

3After the first contact with the Ministry of Education, it was recognized that it "is impossible to offer an education program in the school." Ibid., 15 May 1984, 061.
content of the curriculum.\textsuperscript{1} The commission was also to advise Simón Perdomo, the vice-principal at Nirgua. Perdomo had been appointed the “accreditation program coordinator and commission president,” and it was his responsibility to ensure that the criteria for success of the INSTIVEN project were met.\textsuperscript{2}

By 1986, the process had advanced well and Florez secured the services of a professional team to prepare the paperwork for the proposal. This team developed the five sections of the extensive document in harmony with the Ministry of Educational guidelines.\textsuperscript{3} An important vote was taken by the new administrative board for the proposed INSTIVEN to elevate INSTIVOC to a college with three programs and the inclusion of a religious education track. This track would open the way to prepare Adventist teachers and pastors for SDA schools and churches in Venezuela.\textsuperscript{4}

As part of the official paperwork, the “acta constitutiva” (constitution and by-laws) of INSTIVEN (Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista) was drafted in July 1986 (see appendix E). This legal document, prepared by Gamaliel Florez, Simón Perdomo, and David Poloche,\textsuperscript{5} emphasized the vision and mission of the school and was

\textsuperscript{1}INSTIVOC Directiva, 2 January 1985, 078.

\textsuperscript{2}Ibid., 080.

\textsuperscript{3}Those sections were: “frame of reference, feasibility study, structure and organization, curriculum theory and development, and physical plant.” Proyecto de Creación Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista (INSTIVEN), 1 August 1986.

\textsuperscript{4}INSTIVOC Administrativa, 16 April 1986, 102.

\textsuperscript{5}INSTIVEN, “Acta Costitutiva y Los Estatutos de la Asociación Civil,” 22 July 1986.
added to the official petition presented to the Ministry of Education for their approval.¹

By August 1986 the official document, "Proyecto de Creación Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista (INSTIVEN)," was completed and submitted to the Ministry of Education.² In December, the school administration received the approval of the Unión Colombo-Venezolana to proceed with the college project and to offer two bachelor degrees, "one in theology, the other in religious education; and two associate technology degrees, one in agriculture (citrus fruit production), the other in graphic arts."³ The changes from computer sciences and education to agriculture and graphic arts were due to the well-developed school farm and printing industry which could serve as models and resources for the proposed programs. The duration of each program was defined as ten semesters for the bachelor degrees, and six semesters for the associate degrees.⁴

The final major step in the process of preparing for possible tertiary instruction was the creation of a master plan to upgrade the physical plant. The proposals envisaged leaving intact the old INSTIVOC installations and using the area where the orange farm was situated to construct new buildings for the college. The purchase of additional land for future use by the college was also considered.⁵

¹INSTIVOC Directiva, 6 August 1986, 108.
³INSTIVOC Administrativa, 2 December 1986, 120.
⁴INSTIVOC Directiva, 11 February 1987, 124.
⁵INSTIVOC Administrativa, 12 May 1988, 156.
Preparation for University Institute Status

During the 1980s the Venezuelan Adventists, their pastoral leadership, the Nirgua school administration and teachers, and the students at the school all expressed under various circumstances a considerable yearning for INSTIVOC to develop into a tertiary institution so that it could meet the goals for which it had been established, namely, higher education that prepared leaders for the church. The yearning, however, was not merely a passive dream. It was backed up by concerted efforts to establish a campus that had the physical resources and academic maturity to accommodate the status of a college. The culmination of these efforts in this decade was the INSTIVEN university institute project. Major features of the plan included improving library facilities and the further development of human resources.

The library development started in 1981 when the school asked the Instituto Colombo-Venezolano for help by sending an expert in library science to reorganize the small school library. In addition, advice was given to the school administration on a proposal for sustained library development in preparation for instruction at the college level. The main task at this stage was to teach the Nirgua school librarians how to “organize, laminate, and repair materials, improve the collections, and develop better student services.”

In 1982 over 70,000 bolivars were used to buy new books and to increase the library holdings to “ten thousand volumes.” By 1984 a formal petition was sent by the

1INSTIVOC Directiva, 7 October 1981, 015.
2Ibid., 18 October 1982, 034.
school to the Venezuelan missions requesting that they allocate resources to the school library during the following five years to support the "future project of college instruction in the school." Similar special appropriations were requested from the Unión Colombo-Venezolana. The new library facilities were housed in the recently completed administration building, and included facilities such as an audiovisual room. The library was planned and developed with the hope that it would one day serve as the major academic resource center of a higher-level Adventist institution in Venezuela.

Another important preparation in the 1980s was the development of human resources by way of offering seminars in modern educational technology to improve the quality of education at the school. Teachers were able to take advantage of these courses to develop and improve their computing and communication skills. In addition to the on-campus teacher development strategies, steps were taken at this time to prepare instructors at the tertiary level. Two teachers were sponsored for masters' degrees in religion. Both men later became principals at the Nirgua school.

The preparations discussed are examples of initiatives implemented by the school.

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1Ibid., 2 August 1984, 070.

2The amount requested was 20,000 bolivars. Ibid., 25 February 1985, 086.

3INSTIVOC Directiva, 23 April 1985, 088.

4One seminar, for example, was on the use of "audio-visual technology in teaching." Ibid., 14 May 1981, 006.

5INSTIVOC Directiva, 2 January 1985, 078.

6Sponsorships were voted for Iván Omana and Gamaliel Flórez. Ibid., 15 May 1984, 062.
in order to be approved to offer tertiary instruction at INSTIVOC. These examples are indicative of the search for institutional maturity under the leadership of Garrido, Omaña, and Flórez during the 1980s.

Garrido, Omaña, and Flórez set the stage for the opening of a university institute, even though their labors came to full fruition only in the late 1990s. Theirs was the challenge to take the dreams of the original pioneers of the school and, building upon the strong foundation established through the 1960s and 1970s, to set in motion the initiatives that would eventually lead to the establishment of a tertiary Adventist institution in Venezuela. The roles played by these men, their administrative teams, and the teachers and staff who supported them, were vitally important in the fulfillment of the vision of a school at which Adventist youth could be prepared at the college level in Venezuela to serve the church in their homeland. Though all three men would have wished to see their hopes fulfilled more quickly, the fact remains that their efforts were important contributions in the development of an institutional maturity that has allowed for the Nirgua school to become a college level institution.

School Life in the 1980s

The administrators' commitment to transform the school into a post-secondary institution was also evident in various aspects of the social and spiritual life on campus.

Social Life

In spite of the fact that a positive and wholesome social atmosphere had historically played an important role in the life of the school, during the Garrido era
disciplinary problems led to the appointment of a permanent watchman at the main entrance to the school to control the movement of students. The main problems seemed to center around day students who entered and left the campus as they pleased. Thanks to the controls that were set up at the gate and a timely meeting between Garrido and the parents of the day students, this low point in campus discipline was reversed and high standards of conduct upheld.¹ From that time forward, according to Luz Figueroa, “entrance to the campus by day students was regulated.”²

An important element in the social life of the 1980s was played by the first school newspaper, “Notivoc,” (see copy in appendix G). From the publication of the first edition in November 1980, the paper became an important source of communication at the school. The school newspaper was originally developed under student initiative, but it soon became the official voice of the school.³ In the 1980s, “Notivoc” contributed to the social life at the school by reporting school news and upcoming events on a bimonthly basis. More recently, through the 1990s, its publication has been limited only to special occasions such as graduation. At the time of this writing, the newspaper is still published regularly at graduation time with the photograph and address of each graduating student. There is also an address sheet listing the students graduating at the secondary level. The

¹INSTIVOC Directiva, 30 July 1979, 247. Lack of respect for teachers, and violations of regulations such as campus exclusion zones (relating mainly to association between the sexes) were some of the sources of conflict.

²Luz Figueroa, interview by author, 8 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Figueroa was a day student from 1978-83.

³The first edition was 1,000 copies. INSTIVOC Directiva, 13 November 1980, 266.
maintenance of this list seems to indicate some interest in the development of an alumni
association.¹

An important social development occurred in 1980 that changed earlier school
regulations. This allowed mixed seating during meal times. Until that year, the boarding
students had to sit separately, with boys in one area of the cafeteria and girls in another.
Mixed seating shaped the social life of INSTIVOC, increasing social contacts and the
development of social skills in communicating between genders.²

Sports activities among the students remained extremely popular in the 1980s.
There was considerable pressure for recreational space and a need to increase the size of
the sports areas. In 1981 a new double basketball court was built, and this allowed for
greater numbers of students to participate at the same time (see figure 49).³ The school
swimming pool, which was closed for several years from the mid-1970s, was remodeled
in 1986, making it more functional and shallower than it had originally been. These
improvements were appreciated by students. The new and upgraded facilities made a
good contribution to student social life and increased opportunities for interaction
between students and a number of teachers who participated in the sports. In this way,
though the school was growing bigger, there still remained some of the campus "family
atmosphere" that had been there from the earliest days in El Limón.⁴

¹NOTIVOC, “Special Edition 1999.”
²INSTIVOC Directiva, 22 June 1980, 260.
³Ibid., 14 May 1981, 007.
⁴Ibid., 27 January 1986, 098.
Social development remained at the forefront of the concerns of the school leaders. As described in the school philosophy and objectives, social aspects of human development were of equal concern with the physical, mental, and spiritual aspects. The ideals of Christian education as they were envisaged included wholesome social interaction. The decade of the 1980s encouraged this social interaction by allowing for a less controlled and structured arrangement of relationships between genders, multiple recreational opportunities with a wide variety of activities, and improved facilities for participation in the ever-popular sporting events.

Spiritual Life

In exploring the campus spiritual life of the 1980s, it is evident that the traditional week of prayer continued to be the most important spiritual activity of the school. Preachers with national and international backgrounds came to the school, and there were

\footnote{INSTIVOC, Prospecto.}
numerous conversions to Jesus Christ from the school community. Among these preachers was Mirto Presentación who, according to Ricardo Delgado, was one of the most influential week of prayer speakers in the mid-1980s. Presentación led a great number of students to surrender their lives to Christ.

Spiritual life in the 1980s was shaped in great measure by the addition to the student body of the first-year theology students. The talents of these students were regularly drawn upon by the school church pastor. They were appointed as Sabbath school teachers, youth program leaders, and spiritual mentors to the secondary students. According to Martín Mesa, the first-year theology students were the campus leaders in spiritual matters. They lived in the same rooms with secondary students, and worked as assistants to the preceptor in maintaining a high level of spirituality and appropriate standards of conduct.

One form of spiritual activity remembered and appreciated by the students in this decade was the Bible representations of "Sociedad de Jóvenes." This activity, which became very popular, was composed of role-playing performances by the students and

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1 Chacón, interview.

2 INSTIVOC Directiva, 23 April 1985, 089.

3 Ricardo Delgado, interview by author, 12 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Delgado was a boarding student at INSTIVOC from 1984-86.

4 Martín Mesa, interview by author, 2 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Mesa was a graduate of INSTIVOC in 1983, and a first-year theology student in 1984. At the time of writing he was the senior pastor of IUNAV.

5 Ibid.
teachers in natural settings (see figure 50). This role-playing instilled practical lessons in
the minds of the students that remained with them for years to come. Such, for example,
was the case of Marbelis García, who recalled vivid lessons from the life of Jesus and the
disciples which he had witnessed at those Bible representations.¹

Fig. 50. INSTIVOC Bible role plays.

It is true that spiritual aspects of the campus program had changed through the
years. The spontaneity and family-oriented nature of the earlier years had given way to a
more organized approach to religious activities as the institution grew and matured. This
sort of metamorphosis is to be expected as a community develops. What the 1980s added
was a core of more mature students who could bring creative student leadership to the
spiritual elements of the campus program. The energy of these students, along with the
commitment of the administration to the operation of a Christian school, ensured that
spiritual concerns were retained as a central focus of campus activity. As the institution
matured, the importance of the academic, physical, and spiritual elements of the

¹Marbelis García, interview by author, 7 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. García was a day student from 1984-86.
curriculum was not lost. A wholistic Adventist philosophy of education remained as a
guiding framework for the operation and development of the campus. This philosophy
also undergirded the plans that were being laid for implementing a college program.

Summary

During the 1970s the school program had been strengthened and consolidated in
terms of the physical plant, school industries, curricula offerings, finances, and student
enrollment. To a considerable degree it is true that the struggles of the 1980s could be
faced successfully, and the challenges met, because of the solid foundation laid for the
school in the previous decade. Under the leadership of three Venezuelan principals
during the 1980s, the school developed on a pathway toward maturity that would
ultimately allow for the offering of approved tertiary-level instruction. The first two
significant steps in this direction were the implementation of the first-year theology
program over a period of four years from 1982-86, and the submission of the INSTIVEN
proposal to the Ministry of Education in 1986.

Operations at the school during the 1980s were marked by the considerable
impact of a weak, petroleum-based Venezuelan economy. The weakness of the
Venezuelan currency imposed considerable restraints on school finances and adversely
affected enrollment. Nevertheless, this decade was one in which the school was
improved and modernized by two significant construction projects. In addition,
enrollment was maintained at an adequate level, the first-tertiary level program of
instruction was introduced, significant initiatives toward establishing an approved college
program were undertaken, and institutional finances were consolidated in the midst of a national economic crisis. The strong industrial program, dedicated staff and teachers, and able and energetic administrators all played a significant part in bringing about these considerable achievements.

The prospects for implementation of approved and accredited post-secondary instruction by the end of the decade seemed positive. Though this dream was not fulfilled as soon as many might have wished, the decade ended with high hopes for the future of the Nirgua school. After the disappointments that came at the end of the 1980s, there was a redoubled effort to achieve tertiary-level status in the 1990s. The creation of the university institute will be the subject of the next chapter.
CHAPTER VI

UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE (1989-1999)

Introduction

The 1990s was a decade of change in the political makeup of Venezuela. Democracy was challenged in 1992 by an attempted military coup. In 1993, the country saw the emergence of a third political party, ending the period when there were only two main parties. Many people in the country had placed their hopes in the previous presidents (Pérez and Caldera), but a renewal of popular support for one of the leaders of the 1992 military coup enabled him to win power in 1998. During this decade, the SDA church in Venezuela experienced important changes in its structure due to the creation of the Venezuela-Antilles Union (UVA) in 1989. The historic reorganization of the church promoted the opening of the Venezuelan SDA university institute in 1990 as an institution in which ministerial workers could be educated for the new UVA.¹

¹The metamorphosis of names on the Nirgua campus is confusing to the uninitiated. The institution operated as a secondary school in Nirgua from 1966. It was named INSTIVOC, Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela (Venezuelan Vocational Academy). In 1989, the name INSTIVEN was adopted, that is, Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista (Venezuelan Adventist Ecclesiastical University). This reflected a change in status from a secondary school to an institution offering limited college-level courses. The change was not officially recognized by the Venezuelan authorities. In the mid-1990s a new initiative was developed to obtain recognition from the Venezuelan government. This project looked forward to the establishment of IUNAV, that is, Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela (Venezuelan Adventist University
The opening of the SDA university institute occurred at the same time that Venezuela's government responded negatively to the INSTIVEN project, which had been introduced in 1986. The government's response forced the new leadership of the institution to seek affiliation with other SDA schools in Puerto Rico and Mexico. While the university institute offered affiliate degree programs between 1992 and 1999 under Gilberto Bracho (1989-94) and Fernando Zabala (1994- ), an initiative was started to obtain Venezuelan recognition for the new "Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela" (IUNAV) from the Venezuelan Ministry of Education in 1996. After years of study by the Consejo Nacional de Universidades (CNU), the president of the Republic of Venezuela signed the authorization to operate in 1999. The establishment of IUNAV on the Nirgua campus in the 1990s marked the climax of the institution's history in the twentieth century, as a result of which Adventists in Venezuela were finally able to offer educational instruction to prospective Adventist workers in their own land and under their own laws, a dream which had been part of the school's original objectives in 1962.

Institute). IUNAV was officially approved in 1999. In some official Adventist publications, IUNAV is called Venezuelan Adventist University. Technically, this is incorrect. The name should be Venezuelan Adventist University Institute. In this chapter, the institution will generally be referred to as INSTIVEN up to 1996 when the name change to IUNAV was adopted. Strict adherence to this distinction is however hardly possible, because work was being done on the IUNAV project from the mid-1990s. The term university institute has been used to refer to both INSTIVEN and IUNAV, but repeated use of this term becomes awkward. Bearing all this in mind, the reader should be aware that, in spite of the inclusion of the term "university" in the name of the institution, whatever reference is made to higher education on the Nirgua campus is made in terms of a post-secondary program at the associate or college level. The technicalities and distinctions of the Venezuelan tertiary system of education are explained in more detail in various sections later in this chapter.
Context of the 1990s

Government

According to Richard Haggerty, "By the 1990s, Venezuela politics had changed considerably since the reestablishment of democracy in 1958." The system of two main parties, AD and COPEI, had gradually taken hold, creating an alternative to direct military interference in the nation's governance. President Carlos Andrés Pérez was reelected to a non-consecutive term in 1988 for the period 1989-94. Venezuela experienced political turbulence in response to the 1989 economic austerity program launched by President Pérez. Disgruntled military officers unsuccessfully attempted a coup in 1992, and finally Congress impeached Pérez on corruption charges, cutting short his presidential term.

President Rafael Caldera was elected in December 1993 for his second non-consecutive term of office (1994-99). His administration's primary concern was Venezuela's economic problems. In June 1994, approximately half of the country's banking sector collapsed, and the government had to deal with falling oil prices, foreign debt repayment, and high inflation throughout the mid-1990s. These economic problems substantially affected finances on the Nirgua campus in the late 1990s.

President Hugo Chávez, who took office in 1999, made the idea of a new constitution the centerpiece of his governing agenda. Popular with voters who clamored for reformation of their country's economy and elimination of the growing chasm

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1Haggerty, xxii.
between the rich and the poor, Chávez gradually garnered more and more power. His critics predicted the emergence of a left-wing dictatorship.¹

Education

In the 1990s, the Venezuelan government devoted more than 20 percent of its fiscal budget to public education. Today, about 91 percent of all Venezuelans can read and write. The proceeds of oil profits continue to support full scholarships for more than one thousand promising young students to pursue their academic careers at universities abroad. Such support, however, is conditional on the students pledging to return to Venezuela to practice their professions.²

At the close of the twentieth century, Venezuela had 137 institutions of higher learning, divided into eight different categories, and sub-divided in public and private institutions. As reported in table 22, 64 of the institutions are public and 73 are private.³

The total enrollment at these universities is more than 600,000 students, which represents a 50 percent increase during the 1990s.⁴ According to Orlando Arbomoz, a Venezuelan educational expert, Venezuelan higher education “does not seem to be bound


³IUNAV is numbered among the private institutions.

⁴Venezuela in Pictures, 44-45. For more complete information on the present Venezuelan educational system, see below in this chapter, under “SDA and Venezuelan Systems of Education.”
to change very much in the near future." The expansion of the system has reached a point where further growth is unlikely, both in terms of the demographic structures of the system and the number of institutions. The number of students enrolled at private institutions amounts to some 15 percent of the total eligible population and may reach up to 22 percent in the upcoming years.¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Institution</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Pedagogical Institutes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Polytechnic Institutes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Technology Institutes</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Institutes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Ecclesiastical Institutes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Military Institutes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Colleges</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>64</strong></td>
<td><strong>73</strong></td>
<td><strong>137</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Cantidad de Instituciones Por Tipo y Dependencias [database online]; available from http://www.cnu.gov.ve/EstadisticasBasicas/num_inst Educ_sup_x_depend.htm; Internet.*

IUNAV, as a private university institute (see table 22), began to take up a competitive role in the tertiary educational system of Venezuela in 1999 upon receiving official recognition by the government. The main challenge now facing the institution's leadership is how to retain its SDA philosophy while operating

within the Venezuelan higher educational system.¹

SDA Church

On 7 March 1989, the SDA Church in Cucuta, Colombia, took a vote to split the Colombia-Venezuela Union into the Colombian Union and the Venezuela-Antilles Union. The new Venezuela-Antilles Union was placed under the leadership of Iván Omaha, former INSTIVOC principal, who reported that one of the main objectives of the new union was to develop a theological seminary in the Venezuela-Antilles Union territory.² The Nirgua campus had already been used to train SDA ministers, and a transformation of the secondary school INSTIVOC into Venezuelan Adventist University Institute was fully accomplished in the 1990s.

The Venezuela-Antilles Union, which has experienced rapid growth since its inception, has been organized into four Venezuelan missions and one Antilles mission since it was established in 1989.³ This church growth in Venezuela (presented in table 23) was a major factor in the expansion and development of the Venezuelan Adventist University Institute in the 1990s.


³The rapid rate of church growth was a determinant factor in the reorganization of the East Venezuela Mission into two different fields in 1989, namely, the East Venezuela Mission and the Central Venezuela Mission. In 1992, the West Venezuela Mission was also divided into two fields, creating the West Venezuela Mission and the West Central Venezuela Mission. UVA Acta, 1989, 274.
Table 23. SDA Growth in Venezuela 1989-99

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Churches</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>39,720</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>19,004,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>42,289</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>19,246,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>46,414</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>19,753,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>50,112</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>20,189,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>54,114</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>20,562,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>58,239</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>20,675,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>63,558</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>20,900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>67,742</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>21,004,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>71,889</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>21,983,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>79,887</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>22,396,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>85,033</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>22,803,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


School Leadership in the 1990s

The emergence of a tertiary institution from the secondary INSTIVOC brought new challenges to the local leadership. Gilberto Bracho and Fernando Zabala played important roles as school principals and university institute presidents in the development of the institution during the 1990s.

Bracho Era

Professor Gilberto Bracho came to Nirgua in September 1967, the first year of operation on that campus. He had recently married Sandra, who was a teacher’s assistant

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1INSTIVOC Local, 30 August 1967, 112.
and student at the school. They accepted their appointment with the understanding that they would later be sponsored for further study. This promise was fulfilled in 1970, and the family departed for a period of study at Andrews University, Michigan, USA. They returned in 1973 and worked as teachers at the institution until 1983.¹

In 1986, Bracho returned to the institution as a teacher and the school’s vice-principal until 1988, when he was appointed to be the INSTIVOC principal. In 1989, he became the first president of INSTIVEN,² a position he held until December 1994 when he was again sent by the institution to study for a doctorate in education in Montemorelos, Mexico. He returned to Venezuelan Adventist University Institute in 1997 to take up the position of academic dean, a post he holds at the present time.³

Bracho is considered by his co-workers to be a “man of vision who knows how to make plans and how to implement these plans.”⁴ He has also been described as a popular leader, “calm in his personality,” and “refined in his demeanor.” Bracho has the wisdom and discernment to surround himself with qualified people, and the ability to delegate responsibilities. His easy-going personality has been criticized by some, and the absence of any pastoral training and experience are seen as a lack in his leadership.⁵

¹Sandra Bracho, interview. Sandra Bracho is Gilberto Bracho’s wife.
²INSTIVOC Administrativa, 18 August 1988, 173.
³Gilberto Bracho, interview by author, 8 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording.
⁴Dulce de Rodríguez, interview. Rodríguez was Bible and English teacher in both the secondary school and university institute during the Bracho administration.
⁵Interpretations based on anonymous interviews, due to sensitive nature of the information.
At the time of writing, Bracho’s wife, Sandra, had taught in the school for more than twenty years. She has served in the language department as a Spanish and English teacher. Their two children have grown up at the school (see figure 51). Bracho was assisted in his position as school principal by the vice-principal, Alcibiades Manrique, by the school treasurer David Poloche,1 and of course by the school staff (see appendix B).2

![Fig. 51. Bracho family.](image)

When Bracho was appointed school principal, the school was ready to begin the task of implementing post-secondary instruction on the campus. For this reason, Bracho’s major task was to organize the paperwork of the university institute beginning in 1989-90. He established the executive board of INSTIVEN and ensured that it

1INSTIVOC Administrativa, 18 August 1988, 174-A.

2For example; “Abel Linares, Gustavo Alvarez, Inmaculada de Gallardo, Jorge Barboza, Luis Astudillos, Nelly de Manrique, Castelia de León, Nelly Meza, Elvia de Rodríguez, Jorge Agüero, Eduardo Gallardo, Iraida Pinto, Jorge Pacheco, Fabio García, Dulce de Rodríguez, Nuris de Bustillos, Beatriz Sanoja, América de Oropeza, Julia de Campos, Carmen de Guzmán, Hebert Madgdaleno, Nélson Avila, Javier Villegas, Margarita de Linares, Celia Silva, Nancy Montilla, Sandra de Bracho, and Antonio Sánchez.” Taken from Appendix B, 1989-90.
operated on a regular basis according to the Inter-American Division policies. As per policy he also developed the university institute board of governors, ensured that they met at least twice a year.¹

Under Bracho’s leadership, the board of governors of the institution was appointed by the constituency² and met for the first time on 6 July 1989. The first vote ratified Bracho as president of INSTIVEN,³ followed two months later by the appointments of Javier Villegas, an experienced Venezuelan teacher, as vice-president for academic affairs, and José Ochoa as the vice-president for financial affairs.⁴

Among Bracho’s contributions was the creation of the documents upon which the operation of the institution was established, such as the “University Institute Internal Manual” which included brief statements on the school’s history, philosophy, mission, and objectives. This manual also contained a section on institutional commissions and staff responsibilities, as well as an extensive section on administrative responsibilities and institutional regulations.⁵

¹“Inter-American Division polices A-53, and A-51,” INSTIVOC Administrativa, 2 May 1989, 188.

²For an explanation of “constituency,” see chap. 2, n. 1, under “Introduction”

³INSTIVEN Gobierno, 6 June 1989, 002.

⁴INSTIVEN Ejecutiva, 7 August 1989, 009.

⁵The document outlines the school’s philosophy; “God is the Creator and sustainer of the universe, the Bible is the Word of God, and measure of true learning, Jesus Christ is the supreme revelation of God and the example and only hope for men. Man is a being with physical, intellectual and moral faculties which cannot be separated from each other but must be developed in harmony. Education is the process by which man is restored to the image of his creator . . . . The mission is to develop in young people a desire to
A "University Institute Student Manual" was also produced, including sections on regulations taken from the "University Institute Internal Manual." This was followed by a "University Institute Evaluation Manual," which outlined the procedures used by the school to evaluate students. Last of all, Bracho also produced the first "University Institute Catalog" in 1991, which gave detailed descriptions of the content of each class in the theological program (see also table 28).

Bracho's major challenge was faced at the end of 1989 with the official denial of the INSTIVEN project by the Venezuelan Ministry of Education. In spite of the setback, minister to others, and a readiness to preach the gospel of the returning Jesus, through a solid theological and practical education. The students are to grow into individuals who will be able to serve the church and society through a vocation which brings dignity to work, with a mind oriented to the creative, with research abilities, and with a focus on how the church and community may benefit in the spiritual and social realms in the future.” Instituto Universitario Adventista, UVA, "Reglamento Interno," Seminario Teológico. A-2,3.

1For example, article 1, states that preparation of this document was to match the Ministry of Education requirements. Article 6 states a mandatory minimum attendance of students to 75 percent of scheduled classes. Article 12 sets a maximum class load of twenty-one credits per semester for any student. Articles 23-24 define the evaluation points from one to nine, with five and up being pass marks. Articles 33-34 define honors as follows: A GPA of 9.0 on a nine-point scale attracts recognition to the student for graduating "summa cum laude," and a GPA of 8.0 attracts a designation of "cum laude." Instituto Universitario Adventista, UVA, "Reglamento de Evaluación," Seminario Teológico, 3-10.


3Informe que Presenta la Comisión Designada por el Consejo Nacional de Universidades sobre el Proyecto de Creación del Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista (INSTIVEN) con Sede en Nirgua, Estado Yaracuy, República de Venezuela.” Consejo Nacional de Universidades, Oficina de Planeación del Sector Universitario, Caracas-Venezuela, November 1989. (Report Presented by the Commission of the National University Council to the Project of Creation of the Venezuelan Adventist University Institute (INSTIVEN) Located in Nirgua, Yaracuy State, Republic of
preparations for offering college-level courses were not halted. The plan to introduce some of these courses in March 1990 was not abandoned. The denial by the Venezuelan government led Bracho to seek an affiliation with Antillean Adventist University in order to expand the course offerings beyond the limited curriculum of a theology program.

Before his departure, Bracho saw the first two INSTIVEN theology classes graduate in 1994 (see figure 52). He is also credited with initiating a new accreditation project for the institution in 1994. Finally, Bracho's was an influential participant in developing plans for the purchase of the "El Cuji Farm." This big piece of land doubled the size of the INSTIVOC property from fifty-two hectares to over one hundred and provided for the institution's need for future growth and expansion. It is important to note that portions of the INSTIVOC land were originally given for use as a citrus plantation by the National Agrarian Institute (IAN). The administration wanted to use part of this land for institutional expansion, so it became necessary to buy more land to substitute for the citrus plantations which had been cut down to accommodate the new buildings. This foresight on the part of Bracho is an evidence of the vision that he had for the future development of the Nirgua institution. When he left his position in 1994 to Venezuela. Caracas-Venezuela, November 1989.)

1INSTIVEN Gobierno, 28 November 1989, 014.

2INSTIVEN Ejecutiva, 18 February 1992, 082. The matter of affiliations is discussed later in this chapter. See also INSTIVEN Gobierno, 31 August 1992, 089.

3INSTIVEN Ejecutiva, 6 July 1994, 038.

4Ibid.
pursue further studies, Bracho had made a significant contribution to the institution in its progress toward the goal of approved tertiary-level instruction.

Fig. 52. First University Institute graduating class.

Fernando Zabala

Dr. Fernando Zabala, the present senior administrator, was appointed president of INSTIVEN (later IUNAV) in May 1994. At this time, Zabala was finishing his studies for a Ph.D. in communication from Marquette University, Wisconsin, USA. He took leadership of the Nirgua institution in December 1994 after he had finished his doctoral program. Zabala’s wife, Esther, has been the university registrar at INSTIVEN-IUNAV since 1994. They have two children (see figure 53).

According to his colleagues, Zabala is seen as a “consultative and a charismatic

1Ibid., 29 May 1994, 035.
2Fernando Zabala, interview.
3INSTIVEN Ejecutiva, 19 September 1994, 051.
leader.\textsuperscript{1} His strengths include his capacity to listen to others, his expertise as a counselor, his considerable ability as an educator and communicator, and his creative sense of vision. At times he appears somewhat passive and indecisive because of his concern to hear all points of view. In addition, once he has delegated a task to an individual, he places confidence and responsibility on that person and takes a somewhat laissez-faire attitude to completion of the project. This has been viewed by some as a weakness.\textsuperscript{2}

The first major task that Zabala undertook was to appoint a committee to re-write the mission statement and philosophy of the institution. There were no major changes in the philosophy, but the mission statement was rewritten\textsuperscript{3} so that it would be more

\textsuperscript{1}Eduardo Sánchez, interview by author, 16 May 2001, Berrien Springs to Nirgua, phone. At the time of writing Sánchez was an administration and research teacher at IUNAV. He had held this position since 1998.

\textsuperscript{2}Interpretations based on anonymous interviews, due to sensitive nature of the information.

\textsuperscript{3}The mission statement reads: "The Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista of the Venezuela-Antilles Union is an education center which has as its main task the responsibility to prepare leaders whose main vocation is to serve God and humanity. Because of this, it is established on a philosophy that looks to improving the quality of life and to offering alternatives of excellence to society in general. The institution accepts this vision of its global mission and sees as very important the task of accepting students of any nationality, race, sex, social condition, or religious belief, helping them always to live according to principles that are in harmony with the school.

"The institute recognizes as true education that which contributes to the harmonious development of the student's physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual faculties. True to its program of integrated education, it not only prepares the student for the challenge of today's society, but also helps to restore in students the divine image in which humankind was created, and prepares them for the second coming of Jesus Christ. "To respond to this mission the institute uses different methodologies and educational techniques, whose end is to prepare the student for service to the church and to society in a professional, scientific, and modern context."
Among Zabala's challenges as institutional president was the renewal of the 1992 Antillean Adventist University affiliation document, which expired in 1994. He attempted to extend the affiliation program from two to four years, which would enable students to complete an entire bachelor's program at the Nirgua campus.\(^2\) Progress in the negotiations with Antillean were slow.

At this time Montemorelos University\(^3\) (MU) was offering a Master's Degree in

"This mission of education and excellence in service is sought under the direction of Divine power."

\(^1\)Ibid., 4 April 1995, 001

\(^2\)INSTIVEN Ejecutiva, 19 July 1995, 003.

\(^3\)Montemorelos University is located in Montemorelos, Nuevo León, Mexico. MU is the senior institution of the Inter-American Division of SDA. It enjoys recognition and accreditation by both the SDA church and the Mexican government.
Family Relations at the Nirgua campus. As a consequence of his observation of the professional expertise manifested by Montemorelos in supporting the Master’s degree program, Zabala was encouraged to present a formal petition to Montemorelos requesting an affiliation that would enable the Venezuelan campus to offer complete bachelor’s degrees in administration, computer information system, and secretarial science. Nirgua would operate as an extension campus of Montemorelos University. An agreement of this nature was implemented with the hope of a graduation by 1996.¹

Among Zabala’s most significant contributions was the elaboration of a new university institute project submitted to the Ministry of Education in 1996. The application was for recognition of the “Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela” (IUNAV). The project requested approval for four technical diplomas, known as “Técnico Superior Universitario” (TSU).² These diplomas could be completed in three years and were offered in personnel administration, business administration, computer information systems, and pre-school education.³

Zabala also played an important role in the interchange of facilities between INSTIVOC and IUNAV. This involved the construction of new buildings to separate

¹Ibid., 26 March 1996, 015-6. The matter of affiliations is discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

²TSU is Venezuela’s equivalent to the North American associate college degree. This is also considered a post-secondary sub-degree (see below, this chapter, on “SDA and Venezuelan Educational Systems in the 1990s”).

IUNAV from INSTIVOC.¹ The project, completed in 1998, was sponsored by the Nirgua administration and the Maranatha Volunteers.² The new edifice that resulted was built at a cost of over 56 million bolivars and consisted of five new classrooms in addition to the six that already existed at that time. Teachers’ offices, a teachers’ conference room, and a new INSTIVOC library were all part of the plan. Once the project was completed, Zabala presided over an historical ceremony on 25 November 1998 at which time the official interchange of properties between the two campus entities was completed (see figure 54).³ This event was important in the evolution of the Nirgua campus. IUNAV was taking control of the main campus buildings and giving a permanent place to the secondary INSTIVOC. In spite of separate organizational structures, INSTIVOC has effectively operated under the jurisdiction of the IUNAV administration.

Finally, Zabala’s contributions to the school reached a climax with the official approval of IUNAV by the Ministry of Education in 1999.⁴ This event opened a window of opportunity for young Venezuelan Adventists seeking higher education.

Venezuelan SDA University Institute in the 1990s

The reorganization of the Colombia-Venezuela Union territory in 1989 resulted in

¹IUNAV Gobierno, 1 December 1997, 074-75.

²Maranatha Volunteers is an SDA organization, which participates in building projects around the world.


⁴Fernando Zabala, interview. For more detail about IUNAV, see below in this chapter.
the creation of the Venezuela-Antilles Union and prepared the way for a tertiary-level institution at the INSTIVOC campus in the early 1990s. At this time, INSTIVOC was expecting Venezuelan approval of the INSTIVEN project submitted in 1986. A negative response from the Ministry of Education forced Bracho to search for alternative programs from other accredited SDA universities that might be offered on the Nirgua campus as temporary alternatives to meet the needs of Venezuelan students. In order to facilitate the implementation of tertiary-level instruction at Nirgua, INSTIVEN, which had been rejected by the Ministry of Education, was granted SDA recognition in 1990.

In order to understand more clearly the processes through which this new tertiary establishment needed to go to receive 1) recognition as an higher educational institution, and 2) approval of its study programs, a brief examination and explanation of the Seventh-day Adventist and Venezuelan educational systems will be undertaken.

SDA and Venezuelan Education Systems in the 1990s

In 1989 the SDA educational system classified its institutions in one of thirteen
different categories. With minor changes, the categories remained the same in 1999.

Table 24. SDA System of School Classification 1989-99

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description of the School</th>
<th>1989</th>
<th>1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G-1</td>
<td>Has 4 or more schools offering graduate work</td>
<td>G-1</td>
<td>G-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-2</td>
<td>Offers limited graduate work in its own name</td>
<td>G-2</td>
<td>G-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G-3</td>
<td>Affiliate graduate programs are offered (as extension campuses)</td>
<td>G-3</td>
<td>G-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-1</td>
<td>4 years post-secondary with 12 or more undergraduate programs</td>
<td>T-1</td>
<td>T-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-2</td>
<td>4 years of post-secondary with 4 to 11 undergraduate programs</td>
<td>T-2</td>
<td>T-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-3</td>
<td>4 years of post-secondary with 1 to 3 undergraduate programs</td>
<td>T-3</td>
<td>T-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-4</td>
<td>One to three years of post-secondary studies</td>
<td>T-4</td>
<td>T-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-1</td>
<td>Complete secondary program, admits to higher ed, specialization</td>
<td>S-1</td>
<td>S-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-2</td>
<td>Complete secondary program, admits to higher ed (i.e., matriculation)</td>
<td>S-2</td>
<td>S-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-3</td>
<td>Incomplete secondary program, no matriculation, varies in years</td>
<td>S-3</td>
<td>S-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-4</td>
<td>Incomplete secondary program (no matriculation), training program</td>
<td>W-1</td>
<td>W-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-1</td>
<td>Complete elementary (primary) school program</td>
<td>E-1</td>
<td>E-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>Unclassified, falls within none of the categories outlined</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Since 1968, INTIVOC had been classified by the Adventist educational authorities in the S-2 category. With the opening of the Venezuelan University Institute in 1990 the hope was that the Nirgua campus would achieve C-3 status. This is clear from the report of 13 December 1990 entitled “Informe de la Visita a INSTIVOC en su Interés de su Elevación a Colegio C-3 y su Seminario Teológico” (Site Report to INSTIVOC Regarding C-3 College and Theological Seminary Status).\(^1\)

The process of approval, categorization, and accreditation in the SDA educational

system is overseen by the Education Department of the General Conference of SDA. This department organizes site visits and makes recommendations regarding a particular institution. The recommendations are forwarded to the Adventist Accrediting Association (AAA), which is constituted independently from the visiting teams and the General Conference Education Department. Although the *SDA Encyclopedia* (1996), points to the Board of Regents as “the denominational accrediting body for the academies, colleges, and universities in the world church,” this statement now refers to the work of AAA. The function of AAA is to explore an institution’s commitment to denominational aims and standards, to examine the institution’s educational philosophy and the integration of this philosophy into the curriculum, and, on the basis of the documentation and deliberations, to approve or reject an institution’s application.

While AAA makes the final decision, it is the team making the site visit that writes the report and makes the recommendations. On an initial visit to a campus, “candidacy status” may be granted. Subsequent visits may result in recommendations to AAA for “certified accreditation” to be granted if the accreditation criteria have been satisfactorily met. This process on the Nirgua campus resulted in a recommendation for candidacy status on 11 October 1994 (“Seminario Teológico Adventista de Venezuela”), and on 6 July 1995 a recommendation for accreditation effective through 31 May 1999.

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1The work of AAA was formerly done by a body known as the Board of Regents. At the time INSTIVEN made its first application, the Board of Regents would have considered the recommendations. AAA has now assumed this responsibility.


3Ibid.
The Venezuelan educational system does not have any parallel structures or procedures which it follows for the purpose of accrediting an institution. Unlike the Adventist system, or the systems followed by the regional accrediting associations of North America the Venezuelan model is "highly centralized in the Venezuelan Ministry of Education."

Under the laws governing the Ministry of Education in Venezuela, public education is free for ages seven to sixteen (grades 1 to 9), the language of instruction is Spanish at all levels, and school years runs from September to July (in contrast to the academic year for higher education which is from January to December).

In 1981, significant changes were made in Venezuelan schooling. Before this date, elementary education covered a period of six years, leading to the "Certificado de Educacion Primaria" (Primary Certificate of Education). Secondary school was divided into two cycles, a three-year common cycle, and two-year diversified cycle, leading to the title of "Bachillerato" (High School Graduate). After 1981 the basic level was increased from 6 to 9 years, and now upon completion of the 9th year, a student receives the "Certificado de Educacion Basica" (Basic Education Certificate) which grants access to secondary education. The secondary system remains as a diversified cycle, but the cycle

1The reports mentioned here may be found in appendix J.

2Gilberto Bracho, interview by author, 15 May 2001, Berrien Springs to Nirgua, phone. Bracho has served as the academic dean of IUNAV from 1997 to the present.

may be two or three years depending on program.¹

Tertiary Education is offered in a number of variously named institutions of higher education (see table 22 above). Universities are approved to offer regular undergraduate bachelor's degrees and graduate master's and doctoral degrees. There are 18 public and 21 private universitites. University colleges and university institutes, among others, offer what may be referred to as sub-degrees, roughly equivalent to associate degrees in the US. The diploma awarded is the “Técnico Superior Universitario” (University Superior Technician – TSU). According to information supplied by the Consejo Nacional de Universidades in 2000, TSU diplomas are offered in seven different categories. These diplomas are also offered by both public and private institutions.² IUNAV is currently classified in the category of a university institute.

The Venezuelan higher educational system is guided by the “Consejo Nacional de Universidades” (National University Council – CNU), an entity under the Venezuelan Ministry of Education which administers the PAA (Prueba de Aptitud Académica), oversees post-secondary enrollment in the nation, and studies proposals for the establishment of new institutions of higher learning through one of its offices, OPSU

¹Ibid.

²Cantidad de Instituciones por Tipo y Dependencias [database on-line]; available from http://www.cnu.gov.ve/EstadisticasBasicas/num_insteduc_sup_x_depen.htm; Internet; and Gilberto Bracho, phone interview. The institutions offering diplomas in these categories are divided into specialized educational establishments (pedagogy, polytechnic, technology, ecclesiastical, military), and the more general university colleges and university institutes. See above, table 22. IUNAV is approved in one of the more general categories.
Upon the recommendation of CNU in favor of the creation of a new university institution, the Venezuelan president signs a decree authorizing the institution to operate. At this point, the institution has authority to offer degrees or diplomas in areas which have been approved, and these programs may be said to be accredited. Following the issue of the presidential decree, the Venezuelan Ministry of Education oversees the quality of the programs offered by an institution. Evaluation teams visit the campus from time to time at the discretion of the Ministry. Applications to offer new programs and modify old are processed directly through the Ministry of Education.

This summary of the elementary and secondary study program preparatory to entry into a program of studies in an institution of higher learning, and the overview of SDA and Venezuelan procedures for recognition, authorization, and accreditation of institutions of higher learning, is fundamental to an understanding of the development of the school in Nirgua. This process has taken the Nirgua campus from its foundation as a secondary school (INSTIVOC), through the period of its operation as an institution of higher learning recognized and then accredited by the Adventist Church to offer undergraduate degree program (INSTIVEN), to its present authorization as a diploma-granting university institute under the Venezuelan Ministry of Education (IUNAV),

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2 Gilberto Bracho, phone interview.
INSTIVEN: Establishment of an SDA University Institute

The Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista (INSTIVEN) began officially on 6 June 1989, with the appointment of Gilberto Bracho as the first INSTIVEN president. The members of the governing board eagerly anticipated governmental approval of the university project (INSTIVEN) which had been submitted in 1986. This anticipation and hope is manifested in their vote to designate 29 July 1989 as a day of fasting and prayer for government approval of the INSTIVEN project.¹

In preparation for opening the university institute, Bracho invited Dr. Itamar De Paiva, an experienced SDA pastor specializing in training SDA ministers in the Colombia-Venezuela Union, to develop the policies and procedural structures for inauguration and implementation of a theological seminary.² Once preparation was complete, classes were set to begin in March 1990. At the beginning, the program of study included theology and religious education,³ which would assist the institution in meeting its goal of preparing ministers and teachers to work in the SDA organization in Venezuela.

As plans for the school's opening were being developed, news came from the Ministry of Education requesting that the committee rewrite the INSTIVEN project in

¹INSTIVEN Gobierno, 6 June 1989, 002-4.
²INSTIVOC Administrativa, 2 May 1989, 188.
³INSTIVEN Gobierno, 28 November 1989, 014.
order to rectify inconsistencies which the Ministry had discovered in the proposal. It is important to note that the professional team which had been contracted by the school in 1986 to prepare the proposal had, in some areas, not produced the highest quality of work. For example, there were some glaring misquotes in references to other projects.

While it remains the responsibility of the institution to check its own proposal before it is submitted, it was unfortunate that the consultants had made a number of major errors and done some shoddy work.

In spite of this tremendous setback, on 5 March 1990 the university institute theological seminary opened with forty-one students. By December 1990 a commission was appointed by the Inter-American Division to evaluate the theology program, and the recommendations of this commission for approval of the program were presented in a document dated 14 November 1991. In the SDA Yearbook for 1992, the campus is listed as offering a college level program. By 1992, therefore, INSTIVEN was recognized within the Adventist educational system even though there was as yet no governmental recognition. It should be noted however that, except for the theological program which

1“Informe que Presenta la Comisión Designada por el Consejo Nacional de Universidades sobre el Proyecto de Creación del Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista (INSTIVEN), con Sede en Nirgua, Estado Yaracuy, República de Venezuela.” Consejo Nacional de Universidades, Oficina de Planeación del Sector Universitario, Caracas-Venezuela, November 1989. In summary, point 8 of the document as cited here declares that the Council had voted not to approve the INSTIVEN application.

2Ibid.

had been approved and gave INSTIVEN the status of a T-3\textsuperscript{1} institution within the Adventist system, the programs offered on the Nirgua campus were, even in 1992, recognized on the basis of an affiliation agreement rather than as independently accredited curricula.\textsuperscript{2} Earlier, when the program was opened in 1990, the INSTIVEN administration faced the monumental challenge of finding a way to offer recognized degrees, and the main hope appeared to be through an affiliation agreement with some other SDA higher educational institution. As early as September 1990, INSTIVEN sought recognition of its theology program through Antillean Adventist University (UAA) in Puerto Rico.\textsuperscript{3} Bracho knew that it was INSTIVEN's responsibility to meet the educational needs of the students who had entrusted their time and resources to the new program with the expectation that their studies would be recognized.

Only full-time students were admitted into the programs.\textsuperscript{4} There were two intakes of students in 1990, the first in March and the second in October. At the end of the first semester, it was decided to close the religious education program due to the absence of official Venezuelan authorization to run such a program. Students were encouraged to transfer from religious education to the theological track.\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{1} An institution offering four years of post-secondary education with 1 to 3 undergraduate programs.

\textsuperscript{2} See below in this chapter, "Antillean Affiliation."

\textsuperscript{3} INSTIVEN Gobierno, 6 September 1990, 050.

\textsuperscript{4} INSTIVEN Ejecutiva, 5 March 1990, 035.

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., 6 June 1990, 043.
Before considering the manner in which the institution proceeded to solve the problems it faced due to lack of recognition and accreditation, it is important to take up the story of INSTIVOC one more time. The Nirgua high school, which had operated for over thirty years, and which was the foundation from which the tertiary program had developed, suddenly found itself on a campus with a new identity.

INSTIVOC: Status of the Secondary School

When INSTIVEN was organized in 1989 and opened college-level classes in 1990, the newly-appointed administration took responsibility for the operation of all the programs on the Nirgua campus. INSTIVOC, the secondary school, was administrated as a department of INSTIVEN.

Gilberto Bracho, appointed in 1988 as INSTIVOC principal, was later appointed to be the first president of INSTIVEN. Alcibiades Manrique, who was appointed in 1988 as INSTIVOC vice-principal, became the INSTIVOC principal in 1989.1 Manrique was followed as school principal by Javier Villegas (1992-95), Luis Caldera (1996-98) and Javier Palmieri (1999- ). (See appendix B.) The new positions of academic dean and dean of student affairs were created and filled by the university institute.

In spite of the fact that INSTIVOC had principals in the 1990s, no separate minutes or records were kept apart from those of INSTIVEN. There appears to have been a system established that delegated responsibility without giving the attendant authority. The high school functioned under the umbrella of the university institute which operated

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1INSTIVOC Administrativa, 18 August 1988, 174-A.
as the parent institution. There was only one treasurer for the entire operation on the Nirgua campus, and the finances were not clearly distinguishable until the end of the decade when the accounting records were finally separated.\(^1\) The failure to distinguish between the various campus entities was pointed out as a source of weakness by the evaluation committees appointed to conduct site visits by the General Conference Education Department.\(^2\)

There was tension between INSTIVOC and INSTIVEN in the first half of the 1990s because the library, cafeteria, and residences were used by students from both levels. The age differences and school rules became a source of conflict between the secondary and the tertiary students who shared the same school grounds. The situation was even more complex considering the presence of the elementary school on the campus. The intention of the administration was to relocate the elementary school by moving it to the town of Nirgua, five miles from the campus, and to gradually close down the secondary school.\(^3\) To solve student tensions, different meal schedules were created for secondary and university students, and a new library was built for the secondary school in 1997.\(^4\)

It is important to note that, with the opening of the university institute, the elementary building was used for college classes, and the elementary school was moved

\(^1\)Gilberto Bracho, phone interview.

\(^2\)IUNAV, "Informe de Visita Intermedia de Acreditación," May 1997, 6.

\(^3\)INSTIVEN Ejecutiva, 17 April 1991, 060.

\(^4\)See above in this chapter, on the contributions of “Fernando Zabala.”
to Nirgua town. This was a negative experience due to the lack of space and poor facilities available in the town, and the distance from the campus.\footnote{Elisa Hernández, interview by author, 2 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Hernández has been an elementary teacher at Nirgua since 1984.} All these inconveniences prompted the Zabala administration to build a brand new elementary school complex on campus in 1996.\footnote{INSTIVEN Ejecutiva, 26 March 1996, 017.}

As noted above, the INSTIVEN Board of Governors had planned to close INSTIVOC in 1995. This plan was modified later because of low college enrollments, especially of single students living in the residence halls during the early 1990s. By 1997 a completely new approach had been decided. Rather than gradually close the high school, new buildings were constructed on the campus to establish a separate on-campus identity for INSTIVOC.\footnote{IUNAV Gobierno, 8 July 1998, 014. Also, see below on the INSTIVOC-IUNAV interchange ceremony.}

The secondary school curriculum in the 1990s continued to be dominated by the popular science track offered since 1966. However, a window of opportunity was opened to implement an accounting track for secondary students in the 1990s, and graduates from this track are reported in the school records from 1993-98 (see appendix C). Bible, and courses in agriculture continued to be used as one medium to implement an SDA philosophy in the secondary INSTIVOC.

Manual labor of five hours per week has continued as a requirement of each
boarding student on the secondary level.¹ Mandatory attendance at spiritual services is also still expected of all boarding students,² and use of sports facilities is restricted to scheduled times. Students observe a mandatory study period in their own bedrooms as enforced by regulations applicable to secondary students but not applied to those on the tertiary level.

INSTIVOC continues to operate successfully with a steady enrollment. Some of the potential sources of tension between INSTIVOC and IUNAV students have been addressed, and new facilities and staggered schedules have helped in these matters. Concerns relating to administrative structures have been addressed by AAA evaluation teams, and some progress has been made in establishing separate records, but the operation of INSTIVOC remains closely intertwined with that of IUNAV. This is an issue that will likely need to be addressed in the future in order to establish clear guidelines for an independent, working relationship.

Antillean Affiliation

In April 1991, Bracho officially invited the Antillean Adventist University (UAA) to offer associate degrees in business administration as an extension program on the Nirgua campus.³ In September, representatives from UAA came to INSTIVEN to evaluate the institution's physical facilities and library resources. As a result of the visit, U.E. INSTIVOC, "Reglamento Interno del Estudiante," 1996-97, 32.

¹Ibid, 6.

³INSTIVEN Ejecutiva, 17 April 1991, 060.
an affiliation agreement between the two institutions was concluded, including associate’s degrees in business administration, computer information system, and secretarial science.\(^1\)

The initial UAA-INSTITIVEN affiliation was intended to last for two years.\(^2\) The date chosen for the opening was in October 1992, giving time to implement a promotion plan among the SDA churches in Venezuela before the starting date.\(^3\) The formal affiliation document was signed in July 1992.\(^4\) Under the terms of the four-page document, INSTIVEN agreed to provide the staff, physical facilities, and equipment, while UAA agreed to assign and approve academic rank and to validate the college credit offered for the courses. The charge stipulated was two thousand dollars for each affiliation program, a total of six thousand dollars paid yearly to UAA (see appendix F).\(^5\)

In analyzing the agreement, it is clear that the affiliation was of benefit to INSTIVEN because it contributed to the school’s growth, made it possible for INSTIVEN to offer recognized degrees, and provided more opportunity for the SDA youth of Venezuela to be educated in a Christian setting in areas of study other than theology.

In 1994, the original affiliation contract with UAA expired, and a renewal of the

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\(^1\) INSTIVEN Gobierno, 10 September 1991, 072.

\(^2\) Ibid., 2 December 1991, 079.

\(^3\) INSTIVEN Ejecutiva, 10 February 1992, 082.


\(^5\) Ibid.
affiliation program was necessary. At that time, INSTIVEN paid the fees for two programs, business administration and computer information system, but not for the secretarial science program because it was not being offered. Bracho and Zabala wanted to extend the affiliation agreement to allow for a four-year degree program rather than the two-year associate program. This was necessary due to the fact that Venezuela did not officially recognize a two-year associate degree as valid, so students were required to transfer to UAA in Puerto Rico to finish a bachelor’s degree. This placed the school in a position similar to the one it faced in the 1980s when it offered only the first year of theology and the students had to travel to Colombia to complete their study programs.

In a letter written by Carlos Archbold, the educational director of the Inter-American Division, mention is made of the “lack of communication, experience, and internal accreditation in the UAA,” and these problems are cited as a source of confusion between the two institutions. In 1995 INSTIVEN independently offered the third year of the business administration and computer information system programs. An offer to allow the third-year students to take their fourth year on the UAA campus was accepted, but no courses outside of the affiliation would be accepted by UAA. This decision and the poor communication between the two institutions brought an end to the UAA

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1 INSTIVEN Gobierno, 6 July 1994, 037-8.
2 INSTVEN Ejecutiva, 19 July 1995, 003.
3 See chapter 5, under, “The First Year of Theology.”
INSTIVEN affiliation in 1996, and a new affiliation program was developed with Montemorelos University (UM) in which complete bachelor’s programs were offered.¹

Montemorelos Affiliations

In 1993, the Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista (INSTIVEN) took the initiative to coordinate an extension program for a Master’s degree in Family Relations, which was offered in summer sessions by Montemorelos University (UM).² The well-organized operation of the program led INSTIVEN to send a formal petition to UM in 1996, requesting that they sign an affiliation document which included offering four-year programs in business administration, computer information system, and office administration on the Venezuelan campus.³

The seven-page affiliation document written in March 1996 between UM and INSTIVEN was in many ways similar to the Antillean Adventist University affiliation (see appendix F). However, UM was much more generous in staff support, providing missionary teachers as well as offering a complete bachelor’s program.⁴ The original contract was valid from August 1996 to July 2000, with the possibility of renewal if

²INSTIVEN Gobierno, 31 August 1992, 089.
⁴An example is Maria Felix Admae, who was contracted to Nirgua after her year as a missionary from Mexico. INSTIVEN Gobierno, 10 June 1996, 024.
necessary.\textsuperscript{1} It is important to mention that the UM-INSTITIVEN affiliation was intended to operate until the Venezuelan SDA institution obtained accreditation from the Venezuelan government. By 1995 INSTIVEN had been accredited by AAA,\textsuperscript{2} and was offering an independent theological program. However, students who received diplomas and degrees in other areas of study needed to have these awards accredited under the laws of a national education system. AAA accreditation could not offer this benefit, and it remained imperative that INSTIVEN establish an affiliation with an SDA institution fully accredited under a national system. UM offered this possibility under Mexican law.

After the initial UM-INSTITIVEN affiliation, other Montemorelos programs were offered at INSTIVEN by extension. An example is the Master in Education currently offered as an extension program to teachers at INSTIVEN. Teachers from Montemorelos come to the Venezuelan campus during the summers to teach the courses.\textsuperscript{3} Recent affiliation documents for other master’s extension programs from Montemorelos were approved to begin in the 2000 summer.\textsuperscript{4} Those programs provided opportunities for

\textsuperscript{1}Universidad de Montemorelos, “Convenio de Afiliación entre la Universidad de Montemorelos y el Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista,” March 1996.

\textsuperscript{2}Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista, Certificate of Accreditation, 6 July 1995. The certificate was issued by AAA, and granted accreditation for INSTIVEN to 31 May 1999.

\textsuperscript{3}Ibid., 25 November 1998, 024.

\textsuperscript{4}Universidad de Montemorelos, “Convenio entre la Universidad de Montemorelos y el Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela: Para el Ofrecimiento the Programas de Posgrado de la Universidad de Montemorelos y el Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela,” May 1999.
development and advancement of twelve IUNAV teachers in 1999.¹

At the time of writing, IUNAV is still affiliated with Montemorelos University, and the affiliation continues to cover the four-year programs for those students who started between 1996-98. However, because IUNAV has been approved by the Venezuelan government to grant diplomas, no more four-year programs have been started with Montemorelos since 1999.

IUNAV currently offers a theological program accredited by AAA, and Técnico Superior Universitario (TSU) programs approved by the Venezuelan Ministry of Education. Attention will now be focused on the manner in which authorization was received from the government to offer TSUs, and on an overview of the other institutional achievements during the 1990s.

Achievements and Developments in the 1990s

In the 1990s, the institution developed from a secondary school into a university institute (INSTIVEN-IUNAV) and experienced important growth in enrollment, finances, academic programs, and development as an institution of higher learning. However, the most notable achievement of this decade was obtaining Venezuelan government recognition in 1999. This placed the institution in a privileged situation and paved the way for further developments in the third millennium.

IUNAV Recognition Project

After the failure of the INSTIVEN project in 1989, three more years were needed

¹IUNAV Administrativo, 10 June 1999, 030.
to rewrite an updated SDA Venezuelan university institute project. As early as 1991, a commission presided over by Bracho was formed to look into the possibility of reformulating the university institute project in order to present it once again to the Ministry of Education. The initial contacts made by Bracho eventually led to an agreement with a team of professional consultants to rewrite the project in 1994. A new name was chosen for the university institute to distinguish the new proposal from the INSTIVEN project of 1986. The name, chosen in 1994, was "Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela" (IUNAV).

An important step in the development of this new project was the adoption of the constitution and by-laws of the civil association of IUNAV in March 1996 (see appendix E). With this important step, a legal framework for the operation of the institution was created and the project was now ready to be introduced to the Ministry of Education. In December 1996, the IUVAV project was presented to the permanent secretary of the National University Council (CNU) as a reformulated proposal. After this date the institution started to use the name IUNAV on official documents and letters.

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2The members of this commission were: "Michael Buonfiglio, José Ochoa, Gustavo Garrido, Gamaliel Flórez, Régulo Rivas, Orlando Ramírez, and Luis Kenneth." INSTIVEN Gobierno, 2 December 1991, 079.

3INSTIVEN Gobierno, 6 July 1994, 038; 27 July 1994, 041.


This IUNAV project was different from the previous INSTIVEN project in the types of programs that would be offered. There was a change from an emphasis in the area of the humanities (theology and religious education) to a more technical emphasis. This change of focus was required by OPSU, and the new proposal separated technical studies from the humanities as was required by the Ministry of Education. The new project was designed to prepare professionals in technology to benefit the local community, especially in the State of Yaracuy, in crucial areas such as administration, computer information systems, and pre-school education.

On 27 November 1998, after much feedback from the Ministry of Education and modification of the proposal by the committee at the school, the CNU presented their final report in favor of the creation of IUNAV. This decision was reported in the official government gazette. The final step in the process was completed when the presidential

Office of Planning for the University Sector. This office is part of the National University Council, which operates under the Ministry of Education. OPSU is the first official government entity to study a proposal for the establishment of a university.


Ibid., 4-5.


Gaceta Oficial de la República de Venezuela, no. 36.601, Caracas, 11 December 1998.
decree was signed on 23 July 1999. The president’s approval stated:\footnote{Hugo Chávez, "Decreto 227," Gaceta Oficial de la República de Venezuela, no. 36.750, 26 July 1999.}

HUGO CHÁVEZ FRIAS
President of the Republic

According to what has been set forth in the single paragraph of Section 10 of the Laws for Universities, and in harmony with what has been set forth in Sections 5 and 61 of the Laws for College and University Institutes, and having received approval from the National Council for Universities, and

CONSIDERING

That it is the purpose and duty of the National Executive to promote, protect, and foster those initiatives which tend to elevate cultural and educational levels in all regions of the nation, and

CONSIDERING

That the socio-economic development of Venezuela requires concrete efforts which will lead to better use of our human resources, through the development of highly qualified professionals necessary to achieve national progress,

I DECREE THE FOLLOWING

Article 1: I authorize the operation of the Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela (IUNAV), located in Nirgua, State of Yaracuy.

Article 2: The Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela is authorized to offer the following areas of study:

- Personnel Administration
- Business Administration
- Computer Information Systems
- Pre-School Education

Article 3: Students who successfully complete all the courses in the study plan and fulfill the requirements for the authorized areas of study will receive the title of Técnico Superior Universitario in their respective fields.

Article 4: The Secretary of the Ministry of Education has responsibility for the
implementation and publication of this decree.

The foregoing was signed in Caracas, on the twenty-third day of the month of July of the year nineteen hundred ninety-nine, which is the 189th year of Independence and the 140th year of the Federation.

The good news was shared immediately with a group of Venezuelan Adventists meeting in the Fifth Lay Congress of the Inter-America Division in Mérida, Venezuela. An official IUNAV newspaper was prepared with the good news (see appendix G), and this newspaper was distributed in Venezuela and to the rest of the nations of the Inter-America Division.¹

IUNAV Inauguration Ceremony

After the university institute received approval through the decree from the Venezuelan president, an inauguration ceremony was planned by Zabala and the Yaracuy State magistrates for 23 September 1999. On that day, Dr. Eduardo Lapi, the Yaracuy State Governor, was present at the IUNAV inauguration ceremony.²

The ceremony began with the traditional “opening of the banda.”³ Gilberto Bracho, the academic vice-president, made a speech to the audience gathered in the


³“Opening of the banda” is a traditional ceremony in which pieces of cloth in the colors of the Venezuelan flag, and loosely tied together, are displayed as a symbol of inauguration.
IUNAV administration building about the significance of this ceremony for the SDA community and the general public (see figure 55). Also present were leading figures in the SDA organization in Venezuela. After the introductory ceremony, the audience walked across the campus to the IUNAV auditorium (see appendix K) to hear speeches given in turn by Dr. Iván Omaña, president of UVA; Dr. Fernando Zabala, IUNAV president; and Dr. Eduardo Lapi, Yaracuy State Governor. This day was a celebrated as day of victory. It was the fulfillment of a dream that took almost two decades to realize, a dream not only of the leaders of the university institute, but of the Adventist membership throughout Venezuela.

Fig. 55. IUNAV inauguration ceremony.

Enrollment and Finances

A review of enrollment figures shows the impact made by combining secondary and post-secondary enrollment in the 1990s (see table 25). There was consistent growth in the overall school enrollment in the years following the opening of the tertiary-level

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classes in 1990. Though there was a decrease in the INSTIVOC enrollment, there was a sustained increase in the INSTIVEN-IUNAV enrollment through the decade.

During the 1990s, INSTIVOC registration decreased from 405 students in 1989 to 300 students in 1999, and INSTIVEN-IUNAV enrollment increased from an initial 43 students in 1990 to 336 in 1999. This data highlights the change from a secondary school to a university institute in which tertiary-level students outnumbered the high school students by the end of the decade.

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<th>Total</th>
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<td>300</td>
<td>572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-00</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>636</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In analyzing the school finances in the same period, it is also evident that the inclusion of the university institute made a positive impact on the school finances. Table 26 reveals a sustained growth of institutional assets from 1989-99. Institutional liquidity which ranged between 93 percent and 454 percent followed a downward trend through
the decade, but never declined to dangerous levels.

The working capital, which is a good indicator of the general financial strength of an institution, reports positive indices with the exception of 1996. This was the only instance in the history of the institution that the school ended the year reporting a financial loss. At least from 1989-93 the 15 percent working capital ratio as set by the SDA organization was met. In 1996 this ratio would certainly not have been met, but in the other years from 1994-99 it appears that an adequate working capital was maintained. Once again, however, the apparent positive growth recorded in table 26 is seen to be somewhat of an illusion if inflation, cost of living indices, and exchange rates are factored into the calculations. In spite of this, a report given in November 1999 by Néstor Ochoa, the IUNAV financial vice-president, records that the institution was able to support itself at a 90 to 100 percent level each year notwithstanding the difficult financial situation that resulted after the fall of the country's banking sector in 1994.

An indicator of the growth that took place in the 1990s is the institutional budget which jumped from 16,221,959 bolivars in 1989 to 503,660,050 bolivars in 1998. This represents a 3,104 percent increase. A similar rapid increase may be seen with regard to assets. Assets jumped from nine million bolivars in 1989 to 450 million in

1 Compare with chapter 2, "Finances."


3 See above in this chapter, under "Government."

4 INSTIVOC Administrativa, 16 November 1988, 181.

1999. This represents a 4,500 percent increase in the decade (see table 26).

Table 26. INSTIVEN-IUNAV Balance 1989-99

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>Liability</th>
<th>Net Worth</th>
<th>Working Capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>9,468,915</td>
<td>2,021,772</td>
<td>7,447,143</td>
<td>4,327,405=21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>18,498,125</td>
<td>7,417,483</td>
<td>11,080,642</td>
<td>6,992,476=17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>21,731,480</td>
<td>5,430,477</td>
<td>16,283,003</td>
<td>9,791,648=22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>33,315,566</td>
<td>5,387,892</td>
<td>27,927,674</td>
<td>18,969,345=21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>54,266,884</td>
<td>11,381,108</td>
<td>42,885,776</td>
<td>32,621,214=27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>135,295,281</td>
<td>76,333,014</td>
<td>58,962,257</td>
<td>14,588,432=119%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>133,760,385</td>
<td>65,979,446</td>
<td>67,780,939</td>
<td>-4,466,526=93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>218,460,627</td>
<td>101,585,690</td>
<td>116,874,937</td>
<td>11,607,702=111%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>374,668,259</td>
<td>130,365,426</td>
<td>244,302,833</td>
<td>59,384,899=145%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>450,083,718</td>
<td>149,689,039</td>
<td>300,394,679</td>
<td>50,876,212=134%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Of course, the notable increase in budget and assets may be explained at least in part by the high rate of inflation in Venezuela during the 1990s. The rate reached nearly 100 percent in some years, and totaled over 4500 percent through the decade (see appendix D). In spite of the high rate of inflation during the 1990s, Bracho and Zabala tried to keep tuition increases as low as possible in order to benefit the students.

Nevertheless, records show that there was a tenfold increase in tuition during this decade, 1

1The auditor’s reports for the years 1995-1999 were not available at the time this research was being done, and the documents recently forwarded to the author did not have all the information necessary to complete the calculations for the rest of the decade. It was unfortunately not possible to get the missing data in time to meet the deadline for submission of this project.
from 34,375 bolivars per semester in 1990,¹ to 340,900 bolivars per semester in 1998.² It is important to note that fees were based on a whole-semester package, and students were not charged by the number of credits for which they were enrolled.

Another indicator of the growth that took place with the inclusion of the university institute into the total campus structure can be perceived from the nature of the most important infrastructure projects developed in the 1990s (see table 27). The projects show a clear departure from a focus on the role of the secondary school. Although a number of projects were connected with facilities to house the elementary and secondary schools, the need for this construction was because IUNAV was taking over the main buildings on campus.

Table 27. INSTIVEN-IUNAV Infrastructure Projects 1989-99

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Land study for university institute project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Transfer elementary to Nirgua town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Construction of guest rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Creation of copy department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Purchase of “El Cuji” farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Road and house in “El Cuji” farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>New elementary building construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Bread industry division agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>New INSTIVOC buildings construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>FM Omega Radio acquisition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: INSTIVEN and IUNAV (Gobierno and Ejecutiva 1990-99).

¹INSTIVEN Ejecutiva, 6 June 1990, 043.

²Ibid., 23 April 1997, 025.
The original plans was to construct new buildings for the university institute in the 1990s. It was for this reason that the land study reported in table 27 was undertaken. At the time of opening the university institute in 1990 the shortage of classroom space made it imperative that the elementary building be used for tertiary level classes. As a result the elementary school was transferred to the town of Nirgua in 1991. The negative experience of this transfer resulted in a reconsideration of plans for future physical development of the campus. In the end, contrary to earlier plans, it was decided that it would be wisest to keep both the elementary and secondary programs on campus, but to designate specific areas for their operation. With this course of action in mind, Zabala supported the construction of a new elementary building in 1996. In addition, the old elementary building, then used by the university institute, was enlarged so as to meet the needs of the secondary school. In 1998, when the construction was completed, there was an exchange of physical classroom space between the IUNAV and INTIVOC so as to accommodate the needs of both in the most advantageous way. The current plan is a vision of one day being able to build completely new facilities for the university institute. If this dream is fulfilled, the old facilities will be returned to INSTIVOC.¹

Academic Programs

With the opening of the university institute in the 1990s, new academic programs were of course introduced to the institution. The first and most popular was the theology program, which enrolled 123 students in 1993-94. The theology curriculum of eight

¹Gilberto Bracho, interview.
This rigid curriculum, with no elective courses, was used to form the structure of the theology program in the early days of the course. Currently there is a more flexible curriculum that includes elective courses each semester (see appendix L). In addition to this program of studies, in 1992 the two-year curricula in computer information systems and business administration were introduced. These were the areas offered as extension courses from Antillean Adventist University, and the AAU curriculum was followed while the affiliation agreement lasted. In 1996, the Montemorelos program was introduced as a four-year curriculum in computer information systems, business administration, and office administration.

The 1990s was undoubtedly a decade of innovation in matters of programs and curricula. Affiliation agreements and the projected authorization of programs by the Ministry of Education in 1990 and again in 1999 demanded considerable agility in curriculum development and change (see appendix L). At the time of writing, the institution continues to offer a four-year theology program accredited by the SDA organization (see appendix J), and four additional programs of three years each, leading to a national diploma called “Técnico Superior Universitario” (Superior University Technician). These diplomas are offered in personnel administration, business administration, computer information systems, and pre-school education as approved by the presidential decree.
## Table 28. Theology Curriculum 1990-94

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course code and name</th>
<th>Cr.</th>
<th>Course code and name</th>
<th>Cr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I SEMESTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>II SEMESTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB113 Bible Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>IM213 Communication II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB123 Life of Jesus</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>IM223 English II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM133 Communication I</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>TA232 Personal Evangelism</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM143 English I</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CG243 Prophetic Gift</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS153 General Philosophy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CG253 Research Meth.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA161 Practice I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>TA261 Practice II</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG171 Physical Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III SEMESTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>IV SEMESTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB313 Greek I</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>TB413 Old Testament I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TS325 Bible Doctrines I</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>LB423 Greek II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA331 Practice III</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>TS433 Bible Doctrines II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA343 Health Principles</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>TB443 Hermeneutics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA352 Christian Home</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>TA451 Practice IV</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG362 Computer Intro.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>CS463 Philosophy of Edu.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG372 General Statistics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V SEMESTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>VI SEMESTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB513 Old Testament II</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>TB613 Act and Epistles</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB523 Greek III</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>LB623 Greek IV</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA533 Homiletics</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>LB633 Hebrew I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA541 Practice V</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>TA641 Practice VI</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS553 Ancient History</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>TA652 Sacred Music</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB563 Gospel Theology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CS663 Christian History</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CS672 General Psychology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VII SEMESTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>VIII SEMESTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB713 Daniel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>TB813 Revelation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA721 Practice VII</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>TA821 Practice VIII</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB733 Hebrew II</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>TA833 Public Evangelism</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB743 Epistles II</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>TS843 Other Religions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA753 Pastoral Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>TS853 Science and Religion</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS763 SDA History</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>TA862 Church Admin.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Except for the theology program, the degrees and diplomas which students have completed during the 1990s have attracted national recognition, and this has given graduates new employment opportunities within and outside the SDA organization. The seminary program, because it only has AAA accreditation, is not nationally recognized. The first ministerial candidates to complete this program, and to take all of their studies within Venezuela, graduated in 1994. Until 1997 most of these prospective ministers were employed by the SDA church, and there was no major problem relating to degree recognition. Since 1998 the SDA Church has experienced difficulties employing theology graduates due to the weakness of the national economy and the impact that this has had on the church. The Venezuela-Antilles Union has recently implemented a more rigorous screening program for prospective ministerial students to reduce the number of graduates. In addition, a plan has been developed to employ theology graduates on a part-time basis in districts where there is no SDA presence, with the expectation that these ministerial interns will help support themselves by colporteur, and that they will plant a new church in the district.\textsuperscript{1} Already 70 percent of Venezuelan SDA church districts are under the leadership of former INSTIVOC-INSTIVEN-IUNAV students.\textsuperscript{2} The impact that these former students are making on the work of the church is considerable.

In 1999 the new TSU curricula were approved for IUNAV by the Ministry of

\textsuperscript{1}Edgar Brito, interview by author, 7 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Brito has been the IUNAV seminary dean since 1995.

\textsuperscript{2}Julio Palacios, interview by author, 1 December 1999, Barquisimento, tape recording. Palacios was the Union Venezolana Antillana (UVA) secretary until 2000. He is currently UVA president. He is also a former student of INSTIVOC.
Education. At the time these curricula were drafted in 1996, the professional team contracted to develop the proposal did not consider it expedient or necessary to include any religion or Bible classes. It was no doubt a decision on their part to err on the side of caution considering the rejection of the INSTIVEN proposal just a few years earlier. Thus, when the curriculum was approved in 1999, few of the traditional Adventist general education or religion courses were evident in the program (see appendix L). Courses with names like “Complimentary Activities”, “Social Well-being” and “Philosophy of Education” are mentioned with varying frequency in each of the approved TSU programs. No doubt these classes partially meet the need for a core of general education classes shaped by an Adventist worldview. But the fact remains that Nirgua is currently offering TSU curricula without Bible classes. This is certainly a most unusual situation, and one to which would give any Adventist educational administrator pause for thought. Considering the institutional philosophy, it is indeed surprising that the IUNAV administration did not insist on a more overt expression of SDA distinctive in the TSU curricula.

When a AAA evaluation team made a site visit to IUNAV from 14-16 December 1999 to consider continued accreditation for the institution, the missing Bible in the TSU curricula were noted as a major weakness. The exit report of the visiting AAA team recommended that religion courses be included in the new programs as soon as possible. The administration is therefore under constraint to request curricular changes through the
Ministry of Education at the first opportune moment.¹

One of the reasons for opening a school in 1962 was to provide employees to meet the needs of a growing SDA church in Venezuela. With the new tertiary programs well established at Nirgua, the teachers and administrators can, with some satisfaction, claim that this objective has been achieved.

SDA Philosophy

With the opening of the university institute, new emphasis was placed on the institutional philosophy. At the time the INSTIVEN program was proposed, a philosophy statement was drafted. This was revised under a commission appointed by Zabala when the new IUNAV proposals were being developed. The statement has appeared in official institutional documents since 1990. This statement affirms that God is the Creator and sustainer of the universe; the Bible is the Word of God and the criterion for true learning; Jesus Christ is the supreme revelation of God and the example and only hope of humankind; the physical, intellectual, and moral faculties of human beings are not separate entities and need to be developed in harmony with each other; and finally, education is a process through which men and women are restored to the image of their Creator.²

The institution’s mission statement recognized true education as “the education


that contributes to the harmonious development of the student's physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual faculties." To this end, in the 1990s the institution continued to integrate spiritual and moral instruction in the classroom and provide spiritual activities that influenced the lives of the students.

It has already been noted that, though the theology program is certainly delivered from an Adventist perspective, the TSU programs approved by the Ministry of Education lack a distinctive Adventist core. In spite of this lack, faculty and students alike argue that the spiritual program on the Nirgua campus is a strong one. It may seem that the Zabala administration were irresponsible in not maintaining a distinctive Adventist curriculum. In their own defense the IUNAV administrators would reply that integration of faith and learning is more closely linked to the attitude and experience of the teacher than to the content of the course. With this in mind, the administrators have been careful to employ experienced and dedicated Christian teachers to ensure that Christian learning takes place even in the TSU programs. In this manner they have attempted to maintain a strong Adventist philosophy in spite of the lack of specified religion courses.

Another development relevant to the institutional philosophy was the creation of a labor office under student services administration. This office was responsible for coordinating on-campus student employment and looking for any

\[\text{INSTIVEN Ejecutiva, 4 April 1995, 001.s} \]

\[\text{2 These observations are based largely on the experiences and understanding of the author, who grew up on the Nirgua campus, maintains close links with faculty and staff, and conducted numerous interviews there as a part of this research. Opinions expressed in these interviewees substantiate the idea that the Adventist philosophy of education remains strong, and that faith and learning are still integrated, even in the TSU programs.} \]
opportunities in which students could develop their physical faculties by doing useful work.\(^1\) Another important initiative in providing work for students was the development and expansion of the main campus industries, namely, the farm and bakery. The most notable aspect of this development was the purchase of the “El Cuji” farm. This added 130 hectares to the school property. This purchase benefitted the students by providing work opportunities in agricultural activities relating to about thirty new farm products in addition to oranges.\(^2\)

An emphasis that has continued throughout the history of the institution is the focus on service. A philosophy of service has generally been well exemplified in the lives of teachers and administrators. The aim of true education has been articulated to students as joy in service to God and to society.\(^3\) In these respects, the IUNAV courses are different from those offered by secular schools. At IUNAV, through prayer and other spiritual activities, and by integration of faith, learning, and life, this most noble lesson of the joy of service has been taught.\(^4\)

Finally, an analysis of campus life in the 1990s will better illustrate the kind of institution that IUNAV has become.

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\(^2\) Ordenel Zerpa, interview by author, 12 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Zerpa has been the school farm director since 1995.

\(^3\) Héctor Martin, interview by author, 6 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Martin was a day student of INSTIVEN-IUNAV from 1994-98. He was also a member of the sixth graduating class in 1998. Today he is a religion teacher in the IUNAV administration faculty.

\(^4\) Edgar Brito, interview.
Institutional Life in the 1990s

Social Life

Early in the 1990s, campus social life was strongly impacted by the interaction between secondary- and tertiary-level students. Sharing the same cafeteria, residences, sports facilities, and grounds was not always easy. Differences in the rules applied to each group were for some time a source of conflict.

When the university institute was established, a student affairs office was created. Jorge Aguero, an experienced SDA pastor-teacher, was appointed as vice-president for student affairs.1 The office of student affairs was responsible for coordinating a wide variety of campus life activities and concerns. These included the physical well-being of students, the residences, cafeteria, student clubs, sports, and social activities.2 According to testimonies from the students, intramural sports activities became one of their major recreational interests. Many students are present at these activities to support their teams (see figure 56).3 Dr. Fernando Zabala confirmed that sports activities played an important role in the life of the students and teachers during his administration, and he himself supported the idea of competitive sports performed in a Christian manner, where prayer

1INSTIVEN Ejecutiva, 5 March 1990, 037.

2Instituto Universitario Adventista, Unión Venezolana Antillana, Nirgua, Estado Yaracuy, Reglamento Interno, Seminario Teológico, C-15.

3David Huamán, interview by author, 3 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Huamán was a boarding student at INSTIVEN-IUNAV from 1993-97. In 1997 he was one of the first graduates of the four-year administration program. At the time of writing he was the accounting manager of the campus bread industry.
and good sportsmanship could be part of the activities.¹

Other teachers, for example Oscar González, dean of the faculty of administration, confirm that sports activities are a high priority on campus. González' own plan for socialization with students is by participating with them in physical education classes. In his testimony, he proposes that physical exercise is the best cure for stress for him and his students, emphasizing the importance of physical exercise in Christian education.²

The approach of the Nirgua administration, apparently supported by the teachers, is a dramatic change from the philosophy held by early SDA educators, who considered competitive sports to be "frivolous" activities which should be avoided in SDA Schools.³ The administrators at both El Limón and Nirgua seem through the years to have taken a

¹Fernando Zabala, interview.

²Oscar González, interview by author, 9 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. González has been a teacher in IUNAV since 1995, and director of the Administration program from 1996 to the present.

³See chapter 1, "Avondale Experience."
less conservative attitude to sports than was the case in many other SDA institutions. The campus map at El Limón indicates that a sports area was designated in spite of the limited area available. It appears that during the earliest years in the history of the institution manual work was seen as a preferred option to sports. Since the time of Hernandez in the 1970s, sports activities have often been promoted as an important and positive element of school life. With the acceptance of organized intermural competitions, the attitude at Nirgua in the 1990s was certainly in contrast to that of Adventist institutions in earlier times. Zabala's active promotion of such activities is not at all typical of Adventist administrators. It must be acknowledged that the recent history of sports at Adventist institutions has tended to follow the pattern manifested at Nirgua, but this has more often been an administrative concession rather than an administrative initiative.

George Knight, in commenting on the philosophy and practice of sports activities on SDA campuses has noted that, in an age when work assignments are not usually strenuous, when machines are used to complete many tasks, and when work opportunities at Adventist educational institutions are limited, strenuous sports activities may be an acceptable alternative. He also notes that Ellen White, in expressing her concerns about

1See figure 15, above.

2See chapter 2, on “SDA Philosophy,” and chapter 4, on “Analysis of Campus Industries.”

3See chapter 4, on “Social Life;” and, chapter 5, on “Social Life.” Hernandez, it will be remembered, was responsible for the development of a number of the on-campus industries, so it is clear that he supported the idea of manual labor. Work-study was a part of the required curriculum. Recreational sport, however, was also encouraged as part of a healthy physical and social climate.
sports, does not condemn these activities outright. She opines against competition in sports, but encourages participation in positive recreational pursuits in which adults and youth are involved together. Knight argues that Ellen White "has suggested that parents and teachers should take an interest in the sport of their children—even going so far as to unbend their dignity and participate with them in their games."¹

Zabala in particular, but also his predecessors, seem to have taken a pragmatic approach to the question of sporting activities. Their interpretation of Adventist philosophy on this issue has tended to follow a more liberal interpretation than has often been the case. Knight's commentary on Adventist philosophy of recreation may not itself have influenced their thinking, but it appears that their assessment of the situation convinced the Nirgua administrators that more was to be gained than lost by actively promoting sports. In spite of the on-campus industries, there was not enough work at Nirgua for all the students to be actively involved in manual labor. In addition, it was the considered opinion of faculty and administrators that social relationships with students could be enhanced through teacher participation alongside the students in recreational sports. The inclusion of intramural sports the 1990s appears to have been a conscious and deliberate decision based on the mission of the institution. It is likely that the administrators would acknowledge that IUNAV has not followed the plan that Ellen

¹George Knight, *Myths in Adventism* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1985), 219-33, especially 222. Knight attempts in *Myths in Adventism* to show that Ellen White manifested a reasonable and pragmatic approach to issues when these issues were not matters of fundamental religious principle. She was realistic in assessing situations and balanced in suggesting solutions that were most advantageous under the circumstances.
White might have proposed for the Avondale school, but they would undoubtedly argue that they have followed the principles. A balanced education should incorporate exercise, and teachers should build relationships with students. At Nirgua, it was decided that sporting activities could at least in part facilitate the achievement of these purposes. The underlying purposes of the Adventist educational philosophy, it would be argued, have not been abandoned.¹

Among other activities coordinated by the student affairs office were the many departmental beach trips. Increased enrollment has made it difficult for beach trips to include all students at one time, and in the 1990s the tendency has been for departments and special groups to arrange these occasions. In spite of the changes, the testimonies of students indicate that these trips remain important and enjoyable events in campus social life. An example is given by Dámaris Figueroa, who reported that she missed the beach trip during her first year, but after she took part in her second year, she discovered it was so much fun that she did not miss again.²

Other activities became a tradition in the history of the school and still play a great part in providing wonderful memories for the students. Examples include the welcome banquets for new students, the valentine’s banquet for special friends, and the mountain trips around the school on Saturday afternoons.³

¹Fernando Zabala, interview.

²Dámaris Figeroa, interview by author, 2 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Figueroa was a day student at IUNAV from 1996-99, and a member of the first secretarial class to graduate in 1999. After graduation she became a secretary at INSTIVOC.

³Héctor Martín, interview.
Another development with the beginning of the university institute was the publication of an official seminary newspaper, "El Universitario Adventista" (The Adventist University Student). The newspaper was an initiative of the students to keep the SDA community in Venezuela informed about the progress of the new university institute, and it has been published intermittently since March 1993 (see appendix G). Another campus publication since the late 1990s was the “Contacto Universitario” (University Contact), which was an initiative of Dr. Fernando Zabala. This newspaper has served as the official voice of the Nirgua administration (see appendix G). These newspapers have been both a source of news and socialization among the students and teachers in the 1990s.

Commenting on social life, the consensus is that the campus has been enriched by the presence of college-level students in the 1990s. Life has apparently been full of fun, and recreational, sports, and social activities have contributed to the making of many positive memories. Students noted that their teachers participated in these activities and, as a result, the influence of teachers on the lives of students was greatly enhanced.

**Spiritual Life**

When plans were laid for a university institute and theological seminary, spiritual life was promoted as an integral part of the proposed higher education program. There

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was concern to avoid discrepancies between the mission statement, religious values, and campus activities. Special attention has been given to the weeks of prayer, which seemed to be the most important spiritual activity according to student testimonies.\footnote{Edwing Mago, interview by author, 3 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Mago was a computer information systems student from 1996-98. After he graduated, he began teaching in the computer information systems program at IUNAV.} As a result of these weeks of spiritual emphasis, students have committed their lives to God and, in some cases, been baptized. These developed a powerful spiritual focus.\footnote{Huaman, interview.} (see figure 57).

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{fig57.jpg}
\caption{IUNAV baptismal ceremony.}
\end{figure}

Students also mentioned the powerful influence of activities such as "vigilias" (vigils),\footnote{"Vigilias" refers to spiritual events during the night, consisting of extended group prayer sessions and spiritual introspection.} as well as spiritual retreats for students sponsored by different departments. These activities provided a source of Christian communion and spiritual experience.
shared by teachers and students in the 1990s. Teachers played an important role by their example, encouragement, and personal testimony to students.

According to Fernando Zabala, among the most notable developments in the area of institutional spiritual life in the 1990s was the preparation of what Robert Folkenberg called "The Master Plan of Spiritual Development." This plan was designed to fortify the spiritual life among teachers and students. As part of the spiritual master plan, among the many spiritual activities developed and coordinated by the campus chaplain and the pastor, is the "Hour of Power." This activity consists of a mid-morning and mid-afternoon break each day during the school program. With all other activities stopped, groups of students and faculty gather in the classrooms, hallways, or work areas and share in a moment of prayer. In preparation for the prayer, a passage of scripture or a paragraph from the writings of Ellen G. White is read.

The spiritual life of the institution had been enriched by the inclusion of the university institute. There are more student visitation programs, and evangelistic crusades have been conducted with teacher and student participation. There is also a

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1Juan Rivas, interview by author, 8 December 1999, Nirgua, tape recording. Rivas was a theological student at INSTIVEN from 1993-97. He is presently a full-time SDA minister employed by the Central West Venezuela Mission of the SDA.

2Edgar Brito, interview.

3The idea of preparing a spiritual master plan was presented by Robert Folkenberg, president of the General Conference of SDA, in a meeting with college and university presidents in 1997. Such a plan was developed for IUNAV by Dr. Fernando Zabala.

4Fernando Zabala, interview.
more intensive plan to evangelize the community surrounding the institution. As a result, two new SDA churches and ten new groups of worshipers have been organized and directed by INSTIVEN-IUNAV theology students between 1990 and 1999. This shows that the purpose of the institution is to help students understand the Adventist philosophy of education. Education is more than a preparation for this life, more than acquiring knowledge, and more than a work program. It is also about sharing and communion with each other, surrender to God, and friendship with Him.

Summary

The creation of the Venezuelan-Antilles Union in 1989 opened the way for the transformation of INSTIVOC into INSTIVEN-IUNAV, a university institute offering higher learning, in which teachers, administrators, and pastors for the new union might be educated. This was the fulfillment of a dream of the founding fathers in 1962.

The historic opening of the university institute in March 1990, which included the opening of the seminary, was followed by various affiliations with Antillean Adventist University and Montemorelos University as responses to the failure of the INSTIVEN project. At the same time as these affiliation programs provided recognized degrees for the graduates, a new project, IUNAV, was developed. IUNAV was granted the authority to offer tertiary-level programs under the Venezuelan Ministry of Education by a presidential decree signed by Hugo Chávez in 1999. This recognition has placed the institution in a good position to offer programs in higher education for the SDA church and the local community in the new millennium.
This chapter considered the impact of the opening of the university institute on the Nirgua campus. The impact of the change in status on the secondary school which continued to operate was also considered. The mission, philosophy, and academic programs were explored. The chapter also portrayed the leadership of the first university presidents, Bracho and Zabala, and the important role they played in achieving recognition and accreditation from both the SDA organization and the Venezuelan government. A final section with testimonies from teachers and students was presented to give a better idea of institutional life in the 1990s.

At the end of the millennium, nearly forty years after the institution was founded in 1962, the dream of the pioneers has been realized and the SDA community in Venezuela has begun to see the results of its immense sacrifices. The institution operates with full recognition from the Ministry of Education and the SDA organization. The next and final chapter of this dissertation is devoted to a summary, conclusions and recommendations.
CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study has spanned thirty-eight years of the history, origins, and progress of Venezuelan Adventist University Institute. The school, which opened as a secondary school in 1962, was relocated and renamed in 1966, and was transformed into a university institute in 1990. This chapter summarizes the history of this school from 1962 to 1999, and presents the conclusions and recommendations of this study.

The first SDA church in Venezuelan was organized in 1911 by Pastor Frank G. Lane in Caracas. Among the church members were Ricardo and Rebeca Greenidge, who went as missionaries to Camagüan in 1922 to help the local SDA converts establish the first SDA boarding school in Venezuela. In 1927, the Colombia-Venezuela Union was organized, and a union school (Instituto Colombo-Venezolano [ICOLVEN]) was built in Colombia. This made it necessary for Adventist youth from Venezuela to travel to Colombia to get an SDA education. In 1960 the Venezuelan Adventists were gathered in Caracas for the biennial congress of the East Venezuela Mission. At that meeting there was a groundswell of support for a secondary boarding school in Venezuela.

Arrangements were made to use José Antonio Lamas chicken farm in El Limón
for the school. Once the farm was acquired, a call was sent to Dr. Antonio Ceballos to oversee the project, to prepare the necessary paperwork, and to set up the physical plant so that the school could begin to operate. The Colegio Secundario Adventista Venezolano (COLSEVE) was opened on 1 October 1962, operating with six teachers and fifty-one students enrolled into one of two secondary courses. In spite of the humble beginnings on a chicken farm, the school allowed the youth of the SDA church an opportunity to receive a wholesome education that enriched body, mind, and spirit.

It is apparent from the primary sources that the founders of the school recognized that COLSEVE was being opened at a temporary location, until suitable land could be purchased and a school developed in a more suitable and spacious setting. In 1963-64 small lots were purchased in Nirgua, Estado Yaracuy. Intensive fund-raising efforts were initiated among the Venezuelan SDA churches, to which the members responded with joy. By 1966 the school was transferred from El Limón to Nirgua and re-named Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela (INSTIVOC).

In 1966 Carlos Schmidt became the principal of the school, succeeding Ceballos. For the next three years he put all his passion into the building program. At the end of his term as principal in 1969, he left as his legacy a campus with two residence halls to accommodate four hundred students, two sets of classroom buildings, two industrial buildings, five houses for teachers, and an almost finished cafeteria. This represented an investment of more than two million bolivars.

At Nirgua, a work program was developed and expanded to the point where 65 percent of school income was generated by student labor. In spite of financial hardships,
provisions were made to implement a technical course on the secondary level. The school also offered a science and a humanities curriculum, with some courses in domestic science. Bible courses were required at all levels, but the overall curriculum conformed to directives from the Ministry of Education, which had legal jurisdiction over the program. Private schools were however at liberty to offer an enhanced curriculum.

In 1969, Dr. Humberto Hernández became the third principal, and completed the construction projects begun by Schmidt. Hernández focused on developing school industries, in which students had the opportunity to develop physically, learn the value of work, and help pay their school fees. He developed the farm into a citrus plantation, and established printing and bread industries. The school curriculum was restructured to include industrial courses, and all students were required to work a minimum of five hours per week.

Hernández was succeeded by Miguel Angel López, who arrived at the school at the end of 1974. López was aware of the need to register the school and its patrimony under a legal title representing the SDA church members in Venezuela rather than the SDA organization in the USA. In this manner, the school and its assets would be safeguarded within the framework of Venezuelan law. When López left the school, he opened the way for Venezuelan leadership, beginning with Gustavo Garrido in 1979.

During Garrido’s administration from 1979-83, some important building projects were initiated. He was committed to the construction of a campus church, overseeing the project from its beginning to the day the church was inaugurated. Garrido also began the construction of the school library and administration offices, a project finished by his
successor. He was the leader who obtained approval from ICOLVEN to allow an extension program of the first year of theology at INSTIVOC. He also set the stage to study the possibility of establishing a university institute recognized by the Venezuelan government.

Pastor Iván Omaña, Garrido’s successor, gave continuity to Garrido’s dreams. He supported the first year of the theology program and tried to extend it to a second year. He also supported school initiatives to transform INSTIVOC into an institution of higher learning registered by the government, but his time as school principal (1983-85) did not allow him the opportunity to see the fruit of his work. Omaña was succeeded by Pastor Gamaliel Flórez.

Flórez saw the culmination of the vision that Garrido and Omaña had nurtured when the document outlining the creation of Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista (INSTIVEN) was submitted to the Ministry of Education in 1986. This extensive document embodied the hopes of the SDA membership in Venezuela to transform their secondary school into a college where SDA missionary workers could be educated.

Professor Gilberto Bracho took over the office as INSTIVOC school principal at a critical time in the school’s history. Early in 1989, the Colombia-Venezuela Union was divided into two unions, the Colombia Union and the Venezuelan-Antilles Union. This created the necessity of opening a seminary in the new Venezuela-Antilles Union for the preparation of ministers. This propelled the plan to transform INSTIVOC into Venezuelan Adventist University Institute in the 1990s.
Bracho, who had been the INSTIVOC principal since 1988, became the first INSTIVEN president in 1989. He completed the preparations necessary to open the university institute and seminary, appointing the staff, completing the paper work, and promoting the new program. On 5 March 1990, with forty-one students registered in the theology and religious education programs, a new chapter in the history of the school began.

The primary sources demonstrate that Bracho’s vision was to develop the university institute further, and to this end he explored possibilities for expansion of the physical grounds of the school. He played an important role in the negotiation and purchase of the El Cuji farm which allowed for additional campus development.

Dr. Fernando Zabala became the INSTIVEN president in 1994. His major challenge was to secure official Venezuelan recognition for the Nirgua institution which, up to that point in time, enjoyed only SDA recognition for its programs. Correspondence indicates that Zabala wanted to award full bachelor’s degrees from Antillean Adventist University affiliation programs developed by Bracho, but negotiations to this end were not successful. Zabala therefore initiated an affiliation program with Montemorelos University. In 1996 he introduced the reformulated IUNAV project to the Ministry of Education, and obtained approval to operate as a Venezuelan accredited institution of higher learning on 23 July 1999. With this conclusion to a process that had taken two decades to come to fruition, he placed IUNAV in an advantageous position at the start of the new millennium.
Conclusions

The conclusions reached in this study are as follows:

1. Venezuelan Adventist University Institute was established to provide a boarding school for SDA youth in Venezuela; to serve as a haven for SDA youth and a setting in which the Christian life could be modeled; to facilitate opportunities for the youth to obtain an education encompassing manual, intellectual, and spiritual elements; and to provide qualified denominational workers and a laity dedicated to service for God and society (see above, chapter 2, “Institutional Objectives”). The institution has to a large degree been successful in meeting these purposes, particularly since the introduction of programs of higher education.

2. Venezuelan Adventist University Institute was, to a large degree, established by the self-sacrificing donations in money, time, and effort of the SDA believers in Venezuela.

3. The writings and counsels of Ellen G. White had a great influence on the founding, relocation, and curriculum of the institution.

4. The Venezuelan Ministry of Education upheld requirements for the curriculum and teacher certification which ensured that academic standards were maintained to meet the needs of the Venezuelan socioeconomic setting.

5. The Venezuelan economy (based on fluctuating oil prices) played an important role in school finances and influenced enrollment throughout the history of the institution.

6. Careful selection of school principals (presidents) set the tone of the development of the school, including a shift from foreign to local leadership.
7. The development of a secondary school into a university institute (college level) was perceived as the means to educate individuals to serve the SDA Church and the society.

8. An important characteristic of Venezuelan Adventist University Institute was the spiritual atmosphere that permeated school activities. The example of godly teachers was largely the means by which students learned what it meant to be a Christian.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for further study:

1. An investigation into the Venezuelan SDA secondary feeder schools in relationship to Venezuelan Adventist University Institute, with the purpose of enhancing the partnership between the institutions and encouraging more SDA youth to take advantage of the opportunities offered by SDA higher education.

2. An investigation of the Venezuelan SDA elementary schools as the foundation of the SDA educational system in Venezuela.

3. An examination of the Venezuelan SDA system of education and its relation to the secular system.

4. A survey of the alumni of the Venezuelan Adventist University Institute to determine their roles and influence in the development of the SDA work in Venezuela.
APPENDIX A

AUTHORIZATION LETTERS
LETTER TO IUNAV PRESIDENT

Andrews University

November 17, 1998

Dr. Fernando Zabala
President
Venezuelan Adventist University
P.O. Box 13
Nirgua, Yaracuy
Venezuela

Re: PROPOSED DISSERTATION ON HISTORY OF UNAV

Dear Dr. Zabala:

It is my pleasure to follow up on conversations or attempted conversations with Pablo Huerfano. Mr. Huerfano is well advanced in his doctoral studies in Religious Education here at Andrews University, School of Education. As he has searched for an appropriate dissertation topic, he has been reviewing the possibility of doing a documentary, historical research on the History of the Universidad Adventista de Venezuela. The purpose of this letter is to authenticate his good and regular standing in our doctoral program and to invite you to consider the possibility of facilitating this research, making available to him corresponding books, files, letters, etc. which would permit him access to the necessary information.

In the past we have had students in the School of Education who have made notable contributions to various institutions around the world by writing on their history. Personally I have assisted students in writing on the histories of our educational institutions in Indonesia, Bermuda, and Jamaica. Without exception the institutions studied have felt blessed and strengthened as accurate information has been produced and published which documented their founding and evolution over the years.

We recommend Mr. Huerfano to you, and ask you to consider the possibility of cooperating with him in this scholarly endeavor.

May God richly bless you in your service to the Master, and may the Universidad Adventista de Venezuela continue to accomplish the high goals which you have in your hearts.

Sincerely your brother in Christ,

John B. Youngberg, Ed.D., Coordinator
Programs in Religious Education

Benton Springs, Michigan 49104/(616)471-7771
LETTER FROM IUNAV PRESIDENT

Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela

AUTORIZACION

Yo, Fernando Zabala, Director General del Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela, autorizo al señor:

PABLO E. HUERFANO

para que tenga acceso a los documentos originales relacionados con la historia tanto de INSTIVOC como de IUNAV. Favor brindarle el apoyo necesario en los siguientes Departamentos e Industrias: Biblioteca, Admisión y Registro, Control y Registro Instívoc, Almacén, Finca, Imprenta y Omega Stereo.

Autorización que se hace en la Ciudad de Nigua a los veintisiete días del mes de agosto de mil novecientos noventa y nueve.

Atentamente,

Pr. Fernando Zabala
Director General

gdec.
Yo, Iván Omaña García, presidente de la Unión Venezolana Antillana de los Adventistas del Séptimo Día, autorizo al señor:

PABLO E. HUERFANO

para que tenga acceso a los documentos originales de la Unión Venezolana Antillana, tales como minutas, cartas y documentos pertinentes a la historia de la Universidad Adventista en Venezuela.

Autorización que se hace en la ciudad de Barquisimeto a los veintisiete días del mes de abril de mil novecientos noventa y nueve.

Atentamente,

Iván Omaña G.
Presidente

edec
APPENDIX B

INSTITUTIONAL PERSONNEL
1962-1963

Principal: *Antonio Ceballos (mathematics)
Vice-Principal: *Elias Franco (Spanish, civic, and art)
Registrar: *Teresa de Ceballos (Bible, and physical education)
Treasurer: *Myriam de Suárez (domestic art)
Boys' Dean: *Juan José Suárez (English, history, and church pastor)
Girls' Dean: *Neria Calderón (Bible, food and laundry services)

1963-1964

Principal: Antonio Ceballos (Mathematics, chemistry, and physics)
Vice-Principal: *Freddy Berroterán
Registrar: Teresa de Ceballos (Bible, and physical education)
Treasurer: Myriam de Suárez (Orientation, and domestic art)
Boys' Dean: *Edgar Escobar (math, and Bible)
Girls' Dean: Neria Calderón (Bible and food service)
Teachers: *Justo Vargas (geography, history, and biology); Elias Franco (Spanish, civic, art, and physical education)

1964-1965

Principal: Antonio Ceballos (Mathematics, chemistry, and physics)
Vice-Principal: Freddy Berroterán
Registrar: Teresa de Ceballos (Bible, and physical education)
Treasurer: Myriam de Suárez (orientation, and domestic art)
Boys' Dean: Edgar Escobar* (math, and Bible)
Girls' Dean: Neria Calderón (Bible and food service)
Teacher: Justo Vargas (Geography, History, Biology); Elias Franco (Spanish, civic, art, and physical education)

1965-1966

Principal: Antonio Ceballos (Mathematics, chemistry, and physics)
Vice-Principal: Freddy Berroterán
Registrar: Teresa de Ceballos (Bible, and physical education)
Treasurer: Myriam de Suárez (orientation, and domestic art)
Boys' Dean: *Domingo Miolli* (Bible)
Girls' Dean: Neria Calderón (Bible, and food service)
Teachers: Justo Vargas* (geography, history, and biology); Elias Franco* (Spanish, civic, art, and physical education); and *Guillermina Brito (biology)

1966-1967

Principal: *Carlos Schmidt
Vice-Principal: Antonio Ceballos
Treasurer: *Alberto Guzmán
Registrar: Teresa de Ceballos
Librarian: *Loida de Schmidt
Boys' Dean: *Harold Bohr
Girls' Dean: *Evelyn de Bohr
Food Service: Neria Calderón
Agriculture: *Secundino Rodriguez
Bible: Harold Bohr, and Juan José Suárez
Chemistry: Antonio Ceballos
English: *Harold Bohr, and *Loida de Schmidt
Home Economics: Myriam de Suárez
Industrial Art: *José Franco
Mathematics and Physics: Freddy Berroterán, and *Carlos Schmidt
Music: *Rosita Ramírez
Physical Education: Antonio Ceballos, and Teresa de Ceballos
Social Sciences: Myriam de Suárez, and *Dulce de Rodríguez
Spanish and Literature: *Encarnación Montes
Construction: *Carlos Schmidt
Farm: *Secundino Rodríguez
Laundry: Neria Calderón
Woodwork and Maintenance: *José Franco
Elementary School: Guillermina Brito*
Treasurer: Alberto Guzmán
Registrar: Teresa de Ceballos
Librarian: Loida de Schmidt
Boys' Dean: *Lisido Urdaneta
Girls' Dean: Rosa de Guzmán
Food Service: Neria Calderón
Agriculture: Secundino Rodríguez
Bible: Harold Bohr, and Juan José Suárez
Biology: Antonio Ceballos, and Myriam de Suárez.
Chemistry: Antonio Ceballos
English: Harold Bohr, and Loida de Schmidt
Home Economics: Myriam de Suárez
Industrial Art: José Franco
Mathematics and Physics: Freddy Berroterán, and Carlos Schmidt
Music: Rosita Ramírez
Physical Education: Antonio Ceballos, and Teresa de Ceballos
Social Sciences: Juan José Suárez, and Dulce de Rodriguez
Spanish and Literature: Encarnación Montes.
Construction: Carlos Schmidt*
Farm: Secundino Rodríguez
Laundry: Neria Calderón
Woodwork and Maintenance: José Franco
Elementary School: *Maruja de Urdaneta

1968-1969

Principal: Carlos Schmidt*
Vice-Principal: Antonio Ceballos
Treasurer: Alberto Guzmán
Accountant: *Josué Vázquez
Registrar: Teresa de Ceballos
Librarian: *Maruja de Franco
Boys' Dean: *Iván Omaa
Girls' Dean: *Magaly de Garrido
Food Service: Neria Calderón
Agriculture: Secundino Rodríguez
Bible: Alberto Guzmán, and *Iván Omaa
Biology: *Gilberto Bracho, and *Evelyn de Omaa
Chemistry: Antonio Ceballos, and *Gilberto Bracho
English: Rosa de Guzmán, and *Evelyn de Omaa
Industrial Art: José Franco
Mathematics and Physics: Freddy Berroterán, Antonio Ceballos, *Rafael Tovar
Music: Rosita Ramírez*
Physical Education: Teresa de Ceballos, and *Iván Omaa
Social Sciences: *Gustavo Garrido, *Humberto Hernández, and Dulce de Rodriguez
Spanish and Literature: *Sandra de Bracho, *Gustavo Garrido, and *Onel Vizamora
Typing: *Gladys de Hernandez
Construction: *Humberto Hernández
Farm: Secundino Rodríguez
Laundry: Neria Calderón
Woodwork and Maintenance: José Franco
Elementary School: Luisa de Gutiérrez, and *Castelia Penoth

1970-1971

Principal: Humberto Hernández
Vice-Principal: Antonio Ceballos
Treasurer: Alberto Guzmán
Accountant: Josué Vázquez
Registrar: Teresa de Ceballos
Librarian: Maruja de Franco
Boys' Dean: Iván Omaa
Girls' Dean: Magaly de Garrido

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Food Service: Neria Calderón
Agriculture: Secundino Rodríguez
Bible: Alberto Guzmán, and Iván Omaña
Biology: Gilberto Bracho, and Evelyn de Omaña
Chemistry: Antonio Ceballos, and Gilberto Bracho
English: Rosa de Guzmán, and Evelyn de Omaña
Industrial Art: José Franco
Mathematics and Physics: *Harvey Borton, Antonio Ceballos, and Rafael Tovar
Music: *Anne de Borton
Physical Education: Magaly de Garrido, and Iván Omaña
Social Sciences: Gustavo Garrido, Humberto Hernández, and Dulce de Rodriguez
Spanish and Literature: Sandra de Bracho, Gustavo Garrido, and Humberto Hernández
Typing: Gladys de Hernández
Construction: Humberto Hernández
Farm: Secundino Rodríguez
Laundry: Neria Calderón
Woodwork and Maintenance: José Franco
Elementary School: Luisa de Gutiérrez, and Castelia Penoth

1971-1972

Principal: Humberto Hernández
Vice-Principal: Antonio Ceballos
Treasurer: *Luis Camacho
Accountant: Gonzalo Prada
Registrar: Teresa de Ceballos
Librarian: Gustavo Garrido
Boys’ Dean: *Leopoldo Peinado
Girls’ Dean: Neria Calderón
Food Service: Carmen de Ramírez
Bible: *Manuel Ramírez, Leopoldo Peinado, and Humberto Hernández
Biology: Gilberto Bracho, and Sandra de Bracho
Chemistry: *Hugo García, and Gilberto Bracho
English: Jeannine de Blanco, and Gustavo Garrido
Industrial Art: Cruz Blanco, and *Marvin Shultz
Mathematics and Physics: Harvey Borton, and Antonio Ceballos
Music: Anne de Borton
Physical Education: Leopoldo Peinado, and Jeannine de Blanco
Social Sciences: Gustavo Garrido, Humberto Hernández, Mario Pérez, and Miryam de Prada
Spanish and Literature: Sandra de Bracho, and Mario Pérez
Typing: Gladys de Hernández, and Teresa de Ceballos
Construction: *Víctor Reyes
Laundry: Neria Calderón
Metal Industry: Cruz Blanco
Printing: *Marvin Shultz
Woodwork and Maintenance: Moisés Huérfano
Elementary School: Luisa de Gutiérrez, and *Casilda de Peinado

1972-1973

Principal: Humberto Hernández
Vice-Principal: Antonio Ceballos
Treasurer: Luis Camacho
Accountant: Gonzalo Prada
Registrar: Teresa de Ceballos
Librarian: Gustavo Garrido
Boys’ Dean: Leopoldo Peinado
Girls’ Dean: Neria Calderón
Food Service: Carmen de Ramírez
Bible: *Manuel Ramírez, Leopoldo Peinado, and Humberto Hernández
Biology: Gilberto Bracho, and Sandra de Bracho
Chemistry: *Hugo García, and Gilberto Bracho
English: Jeannine de Blanco, and Gustavo Garrido
Industrial Art: Cruz Blanco, and *Marvin Shultz
Mathematics and Physics: Harvey Borton, and Antonio Ceballos
Music: Anne de Borton
Physical Education: Leopoldo Peinado, and Jeannine de Blanco
Social Sciences: Gustavo Garrido, Humberto Hernández, Mario Pérez, and Miryam de Prada
Spanish and Literature: Sandra de Bracho, and Mario Pérez
Typing: Gladys de Hernández, and Teresa de Ceballos
Construction: *Víctor Reyes
Laundry: Neria Calderón
Metal Industry: Cruz Blanco
Printing: *Marvin Shultz
Woodwork and Maintenance: Moisés Huérfano
Elementary School: Luisa de Gutiérrez, and *Casilda de Peinado

1973-1974

Principal: Humberto Hernández
Vice-Principal: Antonio Ceballos

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Treasurer: Luis Camacho
Accountant: Gonzalo Prada
Registrar: Teresa de Ceballos*
Librarian: Gustavo Garrido
Boys' Dean: Leopoldo Peinado*
Girls' Dean: Neria Calderón
Food Service: Carmen de Ramírez
Bible: Manuel Ramírez, Leopoldo Peinado*, and Humberto Hernández*
Biology: Gilberto Bracho, and Sandra de Bracho
Chemistry: Hugo García, and Gilberto Bracho
English: Jeannine de Blanco*, and Gustavo Garrido
Industrial Art: Cruz Blanco*, and Marvin Shultz
Mathematics and Physics: Harvey Borton, and Antonio Ceballos*
Music: Anne de Borton
Physical Education: Leopoldo Peinado*, and Jeannine de Blanco*
Social Sciences: Gustavo Garrido, Humberto Hernández*, Mario Pérez, and Myriam de Prada
Spanish and Literature: Sandra de Bracho, and Mario Pérez
Typing: Gladys de Hernández*, and Teresa de Ceballos*
Construction: Víctor Reyes
Laundry: Neria Calderón
Metal Industry: Cruz Arismendi
Printing: Marvin Shultz
Woodwork and Maintenance: Moisés Huérfano
Elementary School: Luisa de Gutiérrez, and Casilda de Peinado*

1974-1975

Principal: *Miguel Ángel López
Vice-Principal: *Beatriz Arrieta*
Treasurer: Luis Camacho
Accountant: Gonzalo Prada*
Registrar: Maruja de Franco
Librarian: Maruja de Franco
Boys' Dean: *José Hurtado*
Girls' Dean: Neria Calderón
Food Service: Carmen de Ramírez*
Agriculture: *Cruz Arismendi
Bible: Manuel Ramírez*, and *José Hurtado*
Biology: Gilberto Bracho, and Sandra de Bracho
Chemistry: Hugo García, and Gilberto Bracho
English: Judy de Shultz, Harvey Borton, and Gilberto Bracho
Industrial Art: Marvin Shultz
Mathematics and Physics: Harvey Borton, and

1975-1976

Principal: Miguel Ángel López
Vice-Principal: *Osman Longa
Treasurer: Luis Camacho
Accountant: *America Placencia
Registrar: Maruja de Franco
Librarian: *Myriam de Longa
Boys' Dean: *Gonzalo Pico
Girls' Dean: *Alba de Urdaneta
Food Service: *Máriam de Rodríguez
Agriculture: *Paulino Rodriguez
Bible: Iván Omaha, and *Gonzalo Pico
Biology: Gilberto Bracho, Evelyn de Omaha, and Herminia de Pérez
Chemistry: Hugo García, and Gilberto Bracho
English: Evelyn de Omaha
Mathematics and Physics: Harvey Borton*, and
*Osman Longa
Music: Anne de Borton*
Physical Education: *Osman Longa, and Evelyn de Omaha
Social Sciences: Mario Pérez, and *Olga de López
Spanish and Literature: Sandra de Bracho, and Mario Pérez
Typing: *Esperanza de Pico
Construction: Víctor Reyes
Farm: *Paulino Rodríguez
Laundry: Neria Calderón
Woodwork and Maintenance: Moisés Huérfano

1976-1977

Principal: Miguel Ángel López
Vice-Principal: Osman Longa

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Treasurer: Luis Camacho
Accountant: América Placencia
Registrar: Manuia de Franco
Librarian: Myriam de Longa
Boys' Dean: Gonzalo Pico
Girls' Dean: Alba de Urdaneta
Food Service: María de Rodríguez
Agriculture: Paulino Rodríguez
Bible: Iván Omaña, and Gonzalo Pico
Biology: Evelyn de Omaña, and Herminia de Pérez
Chemistry: Hugo García
English: Evelyn de Omaña
Mathematics and Physics: Osman Longa
Physical Education: Osman Longa, and Evelyn de Omaña
Social Sciences: Mario Pérez, and Olga de López
Spanish and Literature: Mario Pérez
Typing: Esperanza de Pico
Construction: Víctor Reyes
Farm: Paulino Rodríguez*
Laundry: Neria Calderón
Woodwork and Maintenance: Moisés Huérfano
Elementary School: Luisa de Gutiérrez, Elizabeth de Rivas, and Haydeé Huérfano

1977-1978

Principal: Miguel Angel López
Vice-Principal: Gustavo Garrido
Treasurer: Franklin Caicedo
Librarian: Magaly de Garrido
Boys' Dean: *Carlos Acosta*
Girls' Dean: *Mercedes Gómez
Agriculture: Moisés Huérfano
Bible: Iván Omaña, and Gonzalo Pico
Biology: Evelyn de Omaña, and Herminia de Pérez*
Chemistry: Hugo García
English: Evelyn de Omaña
Mathematics and Physics: *Leonardo Suescún, and Noel Ramírez
Physical Education: Evelyn de Omaña
Social Sciences: *Bertha Fermin, and Gustavo Garrido
Typing: Esperanza de Pico
Construction: Juan Rodríguez
Farm: Moisés Huérfano
Laundry: Neria Calderón
Printing: Ted Mohr
Woodwork: Moisés Huérfano
Elementary School: Luisa de Gutiérrez, Elizabeth de Rivas, and *Mireya Vender-Velde

1979-1980

Principal: Gustavo Garrido
Vice-Principal: Gilberto Bracho
Treasurer: Franklin Caicedo
Accountant: *David Poloche
Librarian: Magaly de Garrido
Boys' Dean: *José Viscaya
Girls' Dean: *Olivia de Flórez
Food Service: Mercedes Gómez
Agriculture: Moisés Huérfano
Bible: Iván Omaña, and Gonzalo Pico
Biology: Evelyn de Omaña
Chemistry: Hugo García
English: Evelyn de Omaña
Mathematics and Physics: Leonardo Suescún, and Noel Ramírez
Physical Education: Evelyn de Omaña
Social Sciences: Bertha Fermin, and Gustavo Garrido
Spanish and Literature: *Genoveva de Viscaya
Typing: Esperanza de Pico
Construction: Juan Rodriguez
Farm: Moisés Huérfano
Laundry: Neria Calderón
Printing: Ted Mohr
Woodwork: Moisés Huérfano*
Elementary School: Luisa de Gutiérrez, Elizabeth de Rivas*, and *Juana de Pacheco

1980-1981

Principal: Gustavo Garrido
Vice-Principal: Gilberto Bracho
Treasurer: Franklin Caicedo*
Accountant: David Poloche
Librarian: Magaly de Garrido
Boys’ Dean: Gonzalo Pico
Girls’ Dean: *Carmen de Williams
Food Service: Mercedes Gómez
Agriculture: Secundino Rodríguez
Bible: Iván Omaña, and Gonzalo Pico
Biology: Evelyn de Omaña
Chemistry: Hugo García
English: Evelyn de Omaña
Mathematics and Physics: Leonardo Suescún, and Noel Ramírez
Social Sciences: Bertha Fermín, and Gustavo Garrido
Spanish and Literature: Genoveva de Viscaya
Typing: Esperanza de Pico
Construction: Juan Rodriguez
Farm: Secundino Rodríguez
Laundry: Neria Calderón*
Printing: Ted Mohr
Woodwork: Secundino Rodríguez
Elementary School: Luisa de Gutiérrez, *Belkys de Alvarez, and Juana de Pacheco

1981-1982

Principal: Gustavo Garrido
Vice-Principal: Gilberto Bracho
Treasurer: *Gonzalo Prada
Accountant: David Poloche
Librarian: Magaly de Garrido
Boys’ Dean: Gonzalo Pico*
Girls’ Dean: Carmen de Williams
Food Service: Mercedes Gómez
Agriculture: Secundino Rodríguez
Bible: Gonzalo Pico*
Biology: *Myriam de Prada
Chemistry: Hugo García

1982-1983

Principal: Gustavo Garrido
Treasurer: Gonzalo Prada
Accountant: *Abel Linares
Registrar: *Inmaculada de Gallardo
Librarian: Magaly de Garrido
Boys’ Dean: *Eufracio Oropeza
Food Service: Mercedes Gómez, and Elvia de Rodríguez
Industrial Manager: David Poloche
Agriculture: *Jorge Pacheco
Bible: Gamaliel Flórez, *Carlos Aparicio*, and *Eufracio Oropeza
Biology: *Simón Perdomo
English: Dulce de Rodríguez
Mathematics and Physics: Noel Ramírez
Music: *Bejamín Williams
Physical Education: *Carlos Aparicio*, and *Jorge Pacheco
Social Sciences: Bertha Fermín, Gustavo Garrido, Myriam de Preada
Typing: *Olivia de Flórez
Bakery: *José Salinas
Farm: Secundino Rodríguez
Laundry: Elvia de Rodríguez
Maintenance: Juan Rodriguez
Printing: *Fernando Guzmán
Elementary School: Luisa de Gutiérrez, Belkys de Alvarez, and *Laura Mendoza

1983-1984

Principal: *Iván Omaña
Vice-Principal: Simón Perdomo
Treasurer: Gonzalo Prada*
Accountant: Abel Linares
Registrar: Inmaculada de Gallardo
Librarian: Magaly de Garrido*
Boys' Dean: Eufracio Oropeza
Food Service: Mercedes Gómez, and Elvia de Rodriguez
Industrial Manager: David Poloche
Nurse: *Carmen de Oliveros
Agriculture: Jorge Pacheco
Theology Coordinators: *Eduardo Gómez
Bible: Gamaliel Flórez, Eufracio Oropeza, and *Juan Reyes
Biology: Simón Perdomo
English: Dulce de Rodriguez, and *Rubiela de Reyes
Mathematics and Physics: Noel Ramirez
Physical Education: *Emilio Oliveros, and Jorge Pacheco
Social Sciences: Gustavo Garrido*, and Myriam de Prada*
Typing: Olivia de Flórez
Bakery: *José Salinas
Farm: Secundino Rodriguez
Laundry: Carmen de Guzmán
Maintenance: Juan Rodriguez
Printing: Fernando Guzmán, and Emilio Oliveros
Elementary School: Luisa de Gutiérrez, Belkys Alvarez, and Juanita de Pacheco

1984-1985

Principal: Iván Omaña*
Vice-Principal: Simón Perdomo
Treasurer: David Poloche
Accountant: Abel Linares
Cashier: Gustavo Alvarez
Registrar: Inmaculada de Gallardo
Librarian: Eduardo Gómez*, and Evelyn de Omaña*
Boys' Dean: Eufracio Oropeza
Food Service: Mercedes Gómez, Elvia de Rodriguez, and *Olga de Salinas
Church Pastor: Gamaliel Flórez
Industrial Manager: Eduardo Gallardo
Nurse: Carmen de Oliveros
Agriculture: Jorge Pacheco
Theology Coordinators: Eduardo Gómez*
Bible: Gamaliel Flórez, Eufracio Oropeza, Juan Reyes, and Dulce de Rodriguez
Biology: Simón Perdomo
English: Rubiela de Reyes
Mathematics and Physics: *Arleny Güevara*
Physical Education: Emilio Oliveros, and Jorge Pacheco

Spanish and Literature: *Nancy Montilla, and Dulce de Rodriguez
Typing: Olivia de Flórez
Bakery: José Salinas
Farm: Secundino Rodriguez
Laundry: Elvia de Rodriguez
Maintenance: Juan Rodriguez
Printing: Fernando Guzmán, and Emilio Oliveros
Elementary School: Luisa de Gutiérrez, Belkys Alvarez, and Juanita de Pacheco

1985-1986

Principal: Gamaliel Flórez
Vice-Principal: Simón Perdomo
Treasurer: David Poloche
Accountant: Abel Linares
Cashier: Gustavo Alvarez
Registrar: Inmaculada de Gallardo
Librarian: *Edilma de Poloche
Boys' Dean: Eufracio Oropeza
Girls' Dean: *Elsa Hernández
Food Service: Mercedes Gómez, and Olga de Salinas
Church Pastor: *David Manrique
Industrial Manager: Eduardo Gallardo
Nurse: Carmen de Oliveros
Agriculture: Jorge Pacheco
Theology Coordinators: David Manrique
Bible: David Manrique, Juan Reyes, and Dulce de Rodriguez
Biology: Simón Perdomo, and *Adanay Smart
Chemistry: Noel Ramírez, and *Charles Smart
English: Rubiela de Reyes
Home Economics: Carmen de Guzmán
Mathematics and Physics: *Fabio García
Physical Education: Emilio Oliveros, and *Margarita de Linares
Spanish and Literature: Nancy Montilla, and Dulce de Rodriguez
Typing: Olivia de Flórez
Bakery: José Salinas
Farm: Secundino Rodriguez
Laundry: Elvia de Rodriguez
Maintenance: Juan Rodriguez
Printing: Fernando Guzmán, and *Jorge Fajardo
Woodwork: *Alfonso Moreno
Elementary School: Luisa de Gutiérrez, Belkys Alvarez, and Juanita de Pacheco

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1986-1987

Principal: Gamaliel Flórez
Vice-Principal: Simón Perdomo*
Treasurer: David Poloche
Accountant: Abel Linares
Cashier: Gustavo Alvarez
Registrar: Inmaculada de Gallardo
Boys' Dean: Eufracio Oropeza
Girls' Dean: *Mónica de Ibañez
Church Pastor: David Manrique
Industrial Manager: Eduardo Gallardo

Nurse: Carmen de Oliveros
Agriculture: Jorge Pacheco
Theology Coordinators: David Manrique
Bible: David Manrique, and Dulce de Rodriguez
Biology: Simón Perdomo, and Adanay Smart
Chemistry: Noel Ramirez, and Charles Smart
English: *Julia de Campos
Home Economics: Carmen de Guzman
Mathematics and Physics: Fabio Garcia, and
*Hebert Magdaleno
Music: *Nelson Avila
Physical Education: Emilio Oliveros, and
Margarita de Linares
Social Sciences: *Celia Silva, and *Julian Narvaez
Spanish and Literature: Nancy Montilla, and
Dulce de Rodriguez
Typing: Oliva de Flórez

1987-1988

Principal: Gamaliel Flórez
Vice-Principal: Gilberto Bracho
Treasurer: David Poloche
Accountant: Abel Linares
Cashier: Gustavo Alvarez
Registrar: Inmaculada de Gallardo
Boys' Dean: Eufracio Oropeza*
Girls' Dean: *Mónica de Ibañez
Food Service: Sonia de Poloche
Church Pastor: David Manrique
Industrial Manager: Eduardo Gallardo

Nurse: Carmen de Oliveros*
Agriculture: Jorge Pacheco
Audiovisual: Favio Garcia
Bible: *Jorge Agüero, and Dulce de Rodriguez
Biology: Gilberto Bracho, and Adanay Smart
Chemistry: Gilberto Bracho, Charles Smart, and
América de Oropeza*
English: Julia de Campos
Home Economics: Carmen de Guzman
Mathematics and Physics: Fabio Garcia, and
Hebert Magdaleno

Music: Nelson Avila
Physical Education: *Javier Villegas, and
Margarita de Linares
Social Sciences: Celia Silva
Spanish and Literature: Nancy Montilla, and Julia
de Campos
Systems: *Antonio Sánchez

1989-1990

Principal: Gamaliel Flórez*
Vice-Principal: Gilberto Bracho
Treasurer: *José Ochoa
Accountant: Abel Linares
Cashier: Gustavo Alvarez

Mathematics and Physics: Fabio Garcia, and
Hebert Magdaleno
Music: Nelson Avila
Physical Education: Emilio Oliveros*, and
Margarita de Linares
Social Sciences: Celia Silva, and Julián Narváez
Spanish and Literature: Nancy Montilla, and Julia
de Campos
Typing: Cecilia de Manrique
Registrar: Inmaculada de Gallardo

Boys' Dean: *Jorge Barboza, and *Luis Astudillos*

Girls' Dean: *Nelly de Manrique, and *Castelia de León

Food Service: *Nelly Meza, and Elvia de Rodriguez

Church Pastor: Jorge Agüero

Industrial Manager: Eduardo Gallardo

Nurse: Iraida Pinto*

Agriculture: Jorge Pacheco

Audiovisual: Favio Garcia

Bible: Jorge Agüero, and Dulce de Rodriguez

Biology: *Nurys de Bustillos, and *Beatriz Sanoja

Chemistry: *Nurys de Bustillos, and America de Oropeza*

English: Julia de Campos

Home Economics: Carmen de Guzmán

Mathematics and Physics: Fabio Garcia, and Hebert Magdaleno

Physical Education: Javier Villegas, and Margarita de Linares*

Social Sciences: Celia Silva

Spanish and Literature: Nancy Montilla, and Sandra de Bracho

Theology Seminary:

*Itamar de Paiva* (Dean), Jorge Agüero

1991-1992

President: Gilberto Bracho

Vice-Presidents:

   Academic Affairs: Javier Villegas
   Financial Affairs: José Ochoa
   Student Affairs: Jorge Agüero

Accountant: *Teovaldo Castillo

Cashier: Gustavo Alvarez

Registrar: *Esther de Castillo

Boys' Dean: *Ricardo López*, and *Daniel Gonzalez*

Girls' Dean: Castelia de León

Food Service: Celio Castro, and Eladia de Castro

Church Pastor: *Renato Mejía

Medical Center: *Emilia de Gallegos, and *Susan de Sánchez

Librarian: *Gladys de Ochoa

Agriculture: Secundino Rodriguez

Bible: *Ricardo López*, and Dulce de Rodriguez

Biology: *Humberto Lárez, and Luis Caldera

Chemistry: *Beatriz de Montilla

English: Sandra de Bracho

Home Economics: Carmen de Guzmán

Mathematics and Physics: Fabio García, and Hebert Magdaleno

Music: *Antonio Pereira

Physical Education: Javier Villegas, * and Amalia de Agüero

Social Sciences: Celia Silva, and *María de González*

Spanish and Literature: Nancy Montilla, and Sandra de Bracho

Theological Seminary:


Secondary School:


1990-1991

President: Gilberto Bracho

Academic Dean: Javier Villegas

Treasurer: José Ochoa

Accountant: Abel Linares*

Cashier: Gustavo Alvarez

Registrar: *Maria de Pereira

Boys' Dean: Jorge Barboza, and *Juan Guillermo Hernández*

Girls' Dean: Castelia de León

Food Service: *Celio Castro, and *Eladia de Castro

Church Pastor: Jorge Agüero

Nurse: *Susana de Sánchez

Audiovisual and Systems: *Leonel Bustillos

Bible: Jorge Agüero, and Dulce de Rodriguez

Biology: Nurys de Bustillos, and *Luis Caldera

Chemistry: Nurys de Bustillos

English: Julia de Campos

Home Economics: Carmen de Guzmán

1990 was the beginning of the university.

**1992-1993**

**President:** Gilberto Bracho  
**Vice-Presidents:**  
Academic Affairs: Javier Villegas  
Financial Affairs: *José Ochoa*  
Student Affairs: Dulce de Rodríguez  
**Accountant:** Teovaldo Castillo*  
**Cashier:** Gustavo Alvarez  
**Registrar:** Esther de Castillo*  
**Boys’ Dean:** *José Vizcaya, and *Ramon Humberto Martinez  
**Girls’ Dean:** Castelia de León, and *Blanca Niño  
**Food Service:** Celio Castro, and Eladia de Castro  
**Church Pastor:** Renato Mejía  
**Medical Center:** Milany de Torres  
**Librarian:** *Melitta de Buenfiglio  
**Agriculture:** Secundino Rodriguez  
**Bible:** Elizabeth de Mejía  
**Biology:** Beatriz de Montilla, and Luis Caldera  
**Chemistry:** Nurys de Bustillos  
**English:** Sandra de Bracho  
**Home Economics:** Güelcip Carrillo, and Carmen de Guzmán  
**Mathematics and Physics:** Juan Díaz, Fabio García, and Hebert Magdaleno  
**Music:** Antonio Pereira  
**Physical Education:** Amalia de Agüero, and Luis Caldera  
**Social Sciences:** Celia Silva, and *Genoveva de Viscaya  
**Spanish and Literature:** Nancy de Magdaleno, *Giovana de Caldera, and Osneida de García  
**Theological Seminary:** Michael Bounfiglio (Dean), Leonel Bustillos, *Cora de González, Renato Mejía, Antonio Pereira, Dulce de Rodriguez, Lutgard de Rotman, Pablo Rotman, *Jessie Taylor, Wesley Taylor.  
**Business Administration:** Rubiela Soto (Dean), Leonel Bustillos, Hugo García, Dulce de Rodríguez, *Josefina de Sánchez*, and Wesley Taylor.  
**Secondary School:** Javier Villegas (Dean), Fabio García (Academic Dean), Bellkys de Alvarez, Sandra de Bracho*, Nuris de Bustillos, Giovana de Caldera, Luis Caldera, Güelcip Carrillo, Juan Díaz, Fabio García, Carmen de Guzmán, Hebert Magdaleno, Nancy de Magdaleno, Elizabeth Mejía, Beatriz de Montilla, Jorge Pacheco, Celia Silva, and Genoveva de Viscaya.

**1993-1994**

**President:** Gilberto Bracho*  
**Vice-Presidents:**  
Financial Affairs: *Kenneth Luis  
Student Affairs: Dulce de Rodríguez  
**Accountant:** Gustavo Alvarez*  
**Registrar:** Leonel Bustillos  
**Boys’ Dean:** Jose Vizcaya, and *Ramon Humberto Martinez  
**Girls’ Dean:** Blanca Niño, and *Gilda de Martínez  
**Food Service:** Celio Castro, and Eladia de Castro  
**Church Pastor:** Renato Mejía  
**Medical Center:** *Milany de Torres  
**Librarian:** *Melitta de Buenfiglio  
**Agriculture:** Secundino Rodriguez  
**Bible:** Elizabeth de Mejía  
**Biology:** Beatriz de Montilla, and Luis Caldera  
**Chemistry:** Nurys de Bustillos  
**English:** Sandra de Bracho  
**Home Economics:** Güelcip Carrillo, and Carmen de Guzmán  
**Mathematics and Physics:** Juan Díaz, Fabio García, and Hebert Magdaleno  
**Music:** Antonio Pereira  
**Physical Education:** Amalia de Agüero, and Luis Caldera  
**Social Sciences:** Celia Silva, and *Genoveva de Viscaya  
**Spanish and Literature:** Nancy de Magdaleno, Giovana de Caldera, and Osneida de García  
**Theological Seminary:** Michael Bounfiglio (Dean), Leonel Bustillos, *Cora de González, Renato Mejía, Antonio Pereira, Dulce de Rodriguez, Lutgard de Rotman, Pablo Rotman, *Jessie Taylor, Wesley Taylor.  
**Business Administration:** Rubiela Soto (Dean), Leonel Bustillos, Hugo García, Dulce de Rodríguez, *Josefina de Sánchez*, and Wesley Taylor.  
**Secondary School:** Javier Villegas (Dean), Fabio García (Academic Dean), Bellkys de Alvarez, Sandra de Bracho*, Nuris de Bustillos, Giovana de Caldera, Luis Caldera, Güelcip Carrillo, Juan Díaz, Fabio García, Carmen de Guzmán, Elizabeth Mejía, Beatriz de Montilla, Jorge Pacheco, Juana de Pacheco, María de Pereira, Celia Silva, and Genoveva de Viscaya.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>President</th>
<th>Vice-Presidents</th>
<th>Financial Affairs</th>
<th>Student Affairs</th>
<th>Accountant</th>
<th>Registrar</th>
<th>Boys' Dean</th>
<th>Girls' Dean</th>
<th>Food Service</th>
<th>Church Pastor</th>
<th>Librarian</th>
<th>Theological Seminary</th>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Secondary School:**
- Dean: Luis Caldera
- Agriculture: Ordenel Zerpa
- Biology: Elizabeth de Mejía
- Chemistry: Martha Castro, and *Javier Palmieri
- English: *Dignora de Valdivez
- Home Economics: César Castro, and Carmen de Guzmán
- Mathematics and Physics: Ricardo Delgado
- Music: Antonio Pereira*
- Physical Education: Jesús García, and Luis Caldera
- Social Sciences: Celia Silva
- Spanish and Literature: Sofia Machado, and Giovanna de Calder

---

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Bible: Elizabeth de Mejía, and Humberto Martínez  
Biology: Javier Palmieri  
Chemistry: Nurys de Bustillos  
English: *Mariela Zanoja  
Home Economics: César Castro, and Carmen de Guzmán  
Mathematics: Ricardo Delgado  
Music: Adriana Rivero  
Physical Education: Luis Caldera, and *Luz Estella Fernández  
Physics: *Efrain Infante  
Social Sciences: Julián Narváez, and Celia Silva  
Spanish and Literature: Giovanna de Caldera, and Sandra de Bracho

1998-1999

President: Fernando Zabala  
Vice-Presidents:  
Academic Affairs: Gilberto Bracho  
Financial Affairs: Nelson Ochoa  
Student Affairs: Luis Caldera  
Registrar: Esther de Zabala  
Girls’ Dean: Gilda de Martinez  
Food Service: Pureza de Rodriguez  
Pastor: Jonas Torres*  
Librarian: Damaris de Brito  
Theological Seminary:  
Edgar Brito (Dean), Giovanna de Caldera,  
*Emmer Chacon, *Rima Samaan, Wesley Taylor,  
Dignora de Valdivez, Luis Valencia, and Fernando Zabala.

Business Administration:  
Oscar Gonzalez (Dean), *Iván Abuchar, Gilberto Bracho, Giovanna de Caldera, Ricardo Delgado.  

Secondary School:  
Dean: Javier Palmieri  
Agriculture: César Castro  
Bible: *Jonás Flores, and Gladys de Zerpa  
Biology: Javier Palmieri  
Chemistry: *Patricia Randazzo  
English: Sandra de Bracho  
Home Economics: Carmen de Guzmán  
Mathematics: Robert Atalido  
Music: *Joel Aponte  
Physical Education: Luz Estela Fernández  
Physics: Efrain Infante  
Social Sciences: Julián Narváez, and Jonás Flores  
Spanish and Literature: Sandra de Bracho

1997-1998

President: Fernando Zabala  
Vice-Presidents:  
Academic Affairs: *Gilberto Bracho  
Financial Affairs: *Nelson Ochoa  
Student Affairs: Jorge Fajardo  
Registrar: Esther de Zabala  
Girls’ Dean: Gilda de Martinez  
Food Service: Pureza de Rodriguez  
Pastor: Jonas Torres*  
Librarian: Gladys de Zerpa  
Theological Seminary:  
*Edgar Brito (Dean), Giovanna de Caldera,  
Jorge Fajardo, Elizabeth de Mejia*, Renato Mejia*,  

Business Administration:  
Rubiela Soto (Dean), Gilberto Bracho, Giovanna de Caldera, Ricardo Delgado, Jorge Fajardo, Oscar González, Elizabeth de Mejía*, Renato Mejía*,  

Secondary School:  
Dean: Luis Caldera  
Agriculture: César Castro  
Bible: Humberto Martinez, and *Eduardo Sánchez  
Biology: Javier Palmieri, and *Erika de Torres  
Chemistry: César Castro, and *Gertrudis de Palmieri,  
English: Mariela Zanoja  
Home Economics: César Castro, and Carmen de Guzmán  
Mathematics: Ricardo Delgado, and *Robert Atalido

Music: Adriana Rivero*  
Physical Education: Luis Caldera, Luz Estela Fernández  
Physics: *Efrain Infante  
Social Sciences: Julián Narváez, and Celia Silva  
Spanish and Literature: Giovanna de Caldera, and Sandra de Bracho

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1968

Science
Amado D-Lanoi, Cora Inés
Arevalo Ardila, Ana Rosa
Entrenas Mazzeoi, Ligia Maria
Greenidge Archibold, Arlina
Guerra Moreno, José Teodosio
Huérfano Castro, Areli
Martinez Rojas, Sandra
Negrón, Andrea
Omafla Garcia, Julio Enrique
Pacheco Balza, Evelia
Pacheco Godoy, Sandra
Poloche Zárate, Abel
Poni Ravagli, Esteban Santo
Rodriguez Piña, Fanny Coromoto
Sanchez Garcia, Héctor Manuel
Senesi Osterman, Walter Eduardo
Sequera Vargas, Alicia Yadira
Soto Plata, Martha Adaljiza
Tovar Herrera, Rafael Antonio

Science'
Foronda Garcia, Jaime Enrique
Manrique, Donna Verónica
Nieto, Magaly
Omafla Garcia, Humberto Javier
Poloche Zárate, David
Suárez Mejía, Matilde Coromoto

1969

Science
Arévalo Vergel, Graciela
Bellostas Córdoba, Gilberto
Bloise Arredondo, Alphild Marina
Cartaya Gutiérrez, Fernando Oscar
Escalona Ovial, Moraima
Ferdinand Macedo, Elizabeth
Fernández Navarrete, Pedro
Martinez Meléndez, Dilia María
Martinez Rojas, José Domingo
Ovial Rivero, Freddie Jesús
Padilla Caro, Nelfor Chestar
Poloche Zárate, Rubén Alfredo
Sánchez Sánchez, Ricardo Eliseo

Humanities'
Aguirre Benaviente, Elsa
Aquino Rivero, Ramón Baldemar
Reyes Otegui, Juan Ramón
Silvia, Mirna Judith

1970

Science
Agüero, María del Rosario
Castro Rivero, Lila Marina
Escalona Ovial, Jesús Yonatán

Humanities
Almerida, Benilde del Carmen
Arévalo Ardila, Ofelia
Ceballos Barreto, Mario Enrique
Ferrín Secane, María del Carmen
Grillo Castillo, Elena Emilia
Grillo Castillo, Graciela Etelina
Laguna Bagarozza, Denis Piedad
Martinez Rojas, Fernando Antonio
Mendoza González, Edwin

1971

Science
Acosta Arriaga, Carlos Antonio
Alfonzo Brazon, Luis Arany
Arévalo Vergel, Guillermo
Atalido Parra, Ruth Anastacia
Cajero Cauto, Angelina
Flores Suárez, Hilda Rosa
Frias Robles, Alexander Ramón
Gutierrez Calderón, Niruma
Guzmán Bendrell, Ludín Amelia
Montiel Peralta, Zulima
Moreno Rodriguez, Jacob
Omafla Garcia, Jorge Isaac
Peña Aly, Pedro José
Poloche Zárate, Efrain
Senesi Ostermann, Waldemar
Soto Plata, Oscar Alfonso
Stormes Márquez, Nelson
Suárez Sánchez, Jair Enrique
Vásquez Rojas, Anabella

Humanities
Ardvalo Vergel, Esperanza
Escandón García, Flor Elizabeth
Grillo Castillo, David

1972

Science
Biondi Cabrera, Carlos Alberto
Carreño Niño, Gonzalo
Ceballos Barreto, José Luis
Cortés Rivero, María Jeannette
Fleitas Rodriguez, César Alfonso
Isaac Abrans, Frankie
León Vargas, Dilio Gustavo
Linarezs González, Herty Sara
López Vale, Humberto Rubén
Lugo Dávila, Carlos Francisco
Paris Hernández, Fernando Adolfo
Pérez Aponte, Ursulina
Pot Bocourt, Robert Arnold
Ramírez Urbina, Esther Gladys
Reinoso Yáñez, Luis Enrique
Schuchardi Lechner, Angelika
Soto Alvarado, Pedro Rafael
Tellería Chacón, Yalitza Amparo
Urbina Cáceres, Jorge Elias
Véliz Flóres, Orlando José
Vera Hernández, Carmen Nola
Yuncosa Contreras, Blanca Stela

Humanities
Arévalo Vergel, Esperanza
Escandón García, Flor Elizabeth
Grillo Castillo, David

1973

Science
Arévalo Ardila, Humberto
Aponte Farfán, Genara Yudbina
Archbold Sanjur, Edwing Fulton
Archbold Sanjur, Rónald Efrain
Arismendi Núñez, Cruz Rafael
Camacho Amador, Edgar Enrique
Camacho Amador, Gladys Esther
Castells Ginetser, Jorge Luis
Fariñez Calderón, Raquel
Goncalve Franco, Carlos
González Puerta, Julieta
Graterol Torres, Alexis
Gutiérrez Calderón, Jhunior Ferxis

1Science is a secondary academic degree, equal to high school, with graduates from 1968-99.

2Humanities was a secondary academic degree, equal to high school, with graduates from 1970-78.
Gutiérrez Calderón, Lenny Luby
Hironymus Báez, Hernán
Hirsch Jacob, Cecilia Beatriz
Lott Lott, Samuel
Lowery De Lorena, Robert Byrl
Nava Ortega, Diudzdelly Mireya
Noguera Chirinos, Elaine Elisa
Pedrique Escarrá, Henry
Redhead Benavides, Lupe
Reinoso Yánez, Juan de los Reyes
Rodríguez Texeira, Eunice Maria
Romero Mendez, Vilma Regina
Soto Petit Carmen Luisa
Torrealba Medina, Esther Morella
Urbina Paternina, Edgar Enrique
Valenzuela Villalón, Gabriel
Zabala Díaz, Doris Vanzmerina
Zabala Reyes, Luis Francisco

Humanities
Almarza González, Wilfredo
Ceballos Barreto, Samuel Antonio
Espinoza Mendoza, Layda Isabel
González Moreno, Carmen Teresa

Science
Arévalo Ardila, Orlando
Aguirre Benaventa, Alberto
Arévalo Rujana, Helizenas
Avendaño Palencia, Elcer Miguel
Cárdenas Quintero, Isidro
Capella Mateo, Isis Dolores
Corona, Carmen Eulalia
Coronel Gómez, Degnis
Cortés Riveros, Henry Iván
Dodero Rosso, Marco Humberto
Falcoín Jimenez, Luis José
González Minjeral, Efrain
Guerrero Colmenares, Magaly
Gómez Wilson, Castulo José
Henriquez Ras, Ivonne Cecilia
Hoche Elkitiar, Viola
Jiménez Rodríguez, Carlos Emilio
Landaeta Vargas, Miguel
Linares Gonzáles, Elías José
Machado Gamero, Rafael Jesús
Moncada Homero, Tulio José
Mosquera, Margarita
Narváez Fernenal, Julián Antonio
Negrón, Luis Edmundo
Oliver Mirt, Rubén
Pedrique Escarrá, Alfredo
Peña Peña, Juan Luis
Prieto, Hernan Alberto
Rattia Alvarado, Sara Elisa
Rodriguez Rojas, Leida Cristina
Sequera Vargas, Andrés Eloy
Supelano Escobar, Doris
Supelano Escobar, Ruth
Urbina Paternina, Eduardo José

Humanities
Alvarez Albornos, Sobeida
Brooker Gómez, Juana Violeta
Mata Monterola, Nelson Orlando
Meza Veitia, María Angela
Santos Marrero, Melvin Ernesto

Science
Abreu Márquez, Nena Jannete
Areinamo Chamoro, Héctor Hugo
Betancourt Godoy, Mario Ramón
Betancourt Sánchez, Iris Nacarit
Calles Nevada, Sábado Noel
Cárdenas Quintero, José Ovelleiro
González Abreu, Vera Lucia
González López, Dagoberto José
Guerrero Colmenares, María
Gutiérrez Calderón, Widmar
Hoche Abud, Kaifil
Jensen Boscán, Jane Laila
Mari Pizano, Carlos
Mata Monterola, Miguel Celestino
Nava Ortega, Madeleine Tarcila
Oliver Mirt, Franklin Adolfo
Oliver Mirt, Maigualida María
Pacheco Ardila, Carlos Enrique
Paredes García, Iraida Coromoto
Peidano López, Roberto Wilfrido
Peña Peña, Pedro Elias
Riera Rojas, Maribel
Ríos Guillot, Laura Patricia
Rivas Gómez, Héctor David
Rivas Padrón, José Félix
Sánchez Torres, María Lourdes
Sierra Alvarez, Alba Luz
Torres Narváez, Caleb Jonatán
Tovar Briceño, Elizabeth
Urbina Cáceres, Esther

Humanities
Alvarez Albornos, Sobeida
Brooker Gómez, Juana Violeta
Mata Monterola, Nelson Orlando
Meza Veitia, María Angela
Santos Marrero, Melvin Ernesto
Torrealba, Jesús Emilio
1977

Science
Almarza González, Miguel
Azuaje Rodríguez, Luz Melly
Carvajal Plata, Martha Elena
Coronel Alvarez, Ramón Eduardo
Correa Calderce, Fanny Esperanza
Cuevas Guartt, Migdalia Antonia
Di Stefano Bellafiore, Tomasó
Fandino Rangel, Glenda Nohemi
Gallego Utloque, Efrên Stewart
García Céceres, Carlos Enrique
Gervis Rojas, Eddy Dario
Gutiérrez Borges, Andrés Eloy
Hamilton Sánchez, Daniel Brian
Hernández Alfonso, Magaly
Hoche Abud, Esther
Lee Mijares, Marina Jacqueline
Madera Ramos, Eliana Clariza
Mago Brito, Ana Odilia
Omaña García, Salin Adonirán
Quevedo López, Maria Cristina
Rivas Gómez, Orlando Enrique
Rocco Jiménez, Ingrid
Rodríguez Peña, Eduardo José
Rodríguez Margez, Efren Paulino
Rodríguez Urbano, Mercedes
Salinas Cabrera, Frank José
Salinas Cabrera, Pedro Giovanni
Sierra Álvarez, Nieves Esperanza
Smart Bastidas, Guillermo Alberto
Torrealba Barco, Dalia Maritza

Humanities
Díaz Pérez, Mireya Karciaa
Falcon Jiménez, Eleyes Coromoto
Guerrero Colmenares, Mayra
Huérfans Castro, Freddy Moisés
Jiménez Castellanos, Olga
López García, Ricardo
Loway de Lorena, Michael Roy
Mendoza Ilarraza, Juan Orangel
Ortega, Enrique Humberto
Pérez Rojas, Ludys Estilita
Quintero Carbo, Giovanni
Rivas Lizarra, Ludys Josefina
Villavicencio Weber, Juan Francis

1978

Science
Abate Gallo, María Carmelina
Avala Hernández, Daisy Olimpia
Avala Matos, Nhur María
Calles Nevada, William Rafael
Castellanos Rosendo, Fluvia
Delgado Huérфанo, Jorge Elmer
Días Portela, Francisco Jorge
Falcón Jiménez, Carlos Eduardo
Fernández Alfonso, Gertrudis Patricia
Figueroa Guzmán, María
García Paredes, Francisco José
León Caridad, Yoraxi Josefina
López López, Myram Ninoska
Mari Pinzano, Juan José
Pacheco Ardila, Héberth
Pacheco Ardila, Nelson
Patti Tortorice, Ana María
Pérez Diaz, Carmen
Pérez Diaz, Rafael
Rivas Gómez, Pedro Miguel
Tabare Ramírez, Olivia Josefina
Tabare, Xiomara Josefina
Uzcátegui Contreras, Josué
Valenzuela Villalón, Mabel Alicia
Zárate Beltrán, Alfonzo
Zárate Beltrán, Jorge Elieser

Humanities
Acosta Rodríguez, Angel
Cárdenas Quintero, Jaime Eudy
Escalon Jiménez, Merly
Elizabeth
Rivas Savedra, Belkis Marbelly
Tabares Ramírez, Elizabeth
Urbina Paternia, Estela

1979

Science
Anguiano Zánón, Dulce Liz
Avala Alvarez, José Augusto
Avala Alvarez, Josefina
Becerra, Rosa
Brooke Causario, Virginia
Cárdenas Matute, Amilkar Eladio
Cardona Ascanio, Humberto
Cardozo Castellanos, Martín
Carrizah Pacheco, Gilberto José
Castellanos Rosendo, Cristian

Diroma Corredor, Dalger Yajaira
Duque Duque, Luz Celeste
Espinoza Suárez, Ana Gida
Fleitas Torrealba, María Enriqueta
Guittens Hernández, José Elías
Huérfanos Castro, Elizabeth
Inciarte Zavala, David Eduardo
Irardy Falasco, Anna Gida
Jiménez Chirinos, Pedro José
Machado Batista, Arturo
Patty Bonina, Ana Guiseppa
Prada Gárcias, Agustín Rafael
Rivas Montilla, Juan Hermogenes
Rodríguez Joya, Susana
Rojas Huérfanos, Dagne Yomary
Sánchez González, José Omar
Schwab Romaniuk, Gabriela
Soler Salazar, Rodulfo
Torrealba Reyes, Manuel Eduardo
Velasquez Flores, Luis
Visáez, Lorenza Isabel
Williams Mella, Juan Eligio
Zavala Gamero, Tatiana

1980

Science
Amoracho Mantilla, Yolanda
Atalido Parra, José David
Barbarás Sekoke, Luis
Campero, Carmen Elena
Clermont, Melida Jeanette
Colmenares Mota, Jenny
Dániels Sucre, Belîzza Carlos
Dominguez Ledezma, Héctor
Falcón Jiménez, Leonardo
Fanési Mazzochi, Nino
Fruci Rodríguez, Giuseppe
Fuenmayor Huerta, Jesús Esteban
Franco Camacno, Nelly
Gallardo Cepeíz, Eduardo Augusto
García Escobar, Marisabel
Gittens Hernández, Aurora
Graciano López, Carmelo
Graciano López, Rosa Alba
Hoche Abub, Doris
Hoshe Abud, Kamal
Maneche Ulloque, Yenis Ester
Maríño Sánchez, Pedro Vicente
Núñez Guerra, Alirio Rouski
Paris Romero, Armando José
Rivas Lizarraga, Eliz José

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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1 *Normal* was a secondary professional degree preparing elementary teachers, with graduates from 1980-82.
Lara Piña, Rubén Dario
Linares González, Nilda Esther
Malpica Quintero, Laura
Meza Díaz, Martín Humberto
Moreno Vivás, Ana Xiomara
Núñez, Josué Gerardo
Ortega Camacho, Alexaída
Ortiz Ortiz, Ruth Ariany
Peña Arias, María Cristina
Pérez Thomas, Gail Maríanela
Prada García, Ana
Quintero Machado, Mary
Ramírez Germany, Migdalia
Ratia Alvarado, Luis Armando
Rivero Camacho, Liz Tibaira
Rodríguez Thomas, Leonardo
Rojas Rodríguez, Desidria
Rojas Rodríguez, Felvia Ysabel
Salas Núñez, Marcos Antonio
Salinas Cabrera, Luis Omar
Scala Marrero, Katherine
Schupnik Fleitas, Carlos Rafael
Torres Crispín, Ermércia
Valera, José William
Vladic Hausmann, William
Zambrano Hernández, Gerardo

1984

Science
Alfonzo Díaz, Elizabeth
Alvarez Montezuma, Celso
Alvarez Riazaños, Aroldo
Anato Tenepe, Maida Aracelis
Arenas Azacón, Isidro Antonio
Arismendi Arreaza, Yelixa Judith
Bermudez Soto, Haydee
Blanco López, Jaime
Bravo, José Gregorio
Buckley Brown, John Jerry
Camacho Camacho, Zenaid
Charlie Wattz, Hoyte
Donald Edmunds, Haelitt
Fernández Salazar, Fany
Flores López, Julio César
Gallardo Ortiz, Juan Francisco
García González, Elizabeth
Garrido Rivero, Ruth Nereida
Guido Lugo, Gladis Josefina
Guilarte Prada, Juana del Valle
Hassan Eldeghlawi, César José
Joya Vásquez, Esperanza

1985

Science
Ledezma, Ofelia María
Maldonado Gómez, Abel José
Márquez García, Jorge Luis
Matos Tolosa, Gloria Stella
Michel Lezama, Antonio Elton
Mioli Barboza, Giuseppe
Mora Gutiérrez, Elizabeth
Palacios Guzmán, Ana
Parejo Aponte, Ramón Vicente
Prince Lamz, Alain Mario
Quero Vázquez, Cintya Soraya
Rivero Camacho, Mary
Rodríguez Loyya, Sarita
Rodríguez Lugo, Mariluz
Rodríguez Soto, Juan José
Ruiz Duarte, Gerardo
Ruocco Saje, Ruth Carolina
Sánchez López, Ana Victoria
Sánchez Roa, Angel Jonhny
Vallejo de Calixto, Alba Doris
Villalta Guiarte, Florentina

1986

Science
Abache Astudillo, José Manuel
Arce Carrasquel, Taide Corina
Bencomo Bandres, Geremías
Bolaños Ponce, Olma Cecilia
Buser, Francisca Josefina
Conde Rojas, Maryemma
Coronel Román, José Luis
Dasilva Rodríguez, Israel
Delgado Pérez, Ricardo
Díaz Pérez, María Antonia
García Párez, Marybells
García Rodríguez, José Benigno
García Sánchez, Mauricio Adolfo
Gaviria Niño, Fernando Javier
Girón Flores, Mayra Elena
Guédez Barrios, Víctor José
Heredia García, Hedra Roldán
Hernández Pérez, María
Hernández Roa, Vicente
Isaac, Clayton
López López, Fulvio Isaac
López López, Raquel Magdalena
Loreto Guédez, Humberto
Loreto Guédez, María
Marcano Bastidas, Gustavo
Manchego Ulloque, Alexander
Mendoza Illarrazua, Gloria Maile
Monzón, Liledy Catiuska
Mora Ortega, Coromoto
Moreno Jara, Carlos Enrique
Núñez, Ruth Elena
Onofrietti Ramagnoli, Olga
Pino López, Thania del Valle
Pulido Pérez, Evelin Estelinda
Rosales Pérez, Loida del Carmen
Sánchez Lara, Antonio José
Sánchez López, Lysette
Soler Tomase, Jesús Antonio
Sucre Giménez, Reinaldo Antonio
Torres Landa, Erika Anier
Urdaneta Briceño, Rolando Jesús
Vargas Maldonado, Nyrida Orly
Vázquez Pavique, Yelitza
Ytriago Canelón, Alpidio Antonio
Ytriago Canelón, Gloria Caridad

1987

Science

Alza Ruiz, Laura Maria
Avila Hernández, Martha Rosa
Bacca García, Diomar
Barrera González, Franking José
Bello Ron, Luis Reinaldo
Castellanos Alvarado, Diana
Cristancho García, Samuel
De Massi Miglioccio, Héctor
Díaz Linárez, José Luis
Di Filippo Maurile, Patricia
Donald Edmunds, Berthlyn
Estanga Martínez, Raiza Yaneth
Franco Barros, Marlene
García Pinango, Antonio José
García Ríos, Vidalia
González Aguilar, Laura
González Díaz, Criselda Rebeca
González Hernández, Rafael
González Vargas, Héctor Rafael
Hernández Martínez, Joséú
Huérfano Contreras, Nohemi
Jeffrey Macedo, Donna Juana
Manchego Ulloque, Alexander
Manchego Ulloque, Yanet Judit
Mangone Campos, Carlos José
Mendoza González, Edward José
Mendoza Ibarraza, Gloria Mailet
Moreno, Jovita Zoraida
Nepa Parisani, Sandro
Núñez, Julio César
Ordaz Rivas, Yelitza Cororomo
Ortiz Gómez, Jeorgina Judith
Ortiz Gómez, Julio César
Pérez Belenó, Santiago
Pinto Ynfante, Rodolfio Gonzalo
Ramírez Escalante, María
Rivero Matos, Areany Celina
Rodríguez Castillo, Aurimar
Rodríguez Joya, Samuel Ricardo
Rojas Bautista, José Willman
Salinas Saavedra, Darío Gabriel
Sánchez López, Angélica María
Sánchez Sánchez, Moisés Darío
Schupnik Fieitas, Walter Hugo
Suero de la Cruz, Juan Pablo
Torres Brazón, Aracelys
Torres Martínez, Gabriela
Valero Pérez, Juana Evangelista
Valpolini Zambrano, Gilberto

1988

Science

Aparicio, Evert Gauriel
Aponte Moreno, Irene
Barrera González, Broderith
Bentivenga Delgado, Angel
Bernal Graterol, Edgar David
Brieva Betancourt, Jaime Alberto
Camacho Hernández, Evelin
Capasso Morón, Antonio José
Gallardo Pérez, Luis David
García Pardo, Yatzuris Yadira
Gómez Pérez, León Julio
Hernández Medina, Martha
Huérfano Contreras, Daniel
Ippolito Soto, Carmen Lilian
Lárez Salazar, Eliut Guillermo
Leal Escobar, Rubé Ravier
López Malave, Asbel José
López Malave, Leidy María
López Moreno, Giger Aida
Parra Muñoz, Marco Alejandro
Pereira Carpio, Daniel Efrain
Pestaña Rodríguez, Carmen Rosa
Pimentel Castillo, María Angélica
Manchego Ulloque, Yanet Judit
Merchan Penoth, Castelía Delfina
Mogollón Cordero, Franklin José
Perfíce Luces, Andres Eloy
Ramírez Sierra, Glorialba Marina
Rivero, Neydmar Isolina
Rodríguez Cordova, José Jacinto
Rodríguez Corella, José Antonio
Ruíz Camacho, José Manuel
Sanchez León, Adriany
Santana Corona, Alcides
Tondini Andrade, Vittorio Isidoro
Valenzuela Navas, Benilda

1989

Science

Alfonso Díaz, Samuel
Arenas Silva, Jhonny Alexander
Arroyo Rojas, Eduardo José
Becerra Paz, Ramón
Betancourt, MarleneJosefina
Bracho Pacheco, Pablo Enrique
Cabrera Coronel, Marina
Conde Rojas, Angel Augusto
Contreras Escalona, Belkis
Corona Carvajal, María Angelina
Cortés Koc, Eddie Fernando
Cristancho García, Daniel
Díaz, Juan Pablo
García Rivera, Ronald Jose
García Salas, Yahilihli Nohemi
García Vélez, Yudith Lisbeth
Gómez Benítez, Donorah
Gómez Santiago, José Daniel
González Núñez, Maria
Guerra Placencia, Rafael Angel
Hernández De Ocuveia, Jenny
Hernández, Maríela Jannette
Hernández Medina, Noris Rocio
Hernández Velandia, Héber Ysai
Ibarra Rivadeneira, Carlos
Lima, Víctor Manuel
Lizardi Pérez, Jolcky Josefina
Lobo Romero, Francisco Javier
López Lópe, Noemí Carola
Luna Navarro, Milton César
Mago Vásquez, Keia del Valle
Marcano González, Joel Antonio
Marcano González, Pedro
Materano Contreras, Karen
Mendoza Seijas, Beatriz
Meza Díaz, Margarita
Mioli Barboza, Teddy
Navas García, Marvys Aurora
Núñez, Dennis Ostos
Olguí Marchán, Adriana
Orrego Barrera, Esther Judith
Pereira Carpio, David Othoniel

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1 Accounting was an academic secondary degree, equal to high school, with graduates from 1994-98.
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Mendoza Ilaraza, Ludmila
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1 Administration is a bachelor's degree in business administration, with graduation since 1997.

2 Computer is a bachelor’s degree in computer science with graduation since 1997.
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Ernesto Jiménez, Rigoberto
Ferrín Alfonzo, Loyda Esther
García Pérez, Marbellys Marilys
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Henrít Torres, Lisa Lynn
Richardson, Jacqueline
Rodríguez Moreno, Neida
Sánchez Muñoz, Eduardo
Santana Burguillio, Maribel
Simancas Noriega, Sergio Josué
Vicuña Rojas, Milena Mildrey

2nd Computer
Mago Vázquez, Edwin Rafael

1999

Science
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Atalido Rojas, Adriana Yaneth
Bervis Ron, Miguel Rafael
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Yépez, Miguel
Ytriago Canelón, Alpidio

3rd Administration
Brito Herrera, Luis Alexander

1 Office is a bachelor's degree in office management, with graduation since 1999.
APPENDIX D

FINANCIAL STATISTICS
### VENEZUELAN FINANCIAL STATISTICS

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APPENDIX E

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS TRANSLATED
The register of the Nirgua, in the state of Yaracuy, states that under section 4, files 6-12 of this office, in correspondence to the second quarter of 1975, there is a document that states: “We, Ernestos Santos, Osman Longa, Miguel A. Lopez, and Luis S. Camacho; all in accordance with the law, and teachers; the first one, Cuban-American, the second, Venezuelan, and the last two, Colombians; with Venezuelan ID 81.120.701, 2.143.701, 81.224.60, and 514.664, all from this town; we declare that we constitute a civil association and non-profit organization with the purpose of teaching for the spiritual and manual development of the youth, and according to the constitutional document as follows:

Considering: that because of the big social problems that our society confronts in almost all of the countries, our social and moral values have been threatened and are almost to the point of dissolution.

Considering: that the youth of Venezuela are displaying a more obvious lack of strong values.

Considering: that, besides intellectual instruction to prepare them to continue their education, the youth need guidance in moral matters in order to help them reject the powerful attractions of drugs, bad habits, pornography, prostitution, etc.

Considering: that there is a need to instruct the youth to establish a new and strong foundation in loyalty to the principles of the Christian faith, and to live according to these principles in which they believe.

Considering: that the youth should develop a high concept of dignity at work, which can be provided by allowing them to work in industries, offices, or domestic work. Their experiences while involved in these activities may help them to choose their vocation in harmony with their individual willingness and aptitude to perform.

Considering: that the youth should learn how to develop a character in which self-respect, respect for their superiors, and respect for the opposite sex can be reached through social activities and also throughout their education.

Considering: that the youth should have developed a clear comprehension of their rights and civil duties as citizens, and also a true love for their country and a deep respect for their historical patrimony.

Considering: that there are many intellectual youth who have not been discovered, since their lack of funds prevents them from continuing an education in which they can develop.

Considering: that it is the duty and the responsibility of every good citizen, to the extent of their capacity, to contribute to the preparing of the youth to build a bigger and better nation with more prosperity and responsibility.

We declare as members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church meeting in the city of Nirgua, Venezuela, on February 16, 1975, to constitute the Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela, with the acronym “INSTIVOC,” and with the following by-laws:

Article 1. The association named Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela (INSTIVOC) has been registered in the Venezuelan Ministry of Education, and is integrated by the board, teachers, staff, students, and the organizations which made systematic financial contributions. The registration in the Ministry of Education is S-649. D-2.

Article 2. The location is in the city of Nirgua in the state of Yaracuy.

Article 3. The duration of the Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela is indefinite, but it also can be dissolved in special circumstances according to the national law and these bylaws.

Article 4. The purpose of this association is: a) to establish in the students loyalty to the principles of the Christian faith, exhibited by love and respect for God and His word, b) to teach the students appropriate knowledge in health principles, and the practice of good habits which may result in improving their health, physical, and mental capacities, c) to develop in the students ideals of self-respect and social conscience, to allow them to work in groups, and to promote group interest, d) to offer to the students the opportunity of realizing their usefulness to society through their work in different industries and departments of the school.
Article 5. The school is an institution sponsored by the department of education of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and it may coordinate school relations with the other schools of the Seventh-day Adventist organization, especially with regard to those schools in Latin America.

Article 6. The administrative responsibilities of the school will be under the charge of: a) the board of directors, b) the board of administrators, c) the school staff.

Article 7. The members of the INSTIVOC board of directors consist of several representatives from the financial supporting organizations, such as representatives of the Venezuelan Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists located in Caracas and Barquisimeto, and the leaders from the Colombian-Venezuelan Union.

Article 8. The members of the board of directors should be nominated by each organization according to their own by-laws.

Article 9. The board of directors will meet regularly once or twice a year, or as many times as needed during the year.

Article 10. The officials of the board of directors are: a) the president, who is the president of the Colombian-Venezuelan Union, b) the vice-president, who is a president of one of the Venezuelan Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, chosen by the board, c) the Secretary, who is the principal of INSTIVOC, d) the school treasurer, chosen by the board.

Article 11. The quorum of the board will consist of consent by half of the members plus one, and their resolution should have validity with the majority of the present members.

Article 12. The duties of the board of directors are: a) to nominate the positions of the board, b) to nominate the positions on staff, c) to nominate the administrative staff of the school, such as principal, vice-principal and treasurer, d) to nominate an auditor to check the finances of the school, e) to know and notarize the annual school budget, f) to establish and increase the salaries of school staff as necessary, g) to reform the school's by-laws with a two-thirds vote of the board members, h) to create working plans for the most important issues in the school and delegate them to the board members, i) to delegate their functions to the school's board of administrators as many times as necessary.

Article 13. The board of administrators consists of a president, a secretary, and three members.

Article 14. The board of administrators will meet when the board of directors cannot meet, upon agreement by the administrative president and secretary that the meeting is necessary.

Article 15. The officials of the board of administrators are: a) the president, who is the principal of the school, b) the vice-principal, who is the academic dean of the school, c) the secretary, who is the treasurer of INSTIVOC.

Article 16. The duties of the board of administrators are: a) to fulfill the agreements of the board of directors, b) to promote fund-raising for support of the school, c) to represent the school in legal matters, d) to know and vote on the courses offered by the school, e) to uphold and perform all duties derived from these by-laws or as needed by the school.

Article 17. The duties of the president and the principal are: a) to fulfill the approved agreements of the board of directors, b) to preside over the board of administrators, c) to call a meeting of the board of administrators in harmony with the secretary and the board of directors, d) to represent the school to the organizations providing financial support, e) to be in charge of the fulfillment of resolutions by the board of directors, f) to perform any additional responsibilities of this position.

Article 18. The duties of the administrative board's vice president or academic dean are: a) to represent the school in the Ministry of Education and to the other national and local organizations, b) to be responsible for the fulfillment of the requirements set for the school by the Ministry of Education, c) to be in charge of the fulfillment of the academic programs offered by the school, d) to supervise all of the school's documents and academic records.

Article 19. The duties of the board of administrator's secretary or the school treasurer are: a) to prepare the president's agenda for the board of administrators, b) to write up the resolutions of the board of administrators, c) to perform any additional responsibilities of this position.

Article 20. The duties of the members of the board of administrators are: a) to develop good public relations in favor of the school, b) to assist with the school financial campaign.
Article 21. The school's patrimony or assets will consist of: a) the student fees, b) outside financial donations, c) all income from the school's industries or school departments, d) the properties in which the school is located.

Article 22. The school should have a bank account; the school checks should be signed by the school principal or the treasurer; the school auditor should require full accountability for fund usage by the school faculty/staff.

Article 23. The school fund should be used to pay school costs or liabilities according to need.

Article 24. The directive board members or administrative board members who are not school employees should exercise their positions without pay by the school.

Article 25. All of the school's business that is not taken into account in the operating school budget needs approval of the board of directors.

Article 26. Because the school is a non-profit organization, in case the school were to close after fulfillment of its engagements, the remaining funds will be returned to the financial support organizations of the school, namely the Venezuelan Seventh-day Adventist Missions.

Article 27. The school directors, teachers and staff should be appointed in board meeting before the beginning of each school year; the appointed may be re-elected only once.

Article 28. The school may ask the assessors of other Seventh-day Adventist schools to participate in the board of directors' deliberations, pending previous approval by the board.

Article 29. In educational matters, the school will consider the advice of leaders of other schools superior to that of the organization of Seventh-day Adventists.

Article 30. To sell or transfer the complete or partial property of the school, the school shall need a vote from the board of directors, a vote from the administrative board, and the signature of the school principal and school treasurer. The vote should say that he/she has been authorized to make the transaction.

Article 31. These by-laws may be modified by the board of directors upon agreement by a two-thirds majority of the members present. These by-laws were approved by the board members who met in Nirgua, the sixteenth day of February, nineteen hundred and seventy-five.
We, Gamaliel Flores Gomez, Simon Jose Perdomo, and David Poloche Zarate, all Venezuelans, and adults; the first and third, married, the second, single; teachers with Venezuelan ID 11.7787.293, 4.722.035, and 10.846.149; in harmony with the law and residents of this town, by this document declare that we constitute a civil association and non-profit organization for teaching and for the preparation of spiritual and technical capacity of the youth according to the following considerations:

Considering: that because of the big social problems that our society confronts in almost all of the countries, our social and moral values have been threatened and are almost to the point of dissolution.

Considering: that the youth of Venezuela are displaying a more obvious lack of strong values.

Considering: that, besides intellectual instruction to prepare them to continue their education, the youth need guidance in moral matters in order to help them reject the powerful attractions of drugs, bad habits, pornography, prostitution, etc.

Considering: that there is a need to instruct the youth to establish a new and strong foundation in loyalty to the principles of the Christian faith, and to live according to these principles in which they believe.

Considering: that the youth should develop a high concept of dignity at work, which can be provided by allowing them to work in industries, offices, or domestic work. Their experiences while involved in these activities may help them to choose their vocation in harmony with their individual willingness and aptitude to perform.

Considering: that the youth should learn how to develop a character in which self-respect, respect for their superiors, and respect for the opposite sex can be reached through social activities and also throughout their education.

Considering: that the youth should have developed a clear comprehension of their rights and civil duties as citizens, and also a true love for their country and a deep respect for their historical patrimony.

Considering: that there are many intellectual youth who have not been discovered, since their lack of funds prevents them from continuing an education in which they can develop.

Considering: that it is the duty and the responsibility of every good citizen, to the extent of their capacity, to contribute to the preparing of the youth to build a bigger and better nation with more prosperity and responsibility.

We declare, as members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church meeting in the city of Nirgua, in the state of Yaracuy, on the twenty-sixth day of July, nineteen hundred and eighty-six, to constitute the Instituto Universitario Eclesiastico Adventista, with the acronym “INSTIVEN,” and with the following by-laws:

Article 1. The school named Instituto Universitario Eclesiastico Adventista (“INSTIVEN”) will be registered in the Venezuelan Ministry of Education, and is composed of the board of personnel, teacher, staff, students, and the organizations which made systematic financial contributions.

Article 2. The university will be located in the city of Nirgua in the state of Yaracuy. It may also be established in any state of Venezuela.

Article 3. The duration of “INSTIVEN” is indefinite, but it can be dissolved in special circumstances according to the national laws and these by-laws.

Article 4. The purpose of “INSTIVEN” is: a) preparation of ministers of worship for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Venezuela, b) preparation for Bible teachers for the Seventh-day Adventist schools in Venezuela, c) preparation of people skilled in other areas needed by the Seventh-day Adventist church in Venezuela, d) preparation of technicians for employment by the Venezuelan industry or self-supporting industries, e) to establish in the students loyalty to the principles of the Christian faith, exhibited by love and respect for God and His word, f) to teach the students appropriate knowledge in health principles, and the practice of good habits which may result in improving their health, physical, and mental capacities, g) to develop in the students ideals of self-respect and social conscience, to allow them to work in groups, and to promote group interest, h) to offer to the students the opportunity of realizing their
usefulness to society through their work in different industries and departments of the school.

Article 5. "INSTIVEN" is an institution sponsored by the department of education of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists and by the Venezuelan Missions of Seventh-day Adventists, and it may coordinate school relations with others Seventh-day Adventist schools, especially with regard to those schools in Latin America.

Article 6. The administrative responsibilities of the school will be under the charge of: a) the board of directors, b) the board of administrators, c) the school staff.

Article 7. The board of directors of the "INSTIVEN" is composed by several representatives from the financial supporting organizations such as representatives of Venezuelan Missions of the Seventh-day Adventist, located in Caracas and Barquisimeto (Lara), and leaders from the Colombian-Venezuelan Union, and leaders from Instituto Universitario Eclesiastico Adventista ("INSTIVEN").

Article 8. The members of the board of directors should be nominated by each organization according to their own by-laws.

Article 9. The board of directors will meet regularly once or twice a year, or as many times as needed during the year.

Article 10. The officials of the board of directors are: a) the president, who is the president of the Colombian-Venezuelan Union, b) the vice-president, who is the one of the president of one of the Venezuelan Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist, chosen by the board, c) the Secretary, who is the president of INSTIVEN, d) the treasurer, chosen by the board.

Article 11. The quorum of the board will consist of consent by half of the members plus one, and their resolution should have validity with the majority of the present members.

Article 12. The duties of the board of directors are: a) to nominate the positions of the board, b) to nominate the positions on staff, c) to nominate the administrative staff of the school, such as principal, vice-principal and treasurer, d) to nominate an auditor to check the finances of the school, e) to know and notarize the annual school budget, f) to establish and increase the salaries of school staff as necessary, h) to reform the school's by-laws with a two-thirds vote of the board members, i) to create working plans for the most important issues in the school and delegate them to the board members, j) to delegate their functions to the school's board of administrators as many times as necessary.

Article 13. The administrative board is formed by a president, a secretary, and three members.

Article 14. The board of administrators will meet when the board of directors cannot meet, upon agreement by the administrative president and secretary that the meeting is necessary.

Article 15. The leaders of the school in the board of directors are: a) the president, who is the INSTIVEN principal, b) the vice-principal, who is the academic dean of the school, c) the secretary, who is the treasurer of the school.

Article 16. The duties of the board of administrators are: a) to fulfill the agreements of the board of directors, b) to promote fund-raising for support of the school, c) to represent the school in legal matters, d) to know and vote on the courses offered by the school, e) to uphold and perform all duties derived from these by-laws or as needed by the school.

Article 17. The duties of the board of administrator's president or principal are: a) to fulfill the approved agreements of the board of directors, b) to preside over the board of administrators, c) to call a meeting of the board of administrators in harmony with the secretary and the board of directors, d) to represent the school to the organizations providing financial support, e) to be in charge of the fulfillment of resolutions by the board of directors, f) to perform any additional responsibilities of this position.

Article 18. The duties of the board of administrator's vice-president or academic dean are: a) to represent the school in the Ministry of Education and to the other national and local organizations, b) to be responsible for the fulfillment of the requirements set for the school by the Ministry of Education, c) to be in charge of the fulfillment of the academic programs offered by the school, d) to supervise all of the school's documents and academic records.

Article 19. The duties of the board of administrator's secretary or school treasurer are: a) to prepare the president's agenda for the board of administrators, b) to write up the resolutions of the board of administrators, c) to perform any additional responsibilities of this position.
Article 20. The duties of the members of the board of administrators are: a) to develop good public relations in favor of Instituto Universitario Eclesiastico Adventista ("INSTIVEN") b) to assist with the school's financial campaign.

Article 21. The "INSTIVEN" patrimony or assets will consist of: a) the student fees, b) outside financial donations, c) all income from the school's industries or school departments, d) the properties in which the school is located.

Article 22. The school should have a bank account; the school checks should be signed by the school principal or the treasurer; the school auditor should require full accountability for fund usage by the school faculty/staff.

Article 23. The school fund should be used to pay school costs or liabilities according to need.

Article 24. The directive board members or administrative board members who are not school employees should exercise their positions without pay by the school.

Article 25. All of the school's expenses that are not taken into account in the operating school budget needs approval of the board of directors.

Article 26. Because the Instituto Universitario Eclesiastico Adventista "INSTIVEN" is a non-profit organization, in case the school were to close after fulfillment of its engagements, the remaining funds will be returned to the financial support organizations of the school, namely the Venezuelan Missions of Seventh-day Adventists.

Article 27. The school directors, teachers and staff should be appointed in board meeting before the beginning of each school year; the appointed may be re-elected only once.

Article 28. The school may ask the assessors of other Seventh-day Adventist schools to participate in the board of directors' deliberations, pending previous approval by the board.

Article 29. In educational matters, the school will consider the advice of leaders of other schools superior to that of the organization of Seventh-day Adventists.

Article 30. To sell or transfer the complete or partial property of the school, the school shall need a vote from the board of directors, a vote from the administrative board, and the signature of the school principal and school treasurer. The vote should say that he/she has been authorized to make the transaction.

Article 31. These by-laws may be modified by the board of directors upon agreement by a two-thirds majority of the members present. These by-laws were approved by the board members who met in Nirgua, the seventeenth day of July, nineteen hundred and eighty-six.
INSTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO ADVENTISTA DE VENEZUELA
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

We, Ivan Omana, who is Venezuelan, Doctor in Ministry, adult, residing in Caracas and with
Venezuelan ID 2.964.376, in his position as president of Venezuelan Antillean Union of the Seventh-day
Adventist with legal status in the Federal District dated January 23, 1992 under number 29, file 1, volume
12; Fernando Zabala, Venezuelan, adult, Doctor in Philosophy and Education from this town, and
Venezuelan ID 3.811.303; Javier Villegas, Venezuelan, adult, Masters in Education, from this town, and
with Venezuelan ID 9.709.418; Rubiela Soto, Venezuelan, adult, B.A in Business Administration, from
this town and with Venezuelan ID 4.303.861; Julio Palacios, Venezuelan, adult, from this town and with
Venezuelan ID 3.592.172; Eufrasio Oropeza, Venezuelan, adult, from this town and with Venezuelan ID
4.477.980; Orlando Ramirez, Venezuelan, adult, from this town and with Venezuelan ID 5,074.591;
Gonzalo Prada, Venezuelan, adult, from this town and with Venezuelan ID 6.143.576; Benilde Almerida,
Venezuelan, adult, from this town and with Venezuelan ID 1.958.012; Hector Sanchez, Venezuelan, adult,
from this town and with Venezuelan ID 4.273.170; Hernan Zuniga, Venezuelan, adult, from this town and
with Venezuelan ID 8.054.443.

All in harmony with the law, through this document we declare that we constitute a civil and non-
profit association that will follow these by-laws:

Article 1. The civil association named Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela, with the
acronym “IUNAV,” is a non-profit civil association, with legal status and net worth, and formed by
persons of great morality.

Article 2. The IUNAV civil association will have residence in Nirgua, in the state of Yaracuy,
Caretera Nirgua-Salom, Las Lagunas, but may possibly establish extensions in others areas and cities of
Venezuela according to the Ministry of Education and their members.

Article 3. The association will have an indefinite lifespan, and will not end with the death or
disaffiliation of any of its members, rather only in a seventy-five percent majority vote taken in an ordinary
or extraordinary assembly of its members, or when it is impossible for the association to reach the purpose
for which it is established.

Article 4. The civil association will have the purpose to teach and contribute to research
development according to the national and regional need, with the goal of being self-sustained, and to
support new programs of teachings and research, as well as to support students and teachers in their
activities of research and production. These goals will aim to reach the development of integrated human
beings in knowledge, behaviour and spirituality, ready to satisfy the necessities of society for ethic, human,
moral and spiritual values, and supportive of the quality of life of the Venezuelan and particularly of this
region.

Article 5. In order to fulfill its objectives, the association may: acquire or rent their net worth,
establishing affiliations in the nation and outside of it with other schools; have their own personnel for
their operation; open and close bank accounts; transfer or receive financial transactions in the daily work to
support the purpose of the establishment.

Article 6. The net worth is composed of any appropriations and contributions received, any
income resulting from activities made in the association, assets and dependencies in which the institute is
located, and any other legal incomes, including donations and others.

Article 7. Those who make a donation or contribution to the association will not have priority
above others.

Article 8. The funds in the association will be used to pay the liabilities of the institution.

Article 9. The members of the board of directors will not receive pay for this service.

Article 10. The Association of IUNAV is a non-profit organization; for this reason, after
liquidation and after paying off any debts, the remaining funds will go to the Venezuelan Antillean Union
of Seventh-day Adventists.

Article 11. The Association of IUNAV will start to operate after all legal matters are resolved, and
its fiscal year will run from January 1 to the ending of the 31st of December each year. At the end of each
fiscal year, a general balance will be presented according to the accounting principles accepted.
Article 12. The supreme direction and administration of the association is formed by the active members of the assembly following their own by-laws, and their agreements should be obeyed by all the members even if they were not present or voted for the minority point of view.

Article 13. The assemblies, both ordinary and extraordinary, may take place in the association or in the place where they are scheduled. The ordinary assembly will be appointed by the board of directors; when it is necessary, an extraordinary assembly will be formed by one-fifth of the total associated members, given thirty days notice.

Article 14. The agenda for the assembly will be directed by the president or whoever is in charge; attendance will be kept in the book of minutes, which will be signed by each one of the members present.

Article 15. The assembly will be considered valid when more than half of the active members of the association are present. If at the appointed date and hour, there are not enough members, the president will order to wait an hour, after that there is the possibility to continue the procedure as specified in the appointment letter.

Article 16. The agreements made at the assembly will have validity by the vote made by the majority of the present members; the voting procedures can be public or as determined by the director.

Article 17. There duties of the ordinary assembly are: a) to approve or reject the agenda of the board of directors; b) to propose or reject the closing financial statement from the previous year of assembly. All information related to the balance should be in the hands of the members thirty days before the assembly, and at election time, the president of the assembly should have all association finances audited by external auditors; c) to elect the president and other members of the board in a direct and secret way; d) to modify these by-laws as needed in special circumstances; e) to dissolve the association according to these by-laws, f) to select people to fill vacancies in the board of directors; g) to reach and vote for agreement and modification to previous resolutions.

Article 18. During the assembly recess, the board of directors are the supreme authority of the associations, with no limits besides the ones appointed by these bylaws. The board of directors should meet any time that the president may consider it necessary.

Article 19. The election of the board of directors should be by name or by group and require agreement by two-thirds of the members present in the assembly.

Article 20. The quorum of agreement in the board of directors is half plus one, and if the president is absent it will continue in session with the vice-president presiding in continuation. The decisions made will be supported by the majority of votes, recorded by the secretary, and signed by all members present. In the meting of the directors, advisors may be present as much as the others invited by the president or other members, but will not be given part of the quorum, and only have voice but not vote.

Article 21. The board of directors should have great powers and the following duties: a) to fulfill the assembly’s decisions as well as their own decisions, b) to fulfill all the association’s interests and all duties derived from the assembly, c) to study and promote the assembly’s requests, d) to annually present the resolutions of the association as well as the financial statements and the academic reports to the ordinary assembly, e) to call an extraordinary assembly in case of a lack of president, f) to call an extraordinary assembly to fill in vacancies in the board of directors, g) to name, remove, or renew the personnel of directors, administrative, teachers, and staff of the institute, h) to designate counselors and to delegate as honorable members of the assembly people who have earned merit due to their experience or service in research or education and who may be assets to the institution with their voice and vote in the assemblies, j) to establish fixed criteria in the interpretation of these by-laws, k) to develop rules in expanding these initial by-laws, l) to name the representatives of the institution among public entities, m) to fulfill any remaining duties in these by laws or derived from the assembly.

Article 22. The board of directors is composed of a president, a vice-president, a secretary, two directors and two members.

Article 23. The president is the legal representative of the association, is the representative of the association in all judicial and extra-judicial activities, and is responsible for agreements by the board of directors.

Article 24. The duties of the president are: a) to orient and fulfill the operations of the association, b) to preside over the assemblies of the board of directors, c) to propose an annual budget to the board of
Article 25. In case of the accidental or temporal absence of the president, the vice-president can substitute for the president, with all the privileges and duties contained in these by-laws. In case of permanent absence of the president, his substitute will be elected by the assembly.

Article 26. The board of directors will operate for the period of two years, and may be reelected by the general assembly, and also there will be a substitute for each directive member.

Article 27. The present document is the constitution and by-laws of the civil association, ISTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO ADVENTISTA DE VENEZUELA, approved in a meeting held in Nirgua, Yaracuy state, on 17 March, 1996.

Article 28. The members of the Board of Directors currently designated are the following persons: Ivan Omana ID 2.964.376 as president; Fernando Zabala ID 3.811.303 as secretary; Eufracio Oropeza ID 4.477.980 and Orlando Ramirez ID 5.074.376 as directors; Javier Villegas ID 9.709.375 and Rubiela Soto ID 4.303.861 as members.
APPENDIX F

AFFILIATION DOCUMENTS TRANSLATED
Document of Affiliation Between the Antillean Adventist University and the Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela

I. Purpose of the Affiliation:
   A. To develop a joint effort between Antillean University and the Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela in offering associate degrees in secretarial science, computer programming, and business administration as part of the academic program of Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela.
   B. To support the Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela to fortify and expand their academic programs at the university level.
   C. To allow Antillean University to fulfill their denominational mission by participating in a program that contributes to the development of human resources for service and the advancement of the Seventh-day Adventist work.

II. Definition of the Affiliation:
This affiliation between the Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela, called INSTIVEN in the following document, and Antillean Adventist University, called UAA in the following document, is:

A. That INSTIVEN will assign to UAA
   1. Educational personnel to ensure the proper development of the procedures.
   2. Personnel to maintain the physical facilities, such as:
      a. Classrooms.
      b. Library.
      c. Teaching resources.
      d. Essential Equipment.

B. That UAA may give academic rank to the faculty members of INSTIVEN and authorize them as representatives of UAA. The credit offered in INSTIVEN will be valid in UAA as long as the procedures are according to these by-laws.

C. The president of UAA or the person appointed by him/her is the academic consultant for INSTIVEN.

D. INSTIVEN will pay to UAA the amount of $6,000 annually as affiliation fees. This amount should be paid at the beginning of each school year.

E. UAA may provide special assessment services when INSTIVEN requests it, without additional fees besides travel expenses by mutual agreement.

III. General terms of the Affiliation:
A. Each school should keep their own identity under their own constituency and board of directors throughout the affiliation period.
B. This affiliation document should be signed by the chairpersons of UAA and INSTIVEN board of directors, and by the university president. This affiliation will have validity for two years and may be renewed.
C. This affiliation document will have as attachments the financial and academic agreements. The program curricula will be authorized by UAA.

IV. Administrative Terms:
A. The president of UAA is a consultant to the INSTIVEN board of directors.
B. UAA programs offered at the INSTIVEN campus (associate degrees in computer science, secretarial science, and business administration) will be supervised as follows:
   1. The daily administration will be under the supervision of the INSTIVEN president or his/her designated representative. He/she will be the contact person, and the coordinator of the program.
   2. The job description of the coordinator is:
      a. To approve the curriculum, the teachers, and courses.
      b. To inform the academic dean of UAA about curriculum and calendar changes.
      c. To hire teachers for the program.
      d. To send to the academic dean of UAA copies of syllabi and text books.
      e. To submit the list for graduation candidacy.
V. Faculty of the affiliation:
   A. The UAA by-laws on affiliation, academic requirement, rank, promotions and academic load should be respected.
   B. The rank of UAA guest teacher will be assigned to teachers at INSTIVEN.
   C. The arrangement made by teachers in INSTIVEN programs should be ready two months in advance.
   D. There will always be the possibility to exchange teachers between the programs.

VI. Curriculum Matters in the Affiliation:
   A. Any changes to the curriculum should be stated in an appendix to this document.
   B. Copies of final exams will be filed in INSTIVEN for purposes of academic auditing.

VII. Academic Matters in the Affiliation:
    The following procedures will be implemented:
    A. Application: The application filled out by a student who will be in the INSTIVEN program should be sent by the coordinator to the admissions office in UAA.
    B. Admissions: The same validating procedures for the admissions process as indicated in the UAA catalogue.
    C. Registration: The INSTIVEN coordinator must meet this responsibility, with document copies sent to the registration office of UAA.
    D. Academic Load: The maximum load is 18 credits.
    E. Transfer of Credit: Credit that is not from UAA may be transferred after an evaluation of each course is done to see if it is equivalent to the course at UAA.
    F. Graduation Application: It is the responsibility of the INSTIVEN program coordinator to certify that each student has completed all the requirements.
    G. Graduation: To hold an associate degree, the student should have a minimum GPA of 2.00 and have satisfied all additional requirements in the catalogue.

VIII. Affiliation Approval:
    This document is valid only when both parties fulfill the requirements. Modification may be done only by the school committees assigned and according to the current by-laws of UAA and voted by the board of directors of UAA and INSTIVEN. This agreement was ratified by the members of the boards of directors of UAA and INSTIVEN for the time period January 1992 to January 1994.
Document of Affiliation Between Montemorelos University
And Instituto Universitario Eclesiastico Adventista

I. Purpose of this Affiliation:
The purpose of this affiliation is:
A. To respond to the Venezuelan Antillean Union's need to offer pre-graduate programs to their youth by forming an official affiliation agreement between Montemorelos University (UM) and the Instituto Universitario Eclesiastico Adventista (IUEA) that allows the Venezuelan Antillean Union and the IUEA to take advantage of the programs, services and leadership of UM.
B. To expand the educational services of IUEA and consolidate its position as a superior school [higher educational institution] for the Venezuelan Antillean Union.
C. To help UM to accomplish its denominational mission as an institution of superior education in the Inter-American Division.
D. To promote IUEA pre-graduate programs that are academically and financially acceptable, improving human resources and other materials.
E. To help IUEA in the academic improvement of its personnel providing up-to-date educational information.

II. Definition of this Affiliation:
A. That IUEA will form an official center of extension of UM, under the name “Universidad de Montemorelos Campus Instituto Universitario Eclesiastico Adventista.”
B. That IUEA will be given use of UM personnel and administrators, as well as equipment, physical space such as classrooms, teaching materials, accommodation, and other facilities needed to fulfill this agreement.
C. That IUEA will provide the needed conditions to facilitate the educational goals, such as providing physical space for admission, registration, and filing as required by the operations of UM campus at IUEA.
D. That UM will nominate and give academic rank to qualified personnel from the UM campus at IUEA, and will provide administrative personnel to supervise the program.
E. That the academic credit offered on the UM campus at IUEA will have the same validity as that offered at UM.
F. That UM may provide consultative services or short programs to the personnel of IUEA at no additional cost besides travel, board, and materials, according to their by-laws and mutual agreement.

III. Limits of this Affiliation:
A. Each University will retain its own identity under its own board of directors.
B. The affiliation will be signed after approval by the respective boards: the chairperson of the board of directors and university president of UM, the president of the board of directors and university president of IUEA, and the Director of the Department of Education of the Inter-American Division of SDA.
C. This affiliation will have an initial validity of four years, and may be renewed under the approval of both boards of directors. The first four years will cover the first generation of students at the UM campus at IUEA, and each year the affiliation will be reviewed to see if it ought to cover new student generations.
D. Once a year, the extension director of UM and the director of IUEA campus will review the program. There will be a written report submitted to the UM academic dean’s office.
E. The director of the academic affiliations from UM is responsible to communicate with the director of the UM campus at IUEA regarding all administrative issues as related to the by-laws and this agreement.

IV. Teaching Personnel in this Affiliation:
A. Teachers expressly appointed by UM and in residence at the UM campus at IUEA are responsible to teach courses of the approved programs. This excludes the possibility that teachers resident at UM may be appointed to teach specific courses according to the school’s needs.
B. The teaching personnel at the UM campus at IUEA should be aware of the UM regulations regarding preparation, years of service, academic rank, and promotion.

C. Arrangement for teaching appointments on the UM campus at IUEA should be made six month prior to the beginning of the course.

D. There will be provision made occasionally to host an exchange of personnel between the UM in Montemorelos and the UM campus at IUEA.

V. Affiliation Terms and Study Plans:

A. The study plans offered in the UM campus at IUEA will be those which have been authorized by the UM.

B. Each one of the courses in the course plans offered in the UM campus at IUEA should have the same material as the UM courses, but with local applications as necessary.

C. In harmony with the internal regulations of UM, the teachers should prepare a course syllabus which should be similar to the course content at UM.

D. The department chair at UM, in agreement with the coordinator of the UM campus at IUEA, will annually revise the course content of the courses offered on the UM campus at IUEA.

VI. Academic Norms of the Affiliation:

A. The pre-graduate programs offered in this agreement should be ruled by the academic norms from UM in matters such as admission, evaluation, graduation, pre-work, social service and promotion. This applies to current and future regulations including amendments during the validity of this affiliation.

B. To be part of any pre-graduate program, it is required that a student hold a high school diploma or equivalent, completed by the time of registration, and that the student fulfill all the admissions requirements specified for the program.

C. The academic calendar for this affiliation will be established by the coordinator of the UM campus at IUEA and the director of extension and academic exchange from UM.

D. Academic records will be kept regarding students registered in the UM campus at IUEA. Only UM may authorize official transcripts of study, and requests for these should be sent to the director of the records department at UM.

E. The IUEA will provide the student with all of the requirements needed for admission, study plans, school calendar, administrative and faculty directory, and all important information in agreement with the UM director of extensions and academic affiliations.

VII. Affiliation Approval:

This agreement of affiliation has been ratified by the board of directors of the UM and IUEA. It will be valid from 1 August 1996 to 31 July 2000.
APPENDIX G

SAMPLES OF INSTITUTIONAL NEWSPAPERS
Graduados 87-88

Palabras del Padrino

Para los alumnos,

El paso del tiempo ha transcurrido velocemente y sin interrupciones y Uvida, estas bajas para emprender la partida.

Junto a sus escuchas de sus alegrías y tristezas quedo la satisfacción de verlos alcanzar la meta que un día se habían propuesto.

Hasta luego queridos estudiantes! INSTITUTO las entiende. El tiempo se encarga de convertirlos en los nuevos líderes que hoy se proponen.


Gilberto Rodado Sub-Director
HEMOS COMENZADO

Cada comienzo es un poema, que se escribe en la historia, cien años con un autor que lo puede leer de gloria. En este momento tan especial para nosotros, hemos querido presentar ante ustedes el nacimiento de una idea que puesta en sus manos es una realidad. Con la colaboración de muchas personas tanto Alumnas como Administradores, creómos la primera Edición de este Organador Informativo Estudiantil, para que pueda ser una antología entre la comunidades estudiantil de la U V A y esta Casa de Estudiantes Superiores (INSTITVEN)

La comunicación ha sido un medio de vital importancia a través de los siglos, pero hoy se ha convertido en una exigencia para todos los pobladores de esta Patria, por tal razón, queremos establecer un vínculo mediante esta publicación, que nos identifique y nos unirá a toda la iglesia, no solo a esta Unión, sino a todo el mundo, en tanto, y en tanto, a este tiempo de la comunidad de la Universidad Adventista, esta Casa de Estudiantes Superiores (INSTITVEN)

EDICION UNA CON DIOS

CRISTO NUESTRA UNICA ESPERANZA

Antes de que se establezcan los fundamentos del mundo, Cristo, el Ungido del Señor se comprometió a convertir en Redentor de la raza humana. El pecado de Adán, el primer hombre fue el que causó el pecado en el mundo. Cristo, al ser el Redentor de la raza humana, puede ser llamado Hijo de Dios. (Lucas 1:35)

Hoy también nuestra única esperanza es que estemos familiarizados con la Palabra de Dios. Las que diligentemente escuchasen las Escrituras, no aceptarán los engaños de Satanás, como la verdad de Dios. Nadie debe ser vencido por las especulaciones presentadas por el engaño de Dios y de Cristo. No hemos de especular en cuanto a puntos que señaló la Palabra de Dios. Dios ha sido la que nos ha dado la Palabra de Dios. (Mensajes Escolares, Tomo 1, Pág. 265, 267)

Arturo Alegre
VII Semestre de Teología

Un instante con Dios
El hecho histórico se produjo este 23 de julio de 1999 cuando el Presidente de la República, Hugo Rafael Chávez Frías, firmó el decreto Nº 227, publicado en la Gaceta Oficial Extraordinaria Nº 34750, el cual autoriza la creación y funcionamiento del primer Instituto Universitario privado, denominacional, no católico, de Venezuela. Ya antes, el Consejo Nacional de Universidades (CNU), en sesión ordinaria del 27 de noviembre de 1998, había emitido su opinión favorable a la creación del IUNAV (Gaceta Oficial Nº 36681 del 11 de diciembre de 1998).

Este acto histórico, en todas sus dimensiones, hace realidad lo que para la Iglesia Adventista de Venezuela fue un suceso avanzado por ellos, y pone fin a un proceso que se inició en 1989 y que hoy, felizmente, ha llegado a su fin.

¡A Dios sea la gloria!

A continuación, el texto del histórico decreto:

HUGO CHÁVEZ FRÍAS
Presidente de la República

De conformidad con lo establecido en el parágrafo único del artículo 10 de la Ley de Universidades, en concordancia con lo previsto en el artículo 5º y 61 del Reglamento de los Institutos y Colegios Universitarios, oída la opinión favorable del Consejo Nacional de Universidades.

Considerando

Que es propuesto y debido del Ejecutivo Nacional estimular, proteger y fomentar las iniciativas que tengan a elevar el nivel cultural y educativo en todas las regiones del país.

Considerando

Que el desarrollo socio-económico de Venezuela requiere esfuerzos que conduzcan a un mejor aprovechamiento de nuestros recursos humanos, mediante la formación de los profesionales de alto nivel que demanda el progreso de la Nación.

Decretó

Artículo 1º: Autoriza el funcionamiento del Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela, con sede en Nirgua, Estado Yaracuy.

Artículo 2º: Se autoriza al Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela para ofrecer las siguientes carreras:

- Administración de Empresas
- Administración de Personal
- Educación Prescolar

Artículo 3º: Los alumnos que aprueben el plan de estudio correspondiente a las carreras autorizadas y cumplan con los requisitos establecidos, o que se establezcan tendrán derecho a que se les otorgue el título Técnico Superior Universitario en la carrera respectiva.

Dado en Caracas, a 23 de julio del mes de julio de mil novecientos noventa y nueve, año 149º de la Independencia y 140º de la Federation.

HUGO CHÁVEZ FRÍAS
Ministro de Educación

HECTOR NAVARRO DIAZ
Ministro de Educación

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APPENDIX H

SAMPLES OF INSTITUTIONAL FLOWCHARTS
INSTITUTO VOCACIONAL DE VENEZUELA (1986)
APPENDIX I

SAMPLES OF INSTITUTIONAL SEALS
COLEGIO SECONDARIO ADVENTISTA (1962-66)

INSTITUTO VOCACIONAL DE VENEZUELA (1966-)

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INSTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO ECLESIÁSTICO ADVENTISTA (1990-99)

INSTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO ADVENTISTA DE VENEZUELA (1999-)

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APPENDIX J

SAMPLES OF AUTHORIZATION AND ACCREDITATION
Certificate of Accreditation

This certifies that

Seminario Teológico Adventista de Venezuela

is hereby granted candidacy status until August 31, 1995 by the Board of Regents of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and is entitled to all the privileges and scholastic recognition resulting therefrom.

Dated this 11th day of October, 1994

Chairman, Board of Regents

Secretary, Board of Regents

General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, Maryland 20804-6600, U.S.A. (301) 680-5060
Certificate of Accreditation

This certifies that the accreditation for

Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista

is hereby extended until May 31, 1999 by the Adventist Accrediting Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and is entitled to all the privileges and scholastic recognition resulting therefrom.

Dated this 6th day of July, 1995

Chairman, Adventist Accrediting Association

Secretary, Adventist Accrediting Association

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 12001 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904-0001 USA 301-887-7000
GACETA OFICIAL
DE LA REPUBLICA DE VENEZUELA

PRESIDENCIA DE LA REPUBLICA

23 de julio de 1999

Miguel Chávez Pérez

Presidente de la República

En ejercicio de la competencia que me confiere el artículo 43 de la Ley Orgánica de la Suprema Corte de Justicia, en esta oportunidad, sello la opinión del Consejo de la Suprema Corte de Justicia.

Dado en Caracas, a veintitrés días del mes de julio de mil novecientos noventa y nueve. Año 199 de la Independencia y 210 de la Constitución.

Miguel Chávez Pérez

Presidente de la República

23 de julio de 1999

Héctor Navarro Díaz

Ministro de Economía

En el medio de acompañar...
APPENDIX K

CURRENT INSTITUTIONAL MAP
CURRENT INSTITUTIONAL MAP


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APPENDIX L

CURRENT UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE CURRICULA
**CURRENT UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE CURRICULUM (1999)**

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<th>Business Administration</th>
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### Pre-school Education

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Source: IUNAV - Diseño Curricular [database on-line]; available from http://www.tagnet.org/iunav/tsuadmon.htm; /tsupersonal.htm; /tsuprescolar.htm; /tsuinformatica.htm; Internet.

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Bibliographic Essay

The sources used to construct the history of Venezuelan Adventist University Institute (1962-1999) were largely periodical articles, committee minutes, financial statements, school reports, school bulletins, documents on accreditation, legal papers, letters, and other minor materials.

Periodicals

Numerous articles about the founding of Colegio Secundario Adventista, mostly primary sources of information, appeared in a Seventh-day Adventist periodical, The Inter-American Messenger (1960-73). A sizable collection of issues of this periodical is available in the Heritage Room of the James White Library, Andrews University.

The school yearbook, Canaima (1968-99), published once a year, though with intervals when there was no publication, is a source of important information and has been used in this study as a primary source of information. The yearbook also has historical articles with important information that was used to rebuild the history of the school. The majority of the volumes of this publication are located in the library of Venezuelan Adventist University Institute.

Noti-voc (1981-99). This paper was published by the school and is a source of
information for anyone who desires to trace the history of the school. It was published bi-monthly in the beginning but later it was published for special occasions, such as at the end of each school year, and included pictures of students graduating from the school that year as well as a message from the president of the graduating class. A limited collection of these publications are in the possession of the researcher.

*El Universitario Adventista* (1993-99). This paper, published by the students of Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista, is another source of information. The paper is published on a bi-monthly basis or for special occasions, and contains important information covering many aspects of student life. A partial collection of this publication is in the hands of the researcher.

*Contacto Universitario* (1996-99). This newspaper, put out by the administration of Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela, is the latest source of institutional information. In it are important articles regarding the status of the recognition process, as well as important school activities that took place in the late 1990s. A partial collection of this paper is in the hands of the researcher.

The school bulletin, *Prospecto* (1963-99). The bulletin provided much valuable information about the school such as the school objectives, philosophy, curriculum, work programs, personnel, school fees, and rules and regulations. It was particularly helpful in obtaining information in connection with the first years of the school during the 1960s and 1970s. A collection of these publications belongs to the researcher.

The annual publication of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Yearbook* (1962-99), was used to build the school personnel list, as well as document
Seventh-day Adventist growth in Venezuela. A set of the *SDA Yearbooks* is stored in the Heritage Room of the James White Library, Andrews University.

**Committee Minutes**

Seventh-day Adventist organizations and institutions are governed by committees. Minutes of the governing, executive, local, and administrative boards and committees of Venezuelan Adventist University Institute record a great deal of information relevant to the history of the institution. Minutes of these organizations as well as other school documents were, for the most part, well preserved and readily available in the board room on campus. These include the following:

1. **Colegio Secundario Adventista (COLSEVE) board minutes (1962-66)**, which have been used as a primary source of information to trace the history of the founding of the school in El Limón. The information in these minutes covers subjects such as personnel calls, building development, school programs, and the transfer of the school to its new property in Nirgua.

2. **Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela (INSTIVOC) board minutes (1966-89)** have been used in this study as a primary source of information in tracing the school’s history and its relocation to Nirgua. Special attention has been given to the leaders who held the position of principal, and their influence on the administration of the school. Information concerning the construction, industrial development, growth, curriculum change, and special projects is supported by this valuable documentation.

3. **Instituto Universitario Eclesiástico Adventista (INSTIVEN) board minutes**
(1989-96) are an important and primary source of information about the period when the school changed from a secondary school into a college-level institution. They contain valuable information relating to the academic programs, affiliation with others universities, and the appointment of new staff.

4. Instituto Universitario Adventista de Venezuela (IUNAV) board minutes (1996-99), the most recent set of board minutes, have been used as a primary source of information on the history of the rebuilding of the school. In this stage of development, attention was given to the authorization process, and the separation of the secondary school, INSTIVOC and the university institute, IUNAV.

5. Unión Colombo-Venezolana board minutes (1962-89) were used to document the Seventh-day Adventist organization’s sponsorship and support of the school in the 1960s-80s. Unión Venezolana Antillana board minutes (1989-99) document the Seventh-day Adventist organization’s support of the higher education initiatives in the 1990s.

**School Documents**

Among the most important school documents that were used are the school’s financial balances (1962-93), which are bound and safely stored in the school’s fire security room. These balances were used as primary evidence to trace the school’s growth over the years and to calculate the liquidity and working capital.

It is very unfortunate that the majority of the letters from Colegio Secundario Adventista (COLSEVE), Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela (INSTIVOC), and Unión Colombo-Venezolana (UCV) for the period covered in this study have been destroyed,
and only a few letters were found. Most of these letters deal with authorization given to
the school to function. Letters in the 1990s between the school and the Unión
Venezolana Antillana were kept in the school archives and in the union archives, and
were made available to the researcher.

Useful documents pertaining to land acquisition were found, and especially
helpful were legal documents that had been preserved. These were located in the school
fire security room. Legal documents dealing with the school constitution and by-laws
have been translated by the author and are part of appendix E. These, along with recent
documents concerning school affiliations with other Seventh-day Adventist universities
(see appendix F), have been a great help in tracing the recent developments of the
institution.

School enrollment reports for the years covered in this study were found in the
school archives. Complete and detailed lists of grades for each student every year were
used to create the list of students who have graduated from the school since 1968. The
graduates are reported in appendix C.

Floor plans for the school, the school seals, school photographs, and other items
of historical value, which have been used as support in reconstructing this history, are
included either in the text or in one of the appendixes of this dissertation. Copies of these
documents are in the school library or archives, or belong to the researcher as part of his
personal collection.
Personal Collection

Between 1999-2001 interviews were held with a number of individuals who were considered knowledgeable about the development of Venezuelan Adventist University Institute. Information from these interviews was used in this dissertation to help build a picture of school life during the different eras through which the school has developed. These interviews were mostly recorded on tape and are part of the author's personal collection. A few interviews were done by phone. They include interviews with school pioneers, presidents, teachers, and students. Some information on the personalities and administrative styles of the leaders is sensitive and has been documented by the author as anonymous.

Those who were interviewed are: Nathaniel García, Neria Calderón, Hugo García, Rebeca de Gómez, Gilberta Viloria, Rosita de Franco, Simón Fernández, Guillermmina de Brito, Héctor Sánchez, Eufracio Oropeza, Benilde Almérída, Jorge Omaña, Iván Omaña, Julio Palacios, David Poloche, Luisa de Gutiérrez, Dámaris de Figueroa, David Huamán, Crisólogo Cárdenas, Sandra de Bracho, Fernando Guzmán, Martín Mesa, Elsa Hernández, Juan Rodríguez, Emmer Chacón, Edwing Mago, Maria de Pereira, Marvelis García, Oscar González, Luz Figueroa, Gilberto Bracho, Fernando Zabala, Héctor Marin, Ricardo Delgado, Juan Rivas, Ordenel Zerpa, Edgar Brito, Robinson Urdaneta, Antonio Ceballos, Juan J. Suárez, Gonzalo Pico, Dulce de Rodríguez, Miguel Angel López, Gamaliel Flórez, and Eduardo Sánchez.
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Zabala, Fernando, to Pablo E. Huérfano, 27 August 1999, from author’s personal collection.

Dissertations


VITA

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Education:
1979  Elementary Education
      Instituto Vocacional de Venezuela: Nirgua, Yaracuy, Venezuela.
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1989  Bachelor of Arts (Theological Education)
      Universidad Adventista de Colombia: Medellín, Antioquia, Colombia.
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      Universidad de Montemorelos: Montemorelos, Nuevo León, Mexico.
1997  Master of Divinity (Systematic Theology)
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1990-1991  Home Health Education Service: Panama, Panama.
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1995-1997  M. Div. Student: Michigan, USA.
1998-2001  PhD. Candidate: Michigan, USA.