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Andrews Launches New Academic Program in Campus Ministry

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A Means to an End

BY MELINE PRIYAKUMARI PONNIAH

Growing up in Berrien Springs, Michigan, allowed me to look forward to one thing—leaving. I had been through the Adventist school system in Berrien Springs my whole life. I started with grade one at the Village Adventist School and moved on to Andrews Academy. As graduation day approached, I hoped my diploma would be a ticket out of Berrien Springs for good—maybe even the Adventist school system. I figured that since I attended Adventist schools for my elementary and academy years, it was time to move out into the "real world" and leave the Adventist school system behind.

Little did I know my parents had a very different idea of what my college experience should be. They made the decision that their daughter should attend an Adventist university. I thought the choice was ridiculous and unfair. After all, I was a "grown" 18-year-old woman. How did my parents know what was best for me? After much discussion, I chose to find an Adventist college to attend.

Only four Adventist colleges offered a clinical laboratory science major, and only two had fully accredited programs—Andrews University and Loma Linda University. California wasn't ever a place I wanted to live; so my choice was made to attend Andrews University. I was discouraged, annoyed, and furious.

Now, four years later, I once

again anticipate leaving Berrien Springs as I embark on my clinical practicum. As I look back on my Andrews experience, I would not trade it for anything this world has to offer. I am fortunate to have had a Christian education.

Attending an Adventist university offers so much more than I expected. My professors taught me that my relationship with the Lord must take precedence. This was by no means an excuse to neglect school work. But it was a phenomenal feeling when teachers cared about students' salvation more than their grades in hematology or immunology. It is comforting when a teacher starts the class with prayer or a short worship thought. If I had attended a public university, I would not have had that opportunity to publicly welcome God into my classroom.

Andrews University has taught me so much about

responsibility, integrity, honesty, and, most importantly, my relationship with Christ. My professors have prepared me to enter the "real world" with a mission-driven attitude.

Andrews University has not only prepared me with skills to excel in the workplace but also trained me to be a Christian in the workplace. And in the end, *that's* what *really* matters. Certainly, my education at Andrews University is a means to an end—eternity!

Meline Ponniah, a clinical laboratory science major, is a senior at Andrews pursuing her clinical experience at the Hinsdale Hospital. She plans to graduate in August 2004. She will receive a \$100 scholarship for having her article selected for this column.

