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Lake Union ASI meeting focuses on young professionals

MICHIGAN — At the Lake Union Adventist Laymen’s Services and Industries (ASI) spring fellowship, an annual conference geared toward individuals seeking to witness through their occupations and workplaces, leadership shared a recently voted action to broaden the organization’s reach by actively including young adults. “It was just voted to create a new category for young professionals,” stated Lake Union ASI president, Tom Morrissy. “We saw a need. Youth for Jesus was for high school-aged, and GYC was reaching college-aged members. We want them to join us at ASI and keep that worldwide focus.”

Although there has never been a minimum age requirement for ASI membership or involvement, outreach would still aim to “share Christ in the marketplace,” while in-reach would focus heavily on inviting younger members of the church. According to ASI’s national president, Steve Dickman, “If a young person comes into the church and doesn’t get involvement, either from a church standpoint or an ASI standpoint, they’re gonna walk away from it.”

To incorporate the new demographic, it was announced that registration would be 90 percent off for young professionals for the upcoming convention in Florida, which will include sessions targeted specifically for such new members. “We have a philosophy that everybody is called to be a minister and share in their own workplace,” Dickman continued. “We felt that we needed a way for ages 18–35 to come into ASI at a very reduced cost and be a part of it and experience the ASI convention, activities and fellowship.”

Opportunities for involvement were apparent in this year’s Lake Union ASI offering. Members from Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin gathered in Benton Harbor and generously contributed donations totaling $15,031. Of that amount, $4,150 is going towards the Advocates for Southeast Asians and the Persecuted (ASAP) branch in Rockford, Ill., to assist Karen refugees; $5,531 is assisting FARMSTEW, a sustainable agriculture and sanitation education ministry developing a training center in Jinja, Uganda. Orphans International Helpline, which provides food, clothing, shelter, medical care and Adventist education to abandoned children in Haiti will receive $4,150 to sponsor 40 children. Meanwhile, $2,400 was dedicated for a three-year sponsorship of the Adventist Frontier Mission’s Mali project.

The next ASI event is the 2018 Convention in Orlando, Fla., from August 2–5. The theme this year is “Business Unusual.”

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