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Christina Hunter joins Andrews University staff

Gillian Panigot

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▲ (Left to right) David Banks, chief strategy officer, Tim Cook, AdventHealth Altamonte CEO, and Jillyan McKinney, Littleton Adventist Hospital CEO, participate in the panel discussion, "Implications for AdventHealth."

Leaders explore impact of faith-based health care

Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders, community thought leaders and AdventHealth board members, executives and team members came together in Maitland, Fla., for the organization's 29th annual Conference on Mission, a three-day event centering around AdventHealth's mission of "Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ." This year, attendees were challenged to turn their attention forward and outward as they explored what makes faith-based health care relevant and distinct in their communities.

The new focus related to the conference's 2019 theme, "Whatsoever You Do..." which is based on Christ's words in Matthew 25:35-36, 40 where He calls on His followers to show concern for the weak and the vulnerable — *the least of these*.

"We had a different kind of mission conference this year," said Ted Hamilton, M.D., senior vice president and chief mission integration officer for AdventHealth.

"We gathered not just to talk about mission, but to demonstrate it and to wrestle with the kinds of questions we may not necessarily have answers to."

Throughout the three days, guest speakers, panelists and participants discussed the role that faith-based health care plays in society now and in the future. The keynote speaker, David Brooks, a well-known commentator and author of *The Second Mountain: The Quest for Moral Life*, contrasted the ideas of personal success and meaning, and highlighted moral character as the key to mission-driven leadership.

Ron Smith, AdventHealth board chair and president of the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, presented a devotion on modeling Jesus' ministry, which kickstarted a morning of back-to-back panel discussions. During the "Who is Our Neighbor? What Do We Owe Our Neighbor?" session, one of the panelists, Reverend Zina Jacque of

the Community Church of Barrington in Illinois, posed the idea of a "poof" test — a test that essentially asks whether anyone would notice if one day we were gone. The sobering thought was accompanied by conversations around what it means to "extend" Christ's healing ministry, and how it's not simply about expanding into new markets, but about crossing into new frontiers and doing the mission the organization has been called to do.

In his response to the panel discussions, AdventHealth president/CEO Terry Shaw shared four key take-aways with attendees:

- We are the face of the church in our community.
- We must think about who we need as partners to address the unmet needs of our community.
- We have to stand in the breach and be present when there appears to be no solutions.
- Something being too hard is not an excuse for not getting it done.

The 2019 Conference on Mission concluded with a Sabbath morning worship service featuring a mission spotlight on AdventHealth's Global Mission Impact program and its current Bahamas relief efforts, as well as a powerful sermon by Jimm Bunch, president/CEO for AdventHealth Hendersonville.

"I've been a part of AdventHealth for 30 years and the entire time our mission statement has been 'Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ,'" Bunch said during his sermon. "It's an inspired, God-given mission statement. And up until the last two days, I've paid the most attention to the words 'Healing Ministry of Christ.' This conference made me think of the first word, 'Extending.'" ■

Ingrid Hernández is senior Communications specialist for AdventHealth

Christina Hunter joins Andrews University staff



▲ Christina Hunter

Christina Hunter has joined the staff of Andrews University as dean of University Towers, director of Guest & Convention Services, and sponsor for the Andrews University Graduate Student Association (AUGSA).

Hunter grew up on the Andrews campus, attending junior high at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School and graduating from Andrews Academy. She earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology at Andrews University and, during her college years, worked as a student employee at Student Financial Services. "Interacting with students on a daily basis gave me my first inklings about the type of work I may one day like to do," she says. "I also was

very passionate about music and a major connection to the University came through becoming a member of the Deliverance Mass Choir. Little did I know I would later become a director of the choir. I learned so much about spiritual leadership and ministry and have carried those precious experiences with me throughout my life."

Hunter went on to earn a Master of Education in Clinical Mental Health Counseling with an emphasis in Diversity and Career Counseling from the University of Missouri-St. Louis. She spent 10 years of her career in higher education and Student Life, including work as a counselor, student assistance specialist and instructor. She notes, "I provided academic, personal and career counseling to students as well as worked closely with students in crisis."

In close contact with many Andrews faculty and staff as an alum, the University eventually reached out to her about a job. "After much prayer and exploration, I felt confident that God opened this door to allow me to return to my Andrews University community to serve our students and make a positive difference in their lives," she says.

In her role as dean, Hunter works primarily with graduate and upper-level student residents. She provides support related to residential life and develops programming that helps residents grow mentally, socially, emotionally, professionally and spiritually. "One of my favorite events is the Thursday night "Love+Commune" worship service, a weekly opportunity for

our students to connect with each other and God through meaningful worship, tasty food and fellowship."

Serving as the AUGSA sponsor gives her opportunity to further connect with students as she guides student leaders in building a community for graduate students through programming, events and support.

As director of Guest & Convention Services, Hunter oversees campus guest rooms and aims to provide memorable, comfortable accommodations with excellent customer service and great attention to detail for those visiting the Andrews University campus. "I am guided by the concept that first impressions are everything and strive to have our guest services reflect that. We are excited about the opening of the new Advent Prayer Center that will provide accommodations in addition to our Campus Center rooms," she states. "This Center will provide a beautiful, tranquil space for our guests to enjoy a relaxing and comfortable stay on campus."

Overall, she hopes to bring a caring spirit and personal interaction to her work. She says, "My prayer, especially for our graduate students, is that they can feel connected and valued while enhancing their academics and developing their careers. I look forward to making a meaningful impact on this campus for our students and our guests."

Married to Claval Hunter, a pastor, they have three children: Chloe, Isaiah and Adam. ■

Gillian Panigot, Media Communications manager and FOCUS editor, Andrews University.