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Gerson De Leon joins Andrews faculty

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Gerson De Leon joins Andrews faculty

When Gerson De Leon was 11 years old, growing up in Guatemala, he suffered an accident which resulted in a serious injury. Several tendons, including his right Achilles tendon as well as an artery, were torn entirely due to a deep cut. The result of this accident put in question his ability to ever walk again.

Gerson underwent two surgeries, one in Guatemala and a second in Nicaragua. At that time, it was recommended that two more surgeries were needed. The Lord opened doors for Gerson to be assessed by the Pediatric Orthopedic team at the Loma Linda University Medical Center, where it was determined that no other treatment would be needed. This was a tangible answer to many prayers.

Throughout this process, Gerson wanted one thing: to run again with no visible impairment. He asked God to heal him, and God answered — providing both physical healing and spiritual healing. As a result, says Gerson, “I gave my life to God to serve Him wherever He led.”

Gerson went on to earn a B.A. in Theology from UNADECA (Universidad Adventista de Centro America) in Costa Rica, followed by a B.S. in Biology from the Universidad Adventista de las Antillas in Puerto Rico. Gerson later completed the Physical Therapy Assistant program and graduated from Loma Linda University in 2008 with a doctorate in Physical Therapy.

Gerson began working as a full-time clinician in Loma Linda and later in Ukiah, a small town in Northern California. During that time, he traveled to Andrews University for continuing education

courses. He notes, “Andrews provides an excellent CEU (continuing education unit) for physical therapists in the orthopedic area, which allowed me to obtain a top-notch CEU without having to worry about the Sabbath.”

More recently, Gerson’s wife was offered a job in the Berrien Springs, Mich., area. At the same time, a friend of the couple who was studying in the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews told Gerson about a job opening in the Physical Therapy Department on campus.

Gerson pursued the opportunity. He says, “God works mysteriously.... My wife’s job was put on hold due to COVID-19, and I was offered a position here at Andrews University. I look back and see the hand of God, leading us and directing us here.”

Gerson now works as an assistant professor and the Clinical Sciences coordinator for the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program in the School of Rehabilitation Sciences. This fall he is teaching the entry-level DPT students the PT assessment course and lab. In the spring he will teach health promotion and wellness followed by a summer course on legal and ethical issues in healthcare.

At Andrews, Gerson has especially appreciated the opportunity to pray and interact with his students, the spiritual atmosphere, and the quality colleagues with whom he works.

For Gerson, Psalms 32:8 has been a significant passage of Scripture: *I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.* Gerson has seen God’s leading — from childhood to career choice



Courtesy Andrews University

▲ Gerson De Leon

to his new role at Andrews — and wants to serve God to the best of his abilities. He says, “I am looking forward to every opportunity to share the love of Christ with our students.” ■

Gillian Panigo, Media Communications manager & FOCUS editor

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