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Adventist college in El Salvador Nears Completion



▲ Pastors, professionals and youth from Michigan and Indiana work together like family to build first El Salvador Adventist college.

YOUNG SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS IN THE COUNTRY OF EL SALVADOR WILL SOON HAVE A LOCAL OPTION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION. CURRENTLY, THOSE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING AN ADVENTIST COLLEGE MUST TRAVEL INTERNATIONALLY FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES, AT NO SMALL COST, TO REACH THE NEAREST OPTION.

For this reason, Senior Pastor Ron Kelly from Village Adventist Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan, in conjunction with members of his previous congregation in Cicero, Indiana, and Jack Cain of Reach Out Ministries have been leading a series of mission trips to build the first Adventist college in El Salvador. Accompanying them on the most recent trip were members from Stevensville and Gobles churches, plus volunteers from Pennsylvania, Kansas and Oregon.

Over spring break, 93 missionaries connected with the Village church and another 60 missionaries from the Cicero church met at the Adventist Training School of El Salvador (ECAS), the only Adventist boarding academy in El Salvador. Dan Bacchiocchi is the lead architect for the project. Yoshi Thiele, a student missionary from Village, has

served there several months to help coordinate construction.

Using ECAS as a basecamp, the missionaries are building Orley Ford Mission College adjacent to the academy. Main work projects during the most recent trip included: laying block for the septic system, painting classrooms, installing steel studding for the administration offices, pouring floors for offices, and doing flatwork for covered walkways. Volunteers also laid block to expand the existing cafeteria at ECAS and renovated a portion of the boy's dorm. Additionally, medical and dental services were offered to students on campus and those in the local community.

The group experienced an encouraging divine intervention after gathering for corporate prayer. Intercession was made for part of the

project that had already been held up for a year. Later that afternoon, after 90 people had prayed in small groups, God clearly answered with the solution. In reference to God's promise to answer prayers, Ellen White writes, "The promise is made on condition that the united prayers of the church are offered, and in answer to these prayers there may be expected a power greater than that which comes in answer to private prayer. The power given will be proportionate to the unity of the members and their love for God and for one another." (Letter 32, 1903, page 6, to Brother and Sister Farnsworth, Jan. 28, 1903).

Another interesting testimony of God's provision is the story of Joshua Harrington, an engineering student at Andrews University. He is taking one of the hardest loads this year (no generals, all his courses are engineering classes), so he was in the valley of decision over whether he should go on the mission trip or not. He determined he should go no matter what happened. Two days after he returned, he received a perfect score on two very difficult tests. These results were extraordinary and unexpected because of his limited amount of study time and the high level of difficulty of the tests. Joshua believes he did not deserve the score he received for multiple reasons. First, because he was tired from the trip and didn't get much study time. And second, the average score was only 50 percent for one of the tests, however he didn't miss a single point. God is good!

Through mission trips like this, church members, and especially the youth, are exposed to the great needs of humanity. By the grace of God, those with limited experience come home with a better understanding of what is important and have a testimony regarding the proper priorities of life. Additionally, the stories that are shared about the trip create ripple effects that spread and inspire others. ■

Robert Rice is a Bible worker at the Village church in Berrien Springs, Michigan.