

Loving Christ and helping others

Joyce's parents converted to Adventism when she was just a baby. Even though she was raised in the Adventist faith, her parents encouraged her to decide for herself what she believed. "They wanted all us kids to think for ourselves, to question everything. It made me more grounded in my faith because of it."

Sports has always been a big part of Joyce's life, but attending public school meant sacrificing Friday night and Saturday games. Though friends questioned her decision not to compete on the Sabbath, Joyce knew it was the right thing for her. "It made me ask myself each time, 'Is this what I believe?' and asking the question helped me know that it was."

Coming from a public school environment to Andrews University was a culture shock for Joyce. Her home church in Chicago is small and there aren't many young people, so to be able to fellowship here has been life changing. "I get to see people my own age loving Christ every day."

Staying involved in activities around campus is important to Joyce, who has served as an officer of the South Asian Student Association each year. But her main passion continues to be sports. She stays active with intramural football, volleyball and basketball, and loves that she doesn't have to choose between sports and the Sabbath anymore.

Joyce is currently a junior in the nursing program and after graduation plans to continue her education to become a nurse

practitioner and serve in the mission field. Shadowing a physician's assistant in high school made her interested in pursuing a career in the medical field. "You can help so many people, and my fellow nursing students have been so encouraging. All my classmates want to be nurses to help others. They really care."

With Joyce's parents putting three kids through college, receiving support from donors like L.B. & Donna J. Heller was vital to Joyce being able to attend Andrews. "I feel God wants me to be at Andrews, but like most students, without the generous financial support of others, that would not be a reality. This award is God telling me that yes, He wants me to stay at Andrews and that He will provide the way. I want to thank all of you so much for your self-sacrifice and generosity. Most importantly, I want to thank you for allowing God to use you to bless me."



Joyce Mathai, recipient of the L.B. & Donna J. Heller Endowed Scholarship

Giving back to youth in need

Growing up bouncing between Las Vegas and Los Angeles, life was often tumultuous for Darren Smith. "I had attended 14 or 15 schools by the time I was a freshman in high school," Darren says. It was during his time at a public high school in Las Vegas that a friend introduced him to Adventism. He began studying the faith and was intrigued by the idea of the Sabbath, which he'd never heard of before. When he made the decision to become a Seventh-day Adventist, his family was supportive, but many of his friends were not. "They just couldn't understand why I couldn't go out on Friday nights and do the things they were doing—partying, drinking."

When Darren graduated from high school at 16, he received a full scholarship to culinary school through the help of a Las Vegas program called the Batteries Included Youth Initiative, designed to help teens reach their full potential. When Darren graduated from culinary school a year later, he began working full-time and attending community college part-time. But the negative influences of his past were still there, and he found himself wanting to attend a school where he could be around fellow Adventist youth. After hearing about Andrews from a friend's mother who had attended, he decided to visit. In May of 2010, he applied. When he packed his bags and headed off to Canada as a colporteur that summer, he did so knowing he'd be headed to Andrews right after, though he hadn't yet been accepted. "I had faith I would be accepted to Andrews. I knew it was where I was supposed to be."

Darren, now a senior double-majoring in international business and Spanish, has become a familiar face around campus. He is an officer

in the business club (Enactus), a member of the School of Business Administration student council, an Andrews Ambassador, a member of LIFE Drama Ministries, and a deacon at New Life Fellowship. He also works three jobs to support himself through school, serving as a phonathon supervisor, a server at the cafeteria, and an usher for Student Life.

Knowing firsthand what it's like to have to work to afford school, Darren is very thankful to the donors that contribute to The Fund for Andrews, which helps support the Andrews Partnership Scholarships that are given out to students each year. "This scholarship is the only reason I'm able to be here at all," Darren says, echoing the sentiment of many of his fellow students.

After Darren graduates this May, he plans to look for a job in management, and hopes to gain the experience he needs to one day open his own business. "I want to create a safe place where kids and families can go to stay active and involved." In this way, Darren hopes to give back and help youth in much the same way he was helped.



Darren Smith, recipient of the Andrews Partnership Scholarship