

Adventist Institutions Collaborate on Fitness App

SpiritStrong combines mission stories & exercise

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The School of Distance Education & International Partnerships (SDEIP) and the Department of Public Health, Nutrition & Wellness at Andrews University are partnering with Adventist World Radio and NovoTempo to create “SpiritStrong,” an innovative app designed to promote physical and spiritual fitness. SpiritStrong is launching during the 2015 General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas.

The app has two components: exercise routines with simple step-by-step instructions and accompanying videos, and audio and video streaming of international mission stories. The app, which was originally conceived as a tool for a Cardio Development online course from the SDEIP, will be free and available for download in the Google Play Store, with an iOS version coming soon.

SpiritStrong has been developed almost entirely *gratis* by the previously named institutions, explains Janine Lim, associate dean of online higher education, and it represents an impressive collaboration across continents.

On the Andrews campus alone, development was a joint effort: exercise instructions and workouts were demonstrated by an Andrews adjunct faculty member and demonstrated by students, and Sam Villamizar, learning systems administrator for SDEIP, used NAD Adventist Learning Community equipment to record the video exercise instructions and the WAUS studio to record the audio instructions. The collaboration is representative of the University’s recent increased emphasis on wellness. “As a Seventh-day Adventist university,” says President Niels-Erik Andreasen, “Andrews University has a strong and effective history of focus on the development of the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual powers. Integrated faith with learning is a trademark of the institution.”

Lim agrees: “Andrews University, named after J.N. Andrews, the first official Adventist missionary, seemed a perfect place to lead the creation of an app that has a unique combination of health, wellness and missions.”

Last fall, Lim and her team at the SDEIP approached Novo Tempo, the South American version of the Hope Channel headquartered in Brazil. They were inspired by Novo Tempo’s web department, led by Carlos Magalhães, web director, which had been creating apps to accompany their television programming, and suggested a collaboration based on fitness corresponding to the GC Session’s emphasis on health. They then turned to Adventist World Radio, a ministry of the General Conference, to provide the audio and visual mission stories accompanying the workouts. Daryl Gungadoo, AWR distribution and network engineer, provided initial app design support. Lim notes how the SpiritStrong app represents the ability of the incredibly diverse Seventh-day Adventist Church to collaborate towards the common goal of spreading Jesus’ message of restored and vibrant life in Him.

The app also represents an emphasis on innovation and the integration of technology, education and faith that represents the future of both campus-based and distance Adventist education.

“This app is a fantastic way to combine fitness and faith while having fun, all at the same time,” says Sherine Brown-Fraser, chair of Public Health, Nutrition & Wellness at Andrews. “Who doesn’t love a good story?”

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