

**Board of General Ministries Reports:
ABCUSA/OGS and
Associated Ministry Organizations**

TREASURER'S OFFICE

Highlights of Treasurer's Office, Accounting, American Baptist Churches Information System, Building Management, Traffic, AMOs -- June 2015 – November 2015

ABCUSA

- Prepared 2016 Budget for Board approval at November meeting
- Preparing for 2015 yearend closing and Audit
- Annual insurance reviews/renewals
- Prepared and presented Analyses and Financial Statements to BGM/ABCUSA Finance Committees, BGM and BGM EC; staffed meetings
- Conferred with Regions and churches on financial and administrative issues
- Oversaw work of legal counsel in several areas
- Personnel supervision for Accounting, ABCIS, Building Management and Warehousing
- Planned changes in traffic department due to planned outsourcing of Judson services
- Ongoing ABCIS functions
- Staffed Common Budget Covenant Review Committee.
- Completed new Mission and Receipt Form and Definitions. Mailed to NLC. Mailing to all churches scheduled for November 10. Full implementation to begin January 1, 2016.
- Ongoing collecting agency responsibilities for 13 regions

AMOs (AB Historical Society, AB Women's Ministries, Ministers Council, AB Computer Center)

- Completed 2014 Audits
- Accounting functions, ongoing consultations, insurance reviews, renewals, Quarterly meetings with AMO executives re: financial and operational matters

588 ASSOCIATES

- Preparing for 2015 Audits
- 2015 Tax Returns; accounting functions; leasing and building management; insurance reviews/renewals
- 588 Associates Annual Meeting with 588 Board, and real estate consultants/advisors
- Held Joint Staff Council Meeting to review mission center disposition plans and relocation timeline.
- Participated in planning and hosting of Real Estate Council face to face meeting.
- Supervision of building administrative staff and day-to-day operations
- Worked with 588 legal counsel negotiating to rescind property tax.

-- Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary for Finance/CFO/Treasurer

ECUMENICAL RELATIONS

Since we met in June, there have been several major ecumenical/interfaith events.

- 1) Over the Labor Day weekend, Rev. Medley was honored for his contribution to interfaith understanding by the Islamic Society of North America at its annual convention in Chicago. Rev. Medley was struck by the amount of energy and effort the conference put into speaking against ISIS/ISIL and their recruitment of young Muslims.
- 2) Representatives attended a gathering in DC sponsored by Telos, the group which has helped us organize the ABC/COB visits to the Holy Land. During the meeting, they met with Congressmen and Senators to discuss the issues surrounding Israel and Palestinians.
- 3) The Baptist World Alliance asked GS Medley to serve as their fraternal representative to the 14th Ordinary Synod of Roman Catholic Bishops to discuss the Mission and Vocation of the Family in the Church and the World. Rev. Medley was one of 5 Protestant fraternal delegates in attendance. He, along with the others, participated in the small group discussions around a proposed document and on Friday of the second week was given an opportunity along with the other fraternal delegates to address the assembly of bishops.
- 4) In July, Dr. Rob Sellers of CBF and Rev. Medley met at the BWA gathering and worked to refine a proposal for a third national dialogue between Baptists and Muslims in the US. The refined proposal is now being reviewed by the participating bodies.
- 5) Several ABC delegates attended the BWA Congress and meetings in Durban. There was an ABWM mission experience tour that included meetings with local Baptists, visit to Soweto, attendance at the BWA Women's Department Leadership Conference in Johannesburg and the BWA in Durban. June Totten, Virginia Holmstrom and Pat Hernandez participated, and also connected with Israeli Palestinian friends from the seminary in Nazareth.
- 6) Dr. Ernest Jones continues to represent us on Shoulder to Shoulder. Shoulder to Shoulder has served as a vehicle for Christians, Jews and Muslims to speak out against a number of actions in the past period of time including anti-Muslim campaign rhetoric, legislation that would have pinpointed resettlement and help to only Christian refugees from Syria, and the ongoing violence created by ISIS against Christians and others.
- 7) Rev. Wesley Brown is our representative to Churches for Middle East Peace which has been monitoring the most recent escalation of violence between Israelis and Palestinians. It describes itself as "the only ecumenical peacemaking organization concentrating on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that engages directly in advocacy and education with the U.S. Congress. The CMEP board and staff communicate with Senate and House offices on a regular basis to further the policy positions of the CMEP coalition, particularly a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict, where Israel and Palestine would live side-by-side within secure and recognized borders. CMEP's Washington office works together with church leaders, clergy and

advocates around the country to amplify our message of support for constructive U.S. policies conducive to Middle East peace.”

- 8) Dr. June Totten who chairs CCU/IR, represents ABC on the Central Committee of the WCC and with Christian Churches Together.
- 9) Rev. Medley represents us on the board of the National Council of Churches where he serves as chair.
- 10) Rev. Medley met with Kachin leaders at the Mission Center in September.
- 11) Invited Jim Winkler, President of NCC, to speak at the ABC Ministers Council lunch meeting in October.
- 12) Rev. Medley plans to represent ABC at a symposium on racism, sponsored by Progressive National Baptists, in Charleston SC in December.
- 13) ABC delegates plan to attend the NCC Faith & Order Theological Dialogue in Chicago in December.

--A. Roy Medley, General Secretary/Ecumenical Officer



OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT

Department of Development Office (DOD) Skeletal Report: January 1, to October 16, 2015

Summary Highlights: \$231,319 Raised in Pledges and Gifts from 83 Donors (low \$10 – high \$150,000).

Responsibilities: Individual Prospect Identification/Research/Development/Cultivation/Solicitation; Development Advisory Team Resourcing; *Transformed by the Spirit*; General Secretary's Circle; Enhancement of Plan Giving Opportunities; Department/Office Administration; and other duties as assigned.

General Highlights & Action Steps

- Funds Raised (excludes Targeted 2015 Biennial Items shown below) \$231,319
 - *Transformed by the Spirit (TbyS)* \$84,550
 - ABCUSA Targeted Giving & BGM Gifts \$ 1,300
 - ABWIM \$71,710
 - Peace and Interfaith Initiatives \$50,050
 - General Secretary's Circles \$ 6,649
 - General Secretary's Endowment \$ 6,100
 - Biennial Summit Support \$10,645
 - MRD & Other \$ 315
- Biennial Exhibitors, Ads, Booths, Boosters (\$34,923 above '13) \$133,764
- Including Above Biennial Line Item Revenue \$365,083
- Serve with General Secretary & DAT on cultivation & solicitation visits with top individual prospects;
- Research/ Review/Evaluate Top Ten & Twenty Individual Prospects (\$10k+ Ability);
- Research/Review/Evaluate Foundations, Vendors & Corporate Prospects;

- Conduct Introductory/Cultivation/Solicitation/Moves Management Visits/Events (157);
- Cultivate & Visits/Events (10 States) – CA, IL, KS, OH, IN, PA, NJ, NY, WV, VA;
- Plan/Implement 2nd ABCUSA Giving Tuesday Fund-drive (December 1, 2015);
- Produce Timely Year-End Donor Letters of Recognition/Thanks/Follow-up;
- Submit 2016 ABCUSA/OGS/DOD Budget with Fundraising Goals;
- Attend various ABCUSA, Partner and Affiliate meetings (ABF, McKee, etc.);
- Continue to review internal controls, checks & balances with support from Treasure's Office;
- Facilitate two Development Advisory Team Meetings (Strategy, Logistics, Assignments, etc.);
- Facilitate plans to ID/Select/Recruit 3-5 New Development Advisory Team (DAT) members;
- Plan and Conduct ABCUSA Year-end Pledge Drive (November – December);
- Coordinate General Secretary's Circle of Friends Breakfast (June 27, 2015);
- Facilitate Presentation of proposed Corporate Owned Life Insurance (COLI) plans;
- Provide ABWIM Leadership with proposed action steps to launch 2016 Annual Appeal;
- Continue development of sundry strategic fundraising operational plans and procedures; and
- Refine Naming Opportunities (GS Circles & Mission Center).

--Kenneth C. Marsenburg, Director of Development & Evon Moody, Assistant to the Director

OFFICE OF REGIONAL MINISTRIES (Activity from June - November of 2015)

Marilyn Tyson and I continue to appreciate the opportunity to serve our regions and congregations of ABCUSA. I have listed below the highlights of our activity for the latter half of 2015.

Mission Summit 2015: 85 facilitators engaged people in dialogue at the 2015 Mission Summit Conversations. The evaluation results revealed that 91% indicated that the conversations met or exceeded their expectations. A major development for 2015 was the addition of an interactive ABC Message Board with information about all 21 topics. Three-fourths of the respondents were aware of the Message Board and 1/3 engaged it prior to attending. While this newly developed resource proved extremely helpful in providing information about the topics pre-Summit, the site has not generated the desired activity following the Summit. People appreciate the conversations, shift perspectives as a result of the dialogue, gather new insights to take back home, but seldom engage in further conversation online once they have occurred. A complete formal evaluation of the 2015 Mission Summit is available upon request.

Mission Summit 2017: After the first two seasons of Mission Summit Conversations, people seem to have grasped the concept of the conversations. Several persons have commented that these conversations have helped to bring us back to our grassroots DNA as Baptists. I suggest that the conversations be repeated, but offer the participants three different options. One room might be dedicated to brand new topics and be formatted similarly to Seasons One and Two. Several breakout rooms might be dedicated to several of the ongoing conversations, perhaps with a brief update of what has taken place in that conversation thus far. Thirdly, we might offer one or more large rooms

dedicated to a broad topic such as violence or congregational change with specific tables designed to address various nuances of the topic.

Mission Table 2015: The Mission Table planning team of Virginia Holmstrom, Perry Hopper, Kenneth Kho, and Marcia Patton have met several times and produced an excellent workbook for the upcoming event. Participants will be asked to narrow the list of Mission Table topics to a priority set of 5-7 and the hope is to produce a “case statement” for each priority detailing the importance of engaging in each priority. The final session, led by worship leader Zina Jacque, will include a commissioning service for everyone to commit to championing a particular priority. The expectation for the coming Biennium is that every ABC entity will embrace at least one priority, but no organization is expected to embrace them all.

Search Committee Work: It has been a joy to provide individual orientations for our newest executive ministers, the Rev. Dr. Cheryl Dudley (ABC of Metro New York), the Rev. Dr. James Harrison (ABC of the South) and the Rev. Mary Miller (ABC of Massachusetts). I am also happy to report that ABC of the Great Rivers and ABC of Ohio are in the final stages of their search processes. A group orientation for our newest executive ministers will take place immediately preceding the BGM. Nearly one-third of the executive ministers are new to the REMC in the last four years.

Other Region Consultations: I have also held consultations recently with the Dakotas, Great Rivers, Indiana/Kentucky, and the metropolitan executives.

--C. Jeff Woods, Associate General Secretary for Regional Ministries and Marilyn K. Tyson, Administrative Assistant.

MISSION RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (MRD)

Staff: Leo S. Thorne, associate general secretary; Bridget Lipin, assistant director of communications/web manager; Tina Turner, executive assistant to Associate General Secretary. Ministry responsibilities include United Mission; Communication; Stewardship; Biennial Mission Summit; Representing ABCUSA at Various National and International Meetings and Ecumenical Gatherings and on Several Boards; Preaching and Visiting Local Churches and Regions.

Some major highlights include the following:

- Providing staff leadership for ABCUSA’s UM AD group to address the decline of United Mission and UM promotion, and working closely with team of BGM members and Regional Executive Ministers to develop materials used in a Fall 2015 pilot program in three ABC regions.
- Reviewing RFPs with Discernment Team to distribute unsolicited funds given by a generous donor in the Matthew 25 grant program; fall cycle included 71 grants funded and \$169,000 total grant funding.
- Maintaining communication effectiveness and ABCUSA branding through: timely press releases; video preparations and photography; website maintenance with content and user-friendliness; publication of Enewsletters and *Connections*; attendance at communication workshops and professional conferences; team support for communication about *Transformed by the Spirit* initiative and several other areas of ABC life.
- Organizing and producing the 2016-2017 ABC Directory/Planning Calendar, published online in October 2015.

- Releasing *Connecting*, an 8-page publication aimed at telling American Baptist Local Churches how they are connected across the larger denomination, Associated Ministry Organizations, regions, other local churches, and ecumenical and interfaith organizations.
- Working with national Biennial Mission Summit Planning Team and ABCUSA partners to evaluate the 2015 event, and begin the early stages of planning and coordinating for the 2017 event, while providing critical staff support to undergird the event.
- Engaging in numerous preaching opportunities and other ministry activities in ABC regions and churches as relationship building activities to strengthen churches' giving to UM.
- Serving on several boards, including Bacone College, Baptists Today, and the American Baptist Assembly, as a way of enhancing ABCUSA's connection with a wide constituency. This connection also includes continuing service in ecumenical settings and on committees related to the Baptist World Alliance and the U.S. State Department's religious Freedom Task Force.
- Working with deployed stewardship staff to encourage generous discipleship in ABC through an October 2015 webinar, Stewardship Sunday materials, seminars, Genero\$ity Enewsletter, and content for the ABCUSA website.

-Bridget Lipin, Assistant Director of Communications/Web Manager, Mission Resource Development

AMERICAN BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1. *"At Your Fingertips" fund-raising campaign.* The Board of Directors voted last year to move forward with "At Your Fingertips," a campaign to raise \$550,000 to provide greater digital access to the Society's collections. Funds will be used to create a new position, Digital Asset Archivist. Working collaboratively with the ABHS staff and web designer, Mercer University Libraries staff, Mercer University IT staff, and ABC-USA partners, the Digital Asset Archivist will develop processes to ensure the availability of digital assets that chronicle Baptist history. To date we have received \$220,000.

2. *Implementation of ArchivesSpace.* In collaboration with Mercer Libraries, ABHS has implemented ArchivesSpace, open-source software for managing, and providing access to archives, manuscripts, and digital objects. Information on 358 manuscript collections have been added, with description underway for the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Correspondence collection (approximately 3500 missionaries). The prototype is now accessible at <http://libraries.mercer.edu/archivesSpace>.

3. *National Film Preservation Grant.* This year ABHS received an \$8,000 grant to preserve a silent color film produced by the Northern Baptist Convention (now ABC), *Crow Indians on the Jesus Trail* (1940s). ABHS has restored both this silent film and another film about the Lodge Grass Crow, *Song of the Shining Mountain*. These films are now available for purchase from ABHS.

4. *American Baptist Quarterly.* Working with ATLA (American Theological Library Association), back issues have been scanned and made available by subscription through the ATLA. Current journals are also being sent to ATLA so that each can be added to the searchable database. The most recent issues published are a sesquicentennial issue on West Virginia Baptists and one on Baptists and Culture. This means that in the past year we have moved from being two years behind our publication schedule to just one year behind, with a goal of catching up in the next year.

5. *ABC Biennial Programing.* ABHS provided a pre-biennial workshop on doing local church history, developed at the request of Host Nation leaders and leaders of the Asian Caucus. Included were

representatives from the Inter-Caucus, with all parties planning to adapt this program for their local use. Also we launched our campaign, At Your Fingertips, at a program that featured a lecture about Isabel Crawford, home missionary to the Kiowa. The speaker, Marilyn Whiteley, had used Crawford letters, journals, and scrapbooks at ABHS to publish *The Life of Isabel Crawford: More Than I Asked For*.

6. *Outreach to Churches, Regions & Individuals.* In addition to the regular requests for church anniversary certificates (totaling 72 this year, so far), three regions have requested special help. The ABC region named Growing Healthy Churches (northern California) has asked for help in storing its historical records and ABC of Nebraska and ABC of Puerto Rico have asked for assistance in researching their histories. Staff also have fielded equestions from local church historians. Additionally ABHS Archivist Jan Ballard this month visited Bacone College to speak in classes, chapel, and a public program. Conversations about contribution of personal papers to ABHS have occurred this year with many individuals, including Tony Campolo, Paul & Florence Nagano, and the family of Edwin Tuller.

7. *Major Partners.* Collaborative projects with major partners have included the following:

- Research for Congolese Baptists and the ABC Board of International Ministries (BIM),
- Outreach to AB Home Mission Society (ABHMS) and the makers of a new film, *Act of Faith*, on their missionary, Rev. Emery Andrews, in order to honor this new communication piece,
- Planning with staff from ABC-USA, ABHMS, BIM, and ABW during a three day survey of historical records in the Valley Forge Mission Center (October 21-23)

--Deborah Van Broekhoven, Executive Director

AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN IN MINISTRY & TRANSITION MINISTRIES

ABWIM

Vision: ABWIM seeks the full participation and full partnership of men and women in ministry in which both women and men are able to fully utilize their God-given gifts and fully live out their God-given call.

Some Highlights:

- Participated in a “Think Tank” group to develop a national mentoring model for women of color in ministry
- Planned and participated in the second Women of Color in Ministry national conference
- Continue to partner with AB Women’s Ministries on “Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges,” a project funded by a Palmer Grant. Plans continue to develop for a 2016 return trip to the Republic of Georgia

- Partnered with Virginia Holmstrom (ABWM) and Metro Chicago regional staff for a follow-up event of a new paradigm gathering in ABC Metro Chicago, “Sisters in Service”
- Participated in Women’s Leadership Conference of Baptist World Alliance
- Presented doctoral work exploring the practices that create access for women seeking to fulfill calls to senior or solo ministry positions
- Stoles with the ABWIM logo have been produced as a fundraiser

Transition Ministries

The goal of Transition Ministries ABCUSA is to partner with regions in resourcing churches during times of transition in a way which enhances their ministry and empowers them to journey into the future as vibrant missional congregations.

Our mission is to provide intentional interim ministers who are adept and experienced in leading churches through transitions. These interim pastors guide the congregation on a journey which involves celebrating their history, clarifying their identity, articulating their mission, and moving into a fruitful future.

As this ministry resource continues to develop from what was formerly Interim Ministries, we have had over 30 new assignments. All of the current cadre of assigned interims are interims who have been newly assigned through Transition Ministries. As the program grows, we continue to partner with regions and resource churches as we provide leadership for changing times. To that end, plans are underway to partner with ABC-NYS and ABCOPAD (American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware) for interim ministry training events.

In such times unique resources are needed. **Transition Ministries ABCUSA** serves as the hands and feet of Christ, connecting with regions and congregations in ways that move mission and ministry forward.

In both of these ministry resource areas –ABWIM and Transition Ministries—I am thankful for the Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley, the ABCUSA Leadership Team, the ABWIM Advisory Team and the Board of General Ministries—without whom none of this could happen. Thank-you!

--Patricia P. Hernandez, National Director ABWIM and Transition Ministries

AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN’S MINISTRIES



Accomplishments:

- Worked with Metro Chicago region leaders and ABWIM to continue an experiment that is gaining excitement and traction, in which lay and clergy women gather for a one-day event to

worship God and nurture relationship with one another through the sharing of their stories. The second retreat happened on October 24, at Northshore Baptist Church.

- ABWM sponsored a mission encounter to South Africa in July 2015. Twelve American Baptist women traveled together, getting acquainted with South African Baptist women at Kisago Baptist Church in Johannesburg, and participating in the BWA Women's Leadership Conference in Johannesburg to build relationships with Baptist women worldwide. Ten opted to stay for the BWA Congress in Durban.
- The National Leadership Team of AB GIRLS sponsored a Girls Leadership Academy in Overland Park, concurrent with the Biennial Mission Summit program. The young participants were delighted to have a voice at the mission summit table discussions, and they want to do it again.

Major projects:

- Through ABWM's partnership with the ABC Immigration Task Group, ABWM will sponsor a women's immigration immersion experience at the Mexico/U.S. border in early 2016. ABC missionary Ray Schellinger will host the learning experience that will include conversations with persons who were deported from the U.S. and persons seeking refuge in the U.S. The group of 14 women and girls will also meet with the residents at Deborah's House where they will be housed during their stay in Mexico.
- Our 2016 national conferences for girls and women, including components designed for young adult women, will be held in July 2016, at Hilton Washington Dulles hotel. Optional after-events will feature seminars on leadership, hunger/advocacy, and Baptist-Muslim dialog experiences.
- We're empowering ministries with young adult women. We've formed an advisory team of young women, led by a young nationally-elected coordinator. This Young Adult Women's Ministries Advisory Team (YAWMAT) of six women in their 20s is working with ABWM's leaders to foster a culture shift that will empower young adult women to access leadership training, mentoring, and a voice at decision-making tables throughout the organization.

--Virginia R. Holmstrom, Executive Director

MINISTERS COUNCIL

Report of the Ministers Council

November 2015

Initiatives

1) Program Development - 7R's of Sanctuary

- a) The first cohort of the 7R's of Sanctuary, a program funded through a grant from the Imago Dei Foundation, began in September.
- b) Eight participants convened at the Bethany House of Prayer in Arlington, MA from Sept 28-30.
- c) Research has begun to document and articulate how the intentional practice of stepping away from one's leadership context for spiritual practice is a means of increasing effectiveness in leadership while realizing greater spiritual well-being.
- d) A second cohort will convene in Spring 2016.

- e) Grants are being submitted in December to seek additional funds for program expansion.
- 2) Governance / Organization
- a) Development Council
 - i) As part of the Ministers Council restructuring in 2015, a Development Council is being established and made operational.
 - ii) The Development Council is charged with helping the Ministers Council develop it's development and marketing strategy.
 - iii) Three individuals are being approached and invited, which will increase the Development Council to five individuals. Members can be lay persons or clergy.
 - b) Regional Outreach
 - i) Intentional efforts were made to reach out to new Executive Ministers to re-establish Ministers Council chapters in areas where chapters were defunct or struggling.
 - ii) Conversations have and are happening in Metro New York, DC, the Dakotas, Los Angeles, New Jersey, and Indiana.
- 3) Partnerships
- a) Invited to provide leadership to present the 2016 Ministers Conference.
 - i) Invited partner collaboration - BGM/OGS, ABHMS, IM, MMBB
 - ii) Date set for August 22-26, 2016.
 - iii) Location being sought - looking for east coast locale given the 2017 Mission Summit.
 - b) ABHMS
 - i) Ministers Council hosted a Prayer Room during the Space4Grace event host by ABHMS.
 - ii) Conducted a Judson Press Webinar in October. A second webinar is being planned for spring 2016.
 - c) ABWIM
 - i) Secured Margaret Benefiel, Executive Director of the Shalem Institute, to lead ABWIM After Event for July 2016.
 - ii) Will co-lead ABWIM After Event in July 2016.
 - d) Pastoral Excellence Network
 - i) Presenter and facilitator at the *Peer Power* retreat program – October 21 in Techny, IL.
 - ii) Will present and facilitator at the Peer Power retreat program - January, 2016.
 - iii) Webinar presenter - November 19, 2016.
 - e) Seminary Connections
 - i) ABSW
 - Will teach the intensive January 2016 session for ABSW / Graduate Theological Union's DMin program in Womanist Studies.
 - Course will be on Transformational Leadership.
 - ii) Gordon Conwell, Boston Campus

Have been invited to help identify a cohort to participate in the new Th. M. / DMin program in Leadership. Members of the Ministers Council would receive 25% scholarship support

Will teach courses in Adaptive leadership, and Topics in Leadership.

iii) Virginia Union

Invited to present *Spiritual Practices for Effective Leadership* in a lecture.

Will have the opportunity promote the Ministers Council to AB seminarians

4) Cutting Edge

- a) Have been asked to co-lead strategic planning engagement for the Shalem Institute
 - i) Opportunity to refine strategic planning as a programmatic offering from the Ministers Council.
 - ii) Led retreat for local church in October as a foundation for strategic planning.
- b) Presenting to the Washington DC Presbytery in March 2016.
- c) Recommended three American Baptist leaders to participate in the 2016 cohort of the Christian Leadership Institute sponsored by Shalom Hartman / American Jewish Committee.

5) Upcoming Events

- a) Mission Table - November 9-11, 2015
- b) ABSW Winter Intensive - January 18 - 23, 2016
- c) Pastoral Excellence Network - Peer Power - January 27, 2016
- d) Virginia Union Presentation - March 4, 2016
- e) Shalem Institute Strategic Planning - March 11-13, 2016
- f) Washington DC Presbytery Presentation - March 14-15, 2016
- g) Conference of Baptist Ministers Presentation - April 2, 2016
- h) National Leadership Committee - April 4-7, 2016

--Debora Jackson, Executive Director

RAINBOW ACRES

Rainbow Acres an Associated Ministry Organization has had an exciting summer; developing new relationships with the Independent Educational Consultants Association. Nearly 40 Consultant have visited the Ranch with an eye to placing their clients with Special Needs at Rainbow. We have had positive reviews from those visits.

Since our last report, we have welcomed four new Ranchers to Rainbow Acres: Rosalie and John, brother and sister (73 & 70) respectively; Katie in her late 20's and Tiffany in her early 20's. Their excitement about moving to Rainbow Acres has been thrilling to witness. Katie and Tiffany have settled in and quickly began to find their niche. The current Ranchers extended grace, hospitality and a warm welcome.

At our Fall Flu immunization clinic, Rancher participation was 100%.

On Family and Friends Weekend, we dedicated Oikos House that was underwritten by American Baptist Churches of Los Angeles, Southwest and Hawaii! Mr. Steve Simon and Dr. William Thurmond and Rev Andy Quint of First Baptist Church of Santa Ana represented the region in a powerful way. Pastor Pedro Martinez provided exquisite cabinetry for the house. We extend our heartfelt Thanks to ABCOFLASH for their commitment and faithfulness to Oikos House.

With the passing of Halloween, the Ranchers excitement and anticipation are turning toward Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays! We will be preparing a Special Christmas event for the Ranchers who have no family to visit over the Holiday.

Please accept our heartfelt thanks for the faithful and generous support of our American Baptist Family in 2015. We extend our best wishes for joy filled Christmas and blessed New Year.

--Gary W. Wagner, President and CEO

CHIN BAPTIST CHURCHES USA [CBCUSA]

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Report of the CBCUSA

The CBCUSA has 95 churches in 26 states. In order to carry more effective ministry, the CBCUSA is divided into five areas as follows:

- 1) Eastern Area: 22 churches
- 2) Central Area: 16 churches
- 3) Western Area: 23 churches
- 4) Southern Area: 22 churches
- 5) Mid America Chin Christian Fellowship: 14 churches

We have selected a volunteer secretary for each area. Each area will form an area committee that will lead and perform their own activities in their areas.

The First Consultation of the CBCUSA

It was held at Indiana Chin Baptist Church in Indianapolis, Indiana on October 7- 9, 2015. Almost one hundred Chin pastors and deacons attended and discussed about our current and future ministry and leadership of the CBCUSA. We had very good time together for two days and two evenings.

Mission

Our foreign mission in Southern Chin State and Sagaing State is going well under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. 76 local missionaries are working among our fellow Chins. Many Chins in our mission fields are suffering natural disaster caused by Komen Cyclone in July 2015. Many families lost their homes. They seriously need prayers from friends far and near.

Chin Relief and Rebuilding Program

Natural disaster by Komen Cyclone affected the Chins in Chin State and Sagaing Division and Magwe Division. 3,842 houses were damaged. Hakha, the capital of Chin State was devastated by landslides and flooding from Rung Mount. Six churches were damaged. More than 7000 Chins became homeless in the town of Hakha alone and live in the shelters. Many villages and thousand acres of paddy fields were damaged by flood. Thousands of Chin will be starving in 2016.

The main roads from Hakha to the Burmese towns are damaged for three months. Because of lack of transportation, there is shortage of food and daily needs in towns and villages. It is the culture of the Chins that every man is responsible for his family for living home and daily need of food. Chin women do not need to work hard in the Chinland for their families and just take care of their children and home. It is very hard for the Chin men to see the Chin women and children who are suffering without homes and food.

The CBCUSA has formed Chin Relief and Rebuilding Committee [CRRC] for three years. We are raising fund for relief and rebuilding the Chinland. Our CBCUSA churches are involved in contribution to those who are in need. We raised about \$500,000.00 and sent to those who are affected in the whole Chinland. We are preparing for raising fund for 2016. Our fellow Chins in Myanmar seriously need your prayers.

We have “goandfund” electronic funding program, and everyone who wants to pray for the Chins can visit www.cbcsusanews.blogspot.com and donate for those who are crying for help with tears. You can see photos of damaged towns and villages in the Chinland.

Current Political Situation in Myanmar

Only eight armed groups signed Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement [NCA]. There is still fighting between the Burmese government armies and other armed groups even when they were talking about ceasefire agreement. The government is planning to hold elections on November 8, 2015. Many Chins in the abroad are waiting to see the result of the coming elections. The CBCUSA is praying to God for peace and freedom in Myanmar.

God’s Plan for the Chins

Since God is omniscient, He knows everything in heaven and earth. He knows the current disaster in the Chins ahead. This is why many Chins are sent to the USA and other rich countries to help support to our fellow Chins in Myanmar. The CBCUSA is formed by God to help the whole Chins who are suffering in Myanmar. We are sharing whatever we got with the Chins in all townships in Myanmar.

We trust in God for everything that we need.

--C. Duh Kam, Executive Minister

THE KAREN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE USA

KBCUSA has 91 member churches with 2,570 members.

A. Current Leadership:

- Chairperson: Rev. Hsa Moo
- Vice-Chairperson: Rev. Htee Hgay
- Executive Secretary: Rev. Saw Ler Htoo • Associate Executive Secretary: Rev. Ler Mu Martin • Treasurer: Saw Winner . Director of Women's Department: Thramu Maylary Htoo • Director of Youth Department Thra Plaw Hsoe Thaw • Director of Minister Rev. Livingstone Zan • Director of Christian Education Rev. Debora • Director of Evangelism and Mission Rev. Lincoln

B. Regions

The KBCUSA has seven regions.

1. West Coast
2. East Coast North
3. East Coast South
4. Central North
5. Central South
6. Midwest North
7. Midwest South

C. KBCUSA Conference and Training in 2015 • Youth Conference was on June 18-20, 2015 in Amarillo, Texas • KBCUSA's Annual Meeting was held on July 23-25, 2015 in Buffalo, New York • Women's Leadership Training on June 11-13, 2015 in Lincoln, Nebraska • Ministers' Conference on September 24-26, 2015 in Oakland, California • Church School Teacher's Training on August 6-8, 2015 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

D. Affiliation

KBCUSA is an AMOs of American Baptist Churches USA.

E. Partnerships

- American Baptist Churches USA
- Global Karen Baptist Fellowship
- Karen Baptist Convention
- Kawthoolei Karen Baptist Churches
- Thailand Karen Baptist Convention
- . Myanmar Baptist Convention

F. Advocacy

KBCUSA actively works for advocacy on newcomer immigrants originally from Burma who are resettled in the United States. Working for peace and justice, religious freedom .

We thank God for allowing us to do mission work in the United States, strongly partnership with the American Baptist Churches USA. We really appreciate the ABC churches for supporting us in many ways to carry the cross of Jesus Christ.

--Saw Ler Htoo, Executive Secretary, KBCUSA