

**Congratulations  
December 2015  
Graduates!**

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**Meet Our New Faculty Member  
Nivischi Edwards**

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**TEACHER CANDIDATES:**

They Do Make a Difference

By Krystal Bishop, Ed.D.



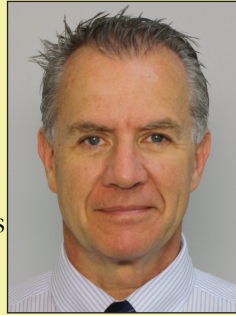
**Education majors Amy Flores, Bianca Labrador, and Shaina Vargas Da Silva**

I graduated from the Teacher Education Program (TEP) at Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University) in 1975. I returned in 1996 as a faculty member. There are not many similarities between my preparation and the preparation of teacher candidates today. This article will focus on one of the outstanding differences—field experiences. My field experiences were limited to a few classroom visits to schools in metro Chattanooga and an eight-week student teaching placement in one school.

*(Continued on page 3)*

# From the Dean's Desk

Have you been to Southern's campus in the fall? It really is spectacular. Colorful foliage makes a gorgeous setting, but having our building full of students is what truly makes it come alive! Thanks to recent renovations, our classrooms, computer lab, and conference rooms have served both our students and those from other departments whose classes meet in our building.



**John  
McCoy, Ed.D.**

One of our crown jewels is the Teaching Materials Center (TMC). This unique space holds numerous items available for check out, and functions as a workroom, with everything from lamination to color printing and Ellison die cuts. Highly valued by our own faculty and students, the TMC also serves the community-at-large. Both public and private school teachers as well as homeschooling parents visit the TMC to take advantage of its many resources. Last but not least, it boasts what we think is the best view on campus from a bank of floor-to-ceiling windows that overlook the campus and surrounding mountains. Stop by sometime to work, play, or just enjoy the view.

In this edition of *Unraveled*, we're also happy to highlight our newest professor, Nivischi Edwards, Ph.D. who joined the faculty of our MS Counseling program this fall. Professor Edwards comes to us from Japan, having worked as a private contractor with the U.S. Department of Defense. We feel fortunate to have coaxed her into coming stateside and joining our team.

# "I Am the Way" Statue



For the faculty and staff of the School of Education and Psychology, Summerour Hall is a second home. As renovations began, we wanted to mark our commitment to leading students to Christ and preparing them to serve others in their chosen field. It was from this desire that the "I Am the Way" statue was born.

A statue was commissioned of a student reading the Bible and pausing to contemplate John 14:6, which says "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life'" Jesus is seated alongside the student on a bench near the main entrance of Summerour Hall.

The student, distracted by her personal struggles, searches for answers, then realizes that Jesus is at her side saying, "I am the way." Because this message applies to us all, room was left on the bench for others to sit with Christ at their side.

It is our prayer that all who enter Summerour Hall will experience Christ's love in every classroom, hallway, and office. By echoing the truth that He is the Way, we endeavor to help each student find fulfillment: academic, professional, emotional, and spiritual.

- John McCoy, Ed.D.

**UNRAVELED**

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# Education Preparation

## Practical Teaching Experience

(Continued from page 1)

Today teacher candidates spend hundreds of hours in classrooms prior to 16 weeks of student teaching. Every EDUC course offers opportunities for candidates to be in classrooms. These field experiences have become a hallmark of the quality preparation teacher candidates receive at Southern Adventist University.

Before acceptance into the TEP elementary education candidates observe in numerous classrooms, interview teachers, present author studies, and work with small groups to lead children into a relationship with Jesus. As they continue building their pedagogical repertoire they collaborate to teach writing in multigrade classrooms, tutor students who struggle with reading, and implement literacy and math strategies in small-group instruction. These experiences culminate in a three-week immersion experience in the junior year. Secondary education candidates have similar experiences with observations, interviews, and teaching experiences in the content areas.

We are frequently reminded that the most critical preparation for teaching happens in the classrooms of our partner schools. Teacher candidates express appreciation for the opportunity to interact with teachers and students in actual classrooms. But what about the teachers and administrators in our partner schools? How do they feel about having teacher candidates? What is the impact? I interviewed several administrators and teachers, hoping their responses will affirm those who have completed our programs.

Teachers and administrators alike shared that one of the greatest benefits to teachers and students is having an extra set (or two) of eyes, ears, and hands. This allows for more differentiation of instruction. But are there additional benefits to cooperating teachers and students? Callie Stewart, vice-principal at Apison Elementary, acknowledges the impact of early field experiences but added: “When student teachers are in the classroom there is an additional level of expertise. Cooperating teachers collaborate with student teachers to craft instruction based on assessment data. The longer exposure has a positive impact on teaching and learning.”

Kelly Klein, a third-grade teacher at A. W. Spalding, hosts junior elementary candidates for three weeks

every spring. She expressed an appreciation for being exposed to fresh pedagogical strategies. Shirley Zanes, principal and teacher at Misty Meadows, likened this to “feeling like I become reconverted to education and teaching. It is refreshing. I am invigorated as I see current practice from candidates who are learning it right now.” Like other teachers in our partner schools, she shared that she often incorporates the ideas into her own repertoire. Teaching is transformed as cooperating teachers are exposed to evidence-based and creative teaching on an ongoing basis. “The involvement of teacher candidates helps teachers stay focused on what really matters” said Zanes.

Nikkia Hampton, principal and teacher at Avondale SDA School shared that she appreciates the opportunity to watch her students as candidates are teaching. She is able to see what strategies engage and inspire her students, giving her a better sense of ways she can engage them during her own instruction. “I like having the privilege to model my teaching as well as being able to see my students so engaged while the candidates are teaching. I love it.” She continues: “I feel that coaching teacher candidates reinforces the idea that teachers must always be purposeful and intentional. Coaching is an additional form of professional development.”

Zanes expressed that the greatest impact of field experiences does not even relate to the content and pedagogical strategies. “Few of my students talked about careers or college but with Southern Adventist University candidates coming on a regular basis the kids are looking at college themselves. They now have a bigger world view.” Hampton shared a similar insight. “The kids in our school are excited to spend time with young people who are in college, who have made a commitment to continuing their education. This is so important to our kids. And our kids are especially drawn to the young male candidates who come. The male role model is so important.”

Ron Hughes, principal at Apison Elementary, summarized the interview with a concluding observation. “The dispositions demonstrated by candidates from your faith-based program are key. The way candidates live their lives and demonstrate their spirit of devotion adds remarkably to the value of our partnership with Southern Adventist University.”

**“The way candidates live their lives and demonstrate their spirit of devotion adds remarkably to the value of our partnership with Southern Adventist University.”**

# School of Education and Psychology

## December 2015 Graduates



**Name:** Ronald Arroyo-Watson  
**Major:** M.S. Instructional Leadership  
**Hometown:** Williamston, SC



**Name:** Clayton Belgrave  
**Major:** M.S. Clinical Mental Health Counseling  
**Hometown:** Stoughton, MA



**Name:** Teresa Bennett  
**Major:** M.S. Ed. Outdoor Education  
**Hometown:** Sunrise, FL  
**Future Plans:** Teach for the Lord using His nature.



**Name:** Angela Boothby  
**Major:** M.S. Outdoor Teacher Education  
**Hometown:** Gobles, MI



**Name:** Diana Clemons  
**Major:** M.S. Literacy Education  
**Hometown:** Avon Park, FL



**Name:** Diego Constante  
**Major:** PE Secondary Education  
**Hometown:** Calhoun, GA  
**Future Plans:** To find a job in my field.



**Name:** Dorlin Duran  
**Major:** M.S. Clinical Mental Health Counseling  
**Hometown:** Woodside, NY  
**Future Plans:** Get married and pursue a Doctoral degree.



**Name:** Andrew Lechler  
**Major:** Liberal Arts-Education  
**Hometown:** Apison, TN



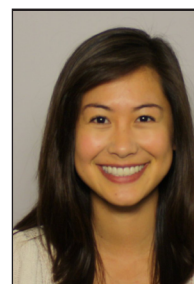
**Name:** Monic Lindsey  
**Major:** Liberal Arts Education  
**Hometown:** North Chicago, IL



**Name:** Ricardo Lowe  
**Major:** Psychology, Industrial/Organizational  
**Hometown:** Bermuda  
**Future Plans:** Go on to graduate school and work in a human resources center.



**Name:** Adele Marsh  
**Major:** Liberal Arts  
**Hometown:** Wausau, WI  
**Future Plans:** To teach grades 3-6 at Green Bay Adventist Junior Academy.



**Name:** Erin Messinger  
**Major:** Liberal Arts  
**Hometown:** Portland, OR  
**Future Plans:** To teach!



**Name:** Cheyenne Meyerpeter  
**Major:** Liberal Arts  
**Hometown:** Centralia, MO  
**Future Plans:** Marry in May and work as a Kindergarten teacher!



**Name:** Katelyn Pettijohn  
**Major:** Liberal Arts  
**Hometown:** Apopka, FL  
**Future Plans:** Find a teaching position in the Chattanooga area.



**Name:** Roselin Prado  
**Major:** Spanish certification  
**Hometown:** Altamonte Springs, FL  
**Future Plans:** Eventually go for my master's in Spanish education.

# Congratulations, Graduates!

“Let us pick up our books and pencils. They are our most powerful weapon.”

— MALALA YOUSAFZAI



**Name:** Isabel Perez  
**Major:** Liberal Arts  
**Hometown:** Austin, TX  
**Future Plans:** Apply to get a teaching position.



**Name:** Layly Ramirez  
**Major:** Psychology, Clinical  
**Hometown:** Ooltewah, TN  
**Future Plans:** Get a master's degree then my Ph.D. in Clinical Forensic Psych



**Name:** Amy Risinger  
**Major:** Psychology, Clinical  
**Hometown:** Chattanooga, TN  
**Future Plans:** Go for my master's in Clinical Counseling.



**Name:** Heather Rice  
**Major:** M.S. Instructional Leadership  
**Hometown:** Orlando, FL  
**Future Plans:** School Administration.



**Name:** Ashleigh Sciulli  
**Major:** Liberal Arts  
**Hometown:** Ooltewah, TN  
**Future Plans:** To look for a job.



**Name:** Jeremy Steinkraus  
**Major:** M.S. Outdoor Teacher Education  
**Hometown:** Dade City, FL



**Name:** Reneze Trim  
**Major:** M.S. Clinical Mental Health Counseling  
**Hometown:** Longwood, FL  
**Future Plans:** Obtain a Ph.D.



**Name:** Gerald Tary  
**Major:** English Education  
**Hometown:** Columbus, NC  
**Future Plans:** Establish my direction in the footsteps of Jesus.



**Name:** Jessica Trejos-Tirado  
**Major:** Music Education  
**Hometown:** Jesup, GA  
**Future Plans:** Start my private music studio, get a music teaching job, and start a family.

## Also Graduating:

Bruce Boggess - M.S. Instructional Leadership  
Dori Boggess - M.S. Literacy Education  
James Goff - M.S. Outdoor Education  
Katherine Kapudjija - M.S. Outdoor Education  
Nina Kesselring - M.S. Literacy Education  
Heidi Ruckle - M.S. Literarcy Education  
Mark Torsney - M.S. Instructional Leadership  
James Reynaert - M.A. Outdoor Education

If you would like to receive future *Unraveled* newsletters electronically, please email [uas@southern.edu](mailto:uas@southern.edu) and request to be put on the list.

# Nivischi Edwards



**Dr. Nivischi, professor of graduate studies in Counseling.**

**N**ivischi Edwards was born in Jamaica where she lived until the age of 11 when, along with her family, she migrated to New York. After living in Brooklyn for middle school and Queens for high school, Nivischi went to Syracuse University for undergraduate studies. While there she obtained her BA in Psychology before entering the program at Andrews University for her MA in Community Counseling. Professor Edwards earned her Ph.D. as a Counselor Educator and is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Nationally Certified Counselor, and Distance Credentialed Counselor.

Edwards has worked in a variety of settings, both nationally and internationally. She has taught with Liberty and Regent Universities as well as the University of Central Florida. While in Florida, she also worked as a Substance Abuse Treatment Counselor and as a counselor

at Florida Hospital College. After her time in Florida, she worked as a Military and Family Life Counselor with the Department of Defense where she was able to work within the United States and internationally in Germany and Japan.

Professor Edwards felt led to the field of counseling due to the positive influence her high school guidance counselor had on her. She recalls her mother saying that even as a young child, Nivischi would set up her dolls and teddy bears in a circle for group counseling sessions. Not only did she feel led to her profession, but she felt led to join the faculty at Southern Adventist University. She said it was not “what” that led her, but “who”—“God did!” Edwards enjoys teaching and loves the “opportunity to positively impact supple minds with information about which [she is] passionate.” She hopes to pass

on to her students the importance of their calling to be counselors and impress upon them the ability they have to be a positive influence in someone else’s life.

When Edwards is not teaching she enjoys any activity that is outdoors, but only when it is warm! She especially enjoys water sports and running. In her spare time she also enjoys board games and spending time with good company. She strives to daily become the woman that God has called her to be and has a personal/professional goal of positively impacting the lives of all those with whom she comes in contact. We are very excited and blessed to have Professor Edwards as a new faculty member and appreciate the positive contributions she is already making to our department.

# Alum Starts One-Teacher School on Indian Reservation

By: Mryon Madden

Southern encourages students to embrace its mission of service and provide assistance to those in need. For an educator, that means offering students a warm smile and a safe space—and that’s exactly what one alum intends to do on a reservation where suicide attempts have become the norm.

Jamie Howell, ’14, has been working with the Dakota Conference to start a one-teacher elementary school on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. The conference approached Howell with the project after she spent a year working at Dakota Adventist Academy.

“We’ve never had someone like Jamie,” said Bill Glassford, director of Dakota Conference’s Native Ministries. “I think the Lord chose her. She was the one we were looking for.”

Payabya Adventist Mission School will be held in the converted two-car garage under Howell’s apartment. Though the accommodations may be small, Howell believes the school could be a beacon of light to its students.

Since December 2014, the number of suicides among young people ages 12 to 24 on the reservation have spiked. Between December and May, nine young

people took their lives, and at least another 103 people of the same age attempted to do the same, *The New York Times* reported. Many of these deaths have been attributed to the oppression, abuse, and high drug usage that surround children on the reservation, but as the number of suicide attempts have increased, more causes have been considered. One such cause is bullying—a problem Howell is ready to tackle by creating a comfortable environment.

“My goal is to give the kids a safe place to come to every day if they don’t have it at home,” Howell said. “Most of our students seem to have a good home situation, but you never know here.”

Though Howell does not believe her students will be tempted to take their lives because of their stable backgrounds, she knows they might be affected by family or friends who have already committed suicide—another suspected trigger for the numerous suicide attempts.

“They tell the kids that life is a lot better on the ‘other side,’ and many kids want that better life so they commit suicide,” Howell said. “As a Christian, I can help them understand that you aren’t going to find out what’s on the other

side until Jesus comes.”

As she prepares to embark on this challenging and exciting journey, Howell has realized the value of her time as an elementary education major at Southern. Student teaching gave her the opportunity to teach in a multi-grade classroom while exposing her to people who didn’t know about God. Her experience serving as a missionary in Bolivia prepared her to adapt to a different culture and readied her to be thrust out of her comfort zone. Most importantly, her professors taught her how to create a safe environment where students will be excited to learn through words and example, and these same professors still help her today.

“The professors in the education department are great,” Howell said. “They are always willing to answer any question that I have. If I need help with something, I can call them or email them or text, and they’ll help me if they can.”

Editor’s Note:

The work that Jamie is doing is a perfect example of the overlap that exists between Education and Psychology. We are proud of all our graduates who have a heart of service and go on to make a difference in others lives.



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