



The Staff at Global Ministries University would like to wish each and every one of you a Happy New Year. As we enter 2016, it is our goal to continue to give our students the most rewarding experience possible.

When enrolling in a university, it is usually expected that you will become a number and must learn how to navigate through the system. It is assumed that you must 'go through the hoops' in order to earn the degree or certificate but Global Ministries University is not your typical university... we do our best to go that extra mile and give students personal service. Applicants are amazed when the Admissions Office questions their particular goals in an effort to be sure they are selecting the program that will best meet their needs. They are so grateful when told they are eligible for a doctoral degree when under the impression they were only eligible to earn a master's degree.

Here are a few of the comments related to the GMU Staff offered by students and graduates:

A D.Min. graduate from Maryland: *"The entire experience has been a blessing that will flow in and through me for years to come. Thank you GMU for this profound experience."*

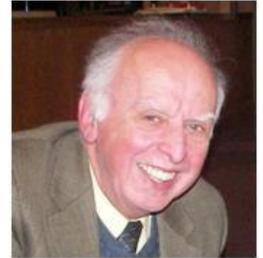
An M.Th. student from Canada: *"I find the Staff very understanding and supportive in this endeavor..."*

An M.Th. student from Alabama: *"The GMU team goes above and beyond the call of duty to ensure a high quality experience."*

There is a great deal to be said for this kind of satisfaction. When students receive a degree or certificate at GMU, they have more than a diploma, they also have a rich and worthwhile experience.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In the past year Global Ministries University graduated its first student from the Joint Doctoral Program with Mahidol University, Dan Lee. Mahidol is a major state university in Thailand with government funding and accreditation. We now have two additional students who have enrolled in this program. It is a sign of the growing recognition of Global Ministries as a major provider of graduate level interfaith education. In addition to our affiliation with Mahidol University in Bangkok, Thailand, we are in the process of making final an agreement with Pwani University in the coastal region of Kenya to provide interfaith curriculum and consulting for the Religious Studies Department of that university and also for the Kenyan Institute of Education, the government sponsored educational agency in Kenya which develops curriculum for its public schools.



Over the past four years we have developed relationships with many of the major interfaith organizations in Kenya including The Coast Council of Interfaith Clerics, the Africa Regional Center of Columbia University in Kenya, the Muslim Respect Foundation, the Bishop Haddington Theological Institute in Mombasa, Kenya and the Jesuit Hakimani Social Justice Institute in Nairobi. We will return to Kenya in August of 2016 for another interfaith training program for Kenyan public school teachers. Religion is taught in the Kenyan public schools, although interfaith classes that promote interfaith and intercultural harmony have yet to be developed. The Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers in Kenya have agreed to be a cosponsor of our interfaith training program for August, 2016.

This week, while we are in New York, we are meeting with the Tannenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding in New York City. We are exploring a possible linkage with this program, which has both national and international interfaith programs. We are also in the process of developing an affiliation with the United Religions Initiative based in San Francisco. One of our GMU faculty members, Andrew Kille, is the Chairperson of the Silicon Valley Interreligious Council in the San Jose area. We participated with him in the Parliament of World Religions meeting in Salt Lake City in October of 2015.

We also want to thank and congratulate Frank Pisciotta, who has worked with us in Kenya the past three years as part of our administrative team there. He recently has completed the GMU Doctor of Theology degree program with an interfaith focus and we plan to have a graduation ceremony for Frank when we return to Kenya this summer.

As we move into 2016 with its many challenges, we are grateful to all the staff and faculty of Global Ministries University who have brought us to this point in our 15-year history, particularly Mike and Jean Conley, who lead our administrative team. We look forward to their continued service with Global Ministries University.

Gerald Grudzen, Ph.D.

MEET OUR FACULTY



Patricia Fresen, RCWP, D.Th, holds a doctorate in theology and teaches two courses for Global Ministries University: *Homiletics and Preaching* and *An Overview of Spiritual Direction*. She is a member of Roman Catholic Women Priests International. In 2003, Patricia was ordained a priest within the Movement that is now known as RCWP. Because of this, she had to leave the Dominicans and moved to Germany, where she took over the training of women candidates for the priesthood. In 2005 she was ordained a bishop and has since helped to educate and later ordain many of the women priests in the USA, Canada and Europe.

Born and raised in South Africa, she joined the Dominicans in her home country and taught in Dominican High Schools for many years. In the 1980's she studied theology in Rome. During her theological studies, she did several intensive courses in homiletics with the Jesuits and also with the Redemptorists. When she returned to South Africa, she taught theology and homiletics at the National Seminary in Pretoria. When St. Augustine Catholic University opened in Johannesburg, she was invited to join the theological faculty there.

Homiletics has been one of Patricia's special interests for many years. Having been trained in preaching in Rome and also in the USA, she has herself given courses in preaching in different countries. Now, with the aid of technology such as Skype, she is able to give individual training in homiletics to people all over the world. She still lives in Stuttgart, Germany, but has often been invited to the USA, Canada, Australia and her home country, South Africa, to give talks, retreats and workshops on theological topics, including the art of effective preaching.

STUDENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Lauren Erickson-Mamane is enrolled in the Interreligious Dialogue certificate program. She is an international development professional with more than 17 years experience in this field and holds a Masters of Public Health from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

After 8 years working for the Peace Corp in Africa, she joined Peace Corps HQ in July 2015 to lead their new Faith Based Initiative. Through this initiative Peace Corps is collaborating with faith organizations and institutions who share their common goal for the common good. She enrolled in the Interreligious Dialogue program to facilitate her work in this role and finds it exciting to delve into the rich and complex diversity of religious practices throughout the world and celebrate the common theme of service.

For the past 15 years, Lauren and her husband Abdourazak have shared a happy interfaith marriage. They have two beautiful boys that have grown up in Africa, Caleb, 13 and Samuel, 10. She has spent 13 of the last 15 years living, working, and raising a family in Africa – Niger, Benin, Zambia and Togo.

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Send feedback, comments, and/or questions to Jean Conley, editor and Vice-President for Operations and Development, [Global Ministries University](http://www.globalministries.org)