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March 8, 1989

89-38

Patterson, Criswell College
might buy Belgian Bible school

By Art Toalston

N-FMB

BRUSSELS, Belgium (BP)--Criswell College of Dallas is negotiating for the purchase of a financially troubled evangelical school near Brussels, Belgium, and the talks have stirred concern among European Baptist leaders and Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board officials.

Paige Patterson, president of Criswell College, is at the forefront of the college's negotiations with the Belgian Center for Biblical Education. Patterson also is a trustee of the Foreign Mission Board and a leader of the conservative movement within the Southern Baptist Convention.

Criswell College, also known as the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies, is an arm of First Baptist Church of Dallas, where W.A. Criswell has been pastor 44 years.

Patterson described any purchase as "extremely tentative." Criswell College trustees have not voted to buy the property, nor has the Belgian institution's administrative council voted to sell it, he said.

"All that is transpiring at the present time is that we are exploring those possibilities further," Patterson said during a telephone interview March 6. He was in Alexandria, Va., for a church Bible conference. He said he hopes Criswell College trustees will arrive at a decision on the purchase within 60 days.

Patterson would not disclose a possible purchase price, but the 500-room Belgian facility was up for sale last fall for \$3 million. Formerly the campus of a Jesuit (Roman Catholic) seminary that closed in the early 1970s, it was purchased with funds supplied by the Greater Europe Mission in Wheaton, Ill., and European evangelicals.

The 10-acre site is on the outskirts of Louvain, Belgium, 16 miles east of Brussels. The evangelical school has about 160 students, a minority of whom are Baptist. The school has operated in the red for a number of years, according to Robert Johnson, European director for Greater Europe Mission.

"I foresee that it could be a rather serious problem" if Criswell College buys the Belgian school, said Knud Wumpelmann of Denmark, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation, the representative body of 26 Baptist unions, or conventions, in Europe.

Criswell College "is going to bring to us something which we haven't asked for," Wumpelmann said March 6 in a telephone interview from Washington, where he was attending a Baptist World Alliance Council meeting. Wumpelmann is one of the BWA's vice presidents.

The European Baptist Federation asked last October for ownership of the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, Wumpelmann said. Foreign Mission Board trustees approved the request by a 59-8 vote the same month. Patterson cast one of the dissenting votes.

"We are deeply thankful to the Southern Baptist Convention" for founding the Swiss seminary in 1949 and for placing it in European hands, Wumpelmann said. "We as European Baptists have never received a greater gift." The seminary played a key role in healing divisions among European Baptists after World War II, he said.

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Wumpelmann said he is concerned that the Belgian school, if affiliated with Criswell College, "could create division by emphasizing the differences (among European Baptists), which of course always will exist, but we do not need to have the problems enlarged."

Causing controversy among European Baptists is not Criswell College's aim, Patterson said. "If (the Belgian school) proves to be divisive, it will not be because of anything we do, (but) because of attitudes that some European Baptists might develop toward it," he added.

Referring to the seminary at Ruschlikon, Patterson said, "Our purpose in being in Brussels will not be to act as an antagonist in any way."

Europe's spiritual needs are enough to keep everyone busy, he said, citing "several millions of people that need to be reached for the gospel" and a limited number of small theological schools for training ministers and missionaries.

He said he hopes European Baptists will allow Criswell College "an opportunity to prove that we can work with them cooperatively and helpfully."

But Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks voiced concern about the potential impact of a high-profile Southern Baptist like Patterson on European Baptists. "They know he is a dominant voice in the Southern Baptist Convention," Parks said. "They know he is a member of the Foreign Mission Board. Many Europeans will see (the Belgian school) as a quasi-official arm of the Foreign Mission Board."

Patterson replied, "We would be happy to make it crystal clear, and we would be happy for (Parks) to make it crystal clear, that this (possible purchase) has nothing to do with the Foreign Mission Board at all."

Patterson cited two reasons for his interest in purchasing the Belgian school:

"First and foremost, it seems to be an important witness for Christ in Belgium and it seems to have some positive effect even beyond Belgium."

Second, a center for studying the Anabaptist movement of the 1500s might be established there, he said. Anabaptists advocated baptism of believers instead of infants, and thousands of these Baptist forerunners were put to death both by the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant reformers in Europe.

Wumpelmann noted an additional concern about Criswell College's possible purchase of the Belgian school -- a concern shared by Parks.

"There has been no contact whatsoever from (Patterson) to the European Baptist Federation and not even to the Belgian Baptist Union," Wumpelmann said. "He doesn't seem to be very interested in what we think and feel."

If someone wants to cooperate with the Southern Baptist Convention, the most appropriate way is to contact its leaders, Wumpelmann said. The same goes for the European federation, which is composed of representatives selected by Baptist unions throughout Europe, he explained.

Responded Patterson, "I fully intend to talk with various groups in Europe." But until an agreement is reached for purchasing the school, consultation with them would be premature, he said.

Officials of the Belgian school first approached Criswell College about buying the property two and a half years ago, Patterson said. Negotiations ensued, but Patterson said he put them on hold last fall -- to avoid any perceived conflict of interest -- when Foreign Mission Board and European Baptist Federation officials considered buying the Belgian site and moving the Ruschlikon seminary there. When Baptist leaders decided against that option, Patterson said he resumed negotiations with the Belgian school.

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FMB leader Parks thinks Criswell College's unilateral purchase of the Belgian school would violate the spirit of cooperation that Southern Baptists, through the Foreign Mission Board, have forged with European Baptists. "We have spent years developing this relationship and partnership," he said.

Patterson could have helped by consulting with European Baptists and Foreign Mission Board officials "even if we disagreed," Parks said. "There would have been an effort to discuss it and come to an understanding.

"The attitude of doing it without consultation says, 'I don't care what you think. I want to do my own thing regardless,'" Parks said. "It does not engender a cooperative spirit."

Parks said both he and Patterson share a deep concern for spreading the gospel in Europe. "We just disagree on the way to work."

The Foreign Mission Board is working through the existing structures and Baptist unions, Parks said. He noted that John David Hopper, a Southern Baptist missionary with a longstanding commitment to the evangelization in Europe, has assumed the presidency of the Ruschlikon seminary and that an Institute for Missions and Evangelism has been created there. In Hungary, an International Baptist Lay Academy is being started to strengthen churches in Eastern Europe, Parks said.

"By working closely with the existing unions and churches and developing a wholesome, strong evangelistic outreach, we feel this will accomplish the evangelization of Europe faster than by working apart from them," Parks said.

Patterson thinks evangelistic growth in Europe has been slow in recent years. "It looks to me that if some new approaches can be developed, then that's what needs to be worked on," he said. "Do we really want to argue that the seven last words of the church should indeed be, 'We've never done it that way before'?"

Patterson said, however, that Criswell College would make relatively few changes in the Belgian school's operation. The Dallas and Belgian institutions would have a sister relationship for exchanging faculty and students, he said. Otherwise, enrollment would remain open to all evangelicals, the doctoral program in theology would continue, and English would not replace the French and Flemish spoken in classes. Europeans would comprise a majority of its administrative board, he said.

"We do not anticipate disestablishing a European model and substituting an American model," Patterson said.

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Texas CLC research consultant
named to national AIDS panel

By Ken Camp

N-Texas
Baptist Press
3/8/89

DALLAS (BP)--Scott Allen, research consultant with the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, has been named to the National Commission on AIDS by U.S. Rep. Jim Wright of Fort Worth, Texas.

Allen, 32, was first director of the AIDS Interfaith Network in Dallas; a member of the Special Texas Legislative Task Force on AIDS; a member of the Dallas County Task Force on AIDS; and board member for AIDS ARMS, a program that deals with meeting the special human needs of person with AIDS.

His wife, Lydia, is one of the founders of Open Arms, Inc., a Dallas-based community ministry to women and children in families with AIDS.

"I hope that I will be able to bring to the commission a sensitivity to the enormous human needs of persons with AIDS and an expertise in ministering in the midst of this great tragedy," Allen said.

Since joining the Texas CLC, Allen's specialized assignment has been research into the spiritual, ethical and psychological dimensions of AIDS.

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"Scott is the undisputed expert on AIDs in Southern Baptist denominational life," said Phil Strickland, director of the Texas CLC. "He has experience at every level: direct pastoral ministry, denominational service, and public policy involvement at the city, county and state levels."

As first director of the AIDS Interfaith Network, his work has included organization and administration of support for H-I-V positive groups, support groups for women with AIDS, family support groups and personal counseling.

He has written widely distributed materials on AIDS, has organized seminars and public forums on the subject, and has provided direct pastoral care for persons with AIDS and their families.

Allen is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif. He served churches in Pacific, Calif., and Colorado Springs, Colo., before joining the CLC staff in 1985.

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N-FMB

New missionary qualifications
allow more flexibility on age

By Bob Stanley

Baptist Press
3/8/89

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--More flexibility to consider older candidates for career missionary appointment will result from a revised statement of qualifications at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

The updated document removes all references to upper age limits for missionary service. Former guidelines said candidates for career appointment could be no older than 45.

Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board staff members presented the changes in February to trustees on the board's mission management and personnel committee, which approved the new document.

"Less emphasis will be placed on the age of the candidate and more emphasis upon the candidate's ability to meet the assignment on the field," said Harlan Spurgeon, vice president for mission management and personnel.

The board hopes "this added flexibility will contribute to an increased flow of candidates for the last decade of Bold Mission Thrust," Spurgeon said. Bold Mission Thrust is Southern Baptists' effort to share the gospel with all people of the world by A.D. 2000.

The board still must consider certain factors in evaluating such candidates, Spurgeon noted. These include fluency in the necessary foreign language or the ability to learn the language, and the time required for a particular candidate to become proficient in a given assignment.

Determining whether candidates measure up to these and other factors "will not be an easy task," Spurgeon said, "but we believe the advantages of greater flexibility will outweigh the difficulties."

Unlike the former guidelines, the new document makes no reference to American citizenship as a requirement for appointment. However, because appointment is limited to persons with "an extended and current record of meaningful membership and participation in a Southern Baptist church," Spurgeon said he does not see this change having a broad impact on appointments.

As in the past, persons born or reared outside the United States generally will not be considered for positions in their countries of origin. Other aspects of the qualifications document also remain unchanged, Spurgeon said.

Of the 3,853 missionaries now assigned to 114 countries, 3,371, or more than 87 percent, are in the career category. The average age of career appointees in 1988 was 32.

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Texas Baptists minister
to marooned motorists

By Ken Camp

N-Texas

DALLAS (BP)--When a late winter storm hit North Texas the first weekend in March leaving hundreds of motorists stranded along a 20-mile stretch of icy I-35, Southern Baptists offered shivering sojourners overnight shelter, hot coffee and warm fellowship.

In Gainesville, most stranded travelers spent the weekend in the community center, according to Bennie Slack, pastor of First Baptist Church. However, his church did provide lodging for two Baptist ministers returning to Missouri from a conference at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth.

First Baptist Church of Sanger, in northern Denton Baptist Association, cooperated with the local Red Cross in housing and feeding about 45 visitors during the weekend, according to Jerry Fleming, minister of music and education.

Texas Baptist involvement appeared to be greatest at First Baptist Church of Valley View, in Cooke Baptist Association, where at least 125 people received shelter, sandwiches and hot beverages.

"It wasn't anything planned. We just responded to a need," said Jeff Blevins, pastor at the Valley View church.

The congregation's involvement began on Friday when sleet and freezing rain resulted in a Minnesota-bound young couple and their three children spending the night in the church's fellowship hall.

The ministry escalated by Sunday and Monday when a combination of highway construction, glazed road surfaces and disabled vehicles turned the normally busy interstate highway near the church into a 20-mile-long parking lot. Once the need was apparent, the church building and the homes of several members were opened to stranded travelers.

"We left a message at the Dairy Queen on the highway to let people know they could come to our church. Several of our members who are volunteer firemen got on their CBs to spread the word, and some members stood along the road for a while telling people," said Blevins. "It just spread by word of mouth, mostly."

Church members brought bedding to the church building, where marooned motorists slept in the fellowship hall, in classrooms and even in hallways. About 20 volunteers provided sandwiches, coffee and hot chocolate to the unexpected visitors throughout their stay.

"It was interesting to watch the people as they picked up things to read at the church--bulletins, copies of Home Life and the prayer guides for home missions week," said Blevins. "It was a tremendous witness to them. A lot probably hadn't been inside a church in a long time."

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Southern gets grant
for ministry study

N-(O)
(SBTS)

Baptist Press
3/8/89

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is one of 10 religious organizations nationwide selected to initiate a large-scale plan for strengthening the quality of candidates for the ministry.

Lilly Endowment Inc., an Indianapolis-based private philanthropy with a long-standing interest in religion, has awarded the Louisville, Ky., seminary \$250,000 for the project. A panel of independent judges selected the 10 proposals out of 47 submitted from around the nation.

Recipients include four other theological schools and the offices of five American denominations.

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The purpose of Southern's program is to "determine what Southern Baptist mean by 'quality minister' and how the seminary can nurture the call to ministry," said project director Daniel Aleshire, professor of psychology and Christian education at Southern Seminary.

In addition, Aleshire said, the seminary will review the issues that define the context of ministry in the Southern Baptist Convention and evaluate recruitment practices and curriculum in light of the study's findings.

"We have a concern that some of the best God-called people may not respond (to their call) because of the denominational crisis," said Aleshire.

The first phase of the study will include a survey of 1,500 to 2,000 Southern Baptist ministers and lay people in seven states to determine how they define "quality ministers." In the second phase, the seminary will gather information from ministers who are identified as "quality ministers" by people surveyed. The study's final phase will deal with student recruitment and an evaluation of several seminary programs.

The SBC's Sunday School Board, Home Mission Board and Education Commission will assist Southern Seminary in the study.

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N-FMB

Missionary succumbs
to cancer in S.C.

Baptist Press
3/8/89

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP)--Southern Baptist missionary Billy K. Fallaw, 52, who worked in Brazil 18 years, died March 6 at his home in Columbia, S.C.

Since August 1987 Fallaw had been associate to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's director for work in Brazil, where about 350 missionaries work. He and his wife, the former Ann Monteith of Columbia, took a medical furlough last September as his health declined because of melanoma cancer.

They were appointed as missionaries to Brazil in 1970. Fallaw worked as a general evangelist in the city of Joao Pessoa and later in Fortaleza. He directed the Portuguese Language School in Campinas from 1984 to 1987.

He "will best be remembered for his evangelistic spirit as well as his administrative ability," said Bill Damon, FMB associate director for Brazil and the Caribbean. "As a general evangelist, he was an effective church planter. He was always seen as a very caring person who ministered to everyone around him."

Fallow, a native of Greenville, S.C., grew up in Lancaster and Spartanburg, S.C. He received the bachelor of arts degree from Furman University in Greenville and the bachelor of divinity degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

Before missionary appointment, he was pastor of Brown's Baptist Church in Warren County, N.C.; Norlina (N.C.) Baptist Church; North Conway (S.C.) Baptist Church; and First Baptist Church of Kershaw, S.C.

Other than his wife, Fallaw is survived by five daughters, his mother, a brother and three grandchildren.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press

Importance of doctrine
focus of conference

By Terri Lackey

N-SSB

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (BP)--The importance of Southern Baptists knowing and understanding the doctrines of their faith was the theme of the three-day National Baptist Doctrine Conference in late February at First Baptist Church of Charlotte, N.C.

About 300 attended the conference where speakers overviewed 10 major doctrines to be highlighted during 1989 Baptist Doctrine Study to be observed April 17-21 in many churches. The adult textbook, "The Doctrines Baptists Believe," was written by Roy Edgemon, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church training department, which sponsored the event.

Speakers included Edgemon; Charles Fuller, pastor of First Baptist Church of Roanoke, Va., and chairman of the SBC Peace Committee; Frank Pollard, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jackson, Miss.; and Joe McKeever, pastor of First Baptist Church of Charlotte.

Edgemon said the conference "sounded a strong reaffirmation of the historic doctrines of the Baptist faith."

The purpose of the national conference, according to Edgemon, was to "lift up the importance of studying doctrine and to motivate and equip pastors to teach doctrine in their churches. Pastors have been getting back to teaching doctrine in our churches, and this conference echoed that."

Doctrines highlighted in the conference were the Bible, God, man, Christ, atonement, salvation, priesthood of believers, the Holy Spirit, the church and last things, including death, heaven, hell and judgment.

Of the Bible, Edgemon said, "The Word of God is divine in its origin, living in its nature, powerful in its illustration and final in its judgment.

"The Bible is God's book. It is authoritative, infallible, inerrant, God-breathed and truth without mixture of error," he continued. "It is the crystallization of God's thoughts.

"The greatest need in the church is for people to learn to love the Word of God," Edgemon said.

On the doctrine of Christ, Pollard said, "Jesus Christ came to show us that God takes sin seriously.

"Jesus came to show us what God is like. He came to show us that God knows what it's like to be down here. And he came to show us what God had in mind when he said, 'Now, I'll make man, person,'" Pollard said. "The Great Physician made a house call."

Speaking on last things, specifically judgment and repentance, Fuller said Christians must be accountable for their actions.

"If there is no judgment, then there would be no accountability. And if there is no accountability, then there would be no responsibility," he said.

Fuller said non-Christians tend to believe they will continue to get a "second-chance" to repent.

"A person who continues to delay his response to the gospel risks eventually becoming calloused to the Bible."

He also risks losing everlasting life, Fuller said. "No one is without accountability to God."

Meanwhile, Edgemon said Christians should face death with "confidence and holy optimism."

"For Christians, there are only two places to be," Edgemon said, "alive in your body or in the presence of the Lord.

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"Our bodies are temporary. We are dying every minute," he said. "The goal of the Christian life is to live in peace with him."

McKeever said God is "sovereign or the highest authority. Once we determine God is sovereign, we either serve him or we don't. Our choice is between God or nothing."

God has three choices of what to do with his fallen creation, Fuller said, in explaining the doctrine of salvation.

"God can disinherit his creation, eliminate his creation or re-create his creation," Fuller noted, saying the word "re-create" is synonymous with salvation.

"God gave us the opportunity to live again," he said.

Other speakers included Bill Stephens, curriculum coordinator, and Art Criscoe, manager of the management support section, both of the church training department.

Those attending the national doctrine conference came from 11 states, according to Steve Williams, growth consultant in the church training department. In addition to North Carolina, registrants came from South Carolina, Virginia, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee and Texas.

State church training staffs from six states were represented.

About 100 state-sponsored doctrine clinics have been or will be held before Baptist Doctrine Study Week, according to Williams.

Resources for use with youth, children and preschoolers during Baptist Doctrine Study also are available.

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(BP) cartoon by Joe McKeever mailed to state Baptist newspapers by SSB bureau of Baptist Press

Ears could 'tingle' if SBC
ignores God, leader says

By Susan Todd

N- (O)
(WMU)

Baptist Press
3/8/89

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--God isn't finished using Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union yet, and won't be as long as the organization listens for his leading, said Marjorie J. McCullough, national WMU president.

McCullough compared WMU's position to that of Samuel's when God called to him in the night to give him a warning. "God told Samuel, 'I'm about to do something in Israel that's about to make the ears of everyone tingle,'" she said.

If WMU is listening and ready to answer as was Samuel, "God may say to us, 'I'm about to do something that will make the ears of everybody in the Southern Baptist Convention tingle,'" she said.

McCullough spoke to WMU leaders from across the country who gathered in early March at the WMU national headquarters for planning. She reminded them of the disobedience to God in Samuel's day. Eli, the priest, had raised sons who were not faithful to God. God brought judgment on them but first gave the warning to Samuel.

McCullough stressed the importance of WMU remaining faithful to its missions purpose and listening to God's leading.

"The lamp of the Lord has not gone out on WMU yet," she said.

"We have something to look forward to because we're going to listen, and we're going to be ready," McCullough said. "Forget about things that are in the past," she said as she recalled the past year of celebrating WMU's centennial. "We don't know what's ahead of us, but we're not afraid."

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There will be obstacles -- not only in the future, but today -- as WMU strives to keep its missions vision, said Carolyn Weatherford, national executive director.

"The current controversy is tearing the heart out of our vision," Weatherford said. "Genius and labor have been redirected, and often misdirected. The Cooperative Program is splintering around our cooperative work that is now defined by camps rather than vision. This is a crisis for us."

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' unified giving plan to fund the work of missionary, evangelistic and educational endeavors around the world.

She emphasized the Cooperative Program's original distribution plan. Money given through the Cooperative Program was to be split 50-50 at each level. Churches were to keep 50 percent of receipts, and send 50 percent to the state convention for state missions causes. In turn, the state was to keep only 50 percent of its receipts and send 50 percent to the Southern Baptist Convention. There, the money would be divided 50 percent to foreign missions, 25 percent to home missions and 25 percent to the other work of the convention.

Weatherford called the Cooperative Program a plan of "genius." But only three states have ever attained the goal, she said. Consequently, missions work has been affected. There isn't enough money to do the job, she said.

"The dream is being killed as we continue with business as usual," she said reminding the group of plans to have 10,000 missionaries in place by the year 2000.

Teaching tithing as a basic missions concept is a task WMU will take seriously in the future, Weatherford said.

"The local church is where the battle for missions will be won or lost."

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CORRECTION: Please change the 21st paragraph of the 3/8/89 Baptist Press article titled "Alliance OK's new seminary" to read:

The new seminary is to have classroom space in Northminster Baptist Church in Richmond and access to Union Theological Seminary's library, pending approval by the church and by the seminary's trustees, Graves told Baptist Press.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

SBC language missions
workers receive awards

N-HMB

Baptist Press
3/8/89

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--Nine Southern Baptist language missions workers were honored for outstanding ministry in their states by the language church extension division of the denomination's Home Mission Board.

Division director Oscar Romo presented the awards during the recent 32nd annual language missions leadership conference.

The division's Kaleidoscopic Award went to five people in recognition of their state's achievements with minimal resources. Romo praised language missions work in Colorado, California, Louisiana, Minnesota-Wisconsin, and in the Pacific Northwest.

Robert T. Nyberg, language program leader for the Colorado Baptist General Convention, was honored for his state's accomplishments in beginning language congregations. He transferred to Denver from the Colorado Springs area in 1978 when the Hispanic church he pastored became self-supporting.

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Lonnie Chavez, language program leader for the California Southern Baptist Convention, received an award for his state's work in refugee resettlement. Chavez was a catalytic missionary in the San Diego area prior to joining the state convention staff in 1980.

Rafael Melian, language program leader for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, was honored for his state's work with the deaf population. The Cuba native has served Louisiana Baptists for the past decade.

Harold Hitt, language program leader for the Northwest Baptist Convention, was recognized for his convention's work with internationals. Hitt also serves as director of missions for the Pacific Northwest.

David Turner, language program leader for the Minnesota-Wisconsin Southern Baptist Convention, received an award for accomplishments in ethnic leadership development. Turner served as a catalytic missionary in Milwaukee from 1976-79 before transferring to Rochester ten years ago.

In addition, Romo presented the Mosaic Missions Award to Jerry Breazeale, director of the school of Christian training at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, who was honored for his support of language missions through his direction of the Hispanic leadership training school at the seminary and his leadership role in ethnic leadership development centers in Florida and Puerto Rico.

During the awards banquet, Romo also presented three Missions Heritage awards to recent retirees who were instrumental in furthering the work of language missions.

Receiving the awards were Henry Neal, state director of missions for the Georgia Baptist Convention; Leslie Baumgartner, state director of missions for the Tennessee Baptist Convention; and Lyndon Collings, who will retire on March 31 as associate vice president for the extension section with the Home Mission Board.