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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

### NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee  
901 Commerce #750  
Nashville, Tennessee 37203  
(615) 244-2355  
Herb Hollinger, Vice President  
Fax (615) 742-8919  
CompuServe ID# 70420,17

### BUREAUS

ATLANTA Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 898-7522  
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5111  
NASHVILLE Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300  
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va., 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151  
WASHINGTON Tom Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223

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Stephen Carleton to head  
SBC Education Commission By Tim Fields & Mark A. Wyatt

Baptist Press  
6/29/93

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (BP)--Members of the Southern Baptist Education Commission elected a new executive director and honored retiring director Arthur L. Walker Jr. during their annual meeting June 27 in Riverside, Calif.

Stephen P. Carleton, 55, was elected without opposition on a roll call vote as executive director to succeed Walker who retires Aug. 31. Carleton has been executive vice president and academic dean at California Baptist College since 1971. He was one of four candidates interviewed by the search committee.

By virtue of the office Carleton also will become executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Commission on the American Baptist Theological Seminary which, along with the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., operates American Baptist College. ABC is a four-year Bible college in Nashville established to provide education primarily for black church leaders.

"The committee was aware of tensions in the convention and we wanted somebody who could speak and be heard in our educational community and be able to relate to leadership in our convention," said Jerry Henry, search committee chairman and pastor of Elkdale Baptist Church in Selma, Ala. "We've got to have someone who can walk the back streets of Nashville and talk to the leadership," Henry said.

"We have worked with SBC leadership in choosing Steve Carleton as our nominee. Steve wants to work with the Southern Baptist Executive Committee and he is positive about making things happen," he said.

Carleton, a native of Shattuck, Okla., has earned a bachelor's degree from Oklahoma Baptist University, a bachelor of divinity degree from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary and an master's and Ph.D. in church history from the University of Chicago.

Prior to coming to California Baptist College as associate professor of history in 1967, Carleton was pastor of churches in Stockton, Calif., and Ceres, Okla. He also has been interim pastor of nearly 100 California churches.

Before voting on Carleton, members held a closed, 15-minute executive session to discuss salary and benefits. When asked later about the package, commission chairman Van Quick told Baptist Press Carleton will receive \$83,285.18 in salary, retirement and medical insurance benefits.

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After members voted to elect Carleton, Quick told the commission the \$60,630 base salary he will receive is among the lowest of Southern Baptist agency heads. He encouraged members to make it a matter of concern in the future.

Walker reminded members he had turned down several attempts by the commission to increase his own salary because of continuing budget constraints.

During a dinner meeting commission members honored Walker with a gift of the commission's 1992 Oldsmobile 98 he has been driving and a check for \$7,500. The amount of the cash gift was based on a percentage of Walker's salary and benefits, according to Quick.

In other action, commissioners adopted a motion "to explore whether the commission might make a positive contribution to denominational life by supporting private and home schools." The motion was in response to an earlier resolution by the Southern Baptist Convention Inter-Agency Council encouraging support for private, Christian and home schools.

Commission members approved a 1993-94 budget of \$592,588, an increase of \$2,236 over the current year. The increased budget was approved in spite of a decrease in Cooperative Program funding from \$498,152 in 1992-93 to \$491,168. The shortfall in Cooperative Program funding will be supplemented by an expected increase in designated gifts, sale of materials and a transfer of \$24,000 from reserves.

During discussion of the budget, K. Eugene Lee, commission member from Manassas, Va., presented a motion requiring individual staff salaries and benefits be presented as part of the budget presentation to the full commission. The motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioners received a report that during the past year 40 scholarship/loans totalling \$90,100 for post-graduate study were awarded to educators who teach at Southern Baptist colleges and schools. Since the program began, nearly \$795,000 in such scholarship/loans have been repaid through service to Baptist educational institutions.

Commission member Tommy Middleton, pastor of Woodlawn Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, La., was critical of the national Faith and Discipline Conference sponsored by the Education Commission in June 1992 at Samford University.

Middleton mentioned specifically "a dearth of solid, more conservative balance" in the conference. "It seemed we were pandering to everybody's sensibilities and sensitivities, but we didn't nail the issues." Middleton specifically mentioned the need to deal with issues in public education such as "the seduction of the New Age Movement," creationism versus Darwinian evolution, relativism versus absolutism and secular humanism.

"No wonder there's no evangelism, no heartthrob to win the lost," Middleton declared.

"I'm not a bloody-eyed fundamentalist with a capital 'f', maybe with a small 'f,'" Middleton said. He called the conference a "tremendous" idea but added without balance including more conservative writers, "we have left our education and become lame-brained academically."

Commissioners elected new officers for the coming year: Jerry Henry, chairman; E. Douglas Hodo, president of Houston Baptist University, vice chairman; and Betty Jo Cooley, a member of the Spartanburg (S.C.) County Council, secretary.

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(BP) photos of Carleton mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Education Commission.

Change at helm signals new  
course for Education Commission By Mark A. Wyatt

Baptist Press  
6/29/93

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (BP)--At a meeting where they honored a retiring chief executive and elected his replacement, Southern Baptist Education Commission members also signaled a new direction for the agency.

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Commissioners indicated they will continue emphasizing evangelism and the need for Baptist educators to integrate personal faith and professional discipline.

But other discussion hinted at actions that could intentionally move the agency into denominational politics in an attempt to bring healing after years of conflict.

"We can help bring some things about in reconciliation in the convention," said Jerry Henry, pastor of Elkdale Baptist Church in Selma, Ala.

Henry was elected commission chairman at the conclusion of the agency's annual meeting June 27-28 in Riverside, Calif.

Members also elected Stephen P. Carleton, 55, as executive director to succeed Arthur L. Walker Jr., who retires Aug. 31 after 15 years as the commission's top staff member.

For the past 26 years Carleton has been a professor and, more recently, academic dean and executive vice president at California Baptist College. He moves to the Education Commission at a time when some are questioning whether there is a need for the agency.

The issue came up several times during the two-day meeting.

"I was asked by the leadership (of the SBC), 'Why should the Education Commission exist?'" chairman Henry told commissioners.

"Is there anything the Education Commission can do to help bring healing in our denomination?" Henry asked.

"It seems to me that's the No. 1 problem you'll want to face," said Walker in his final meeting with commissioners.

"I am very much aware that you have been open to me ... also that you have plans for doing things differently in the future," Walker said.

"You need to be aware that education, by its very nature, is going to be classified with one side of the conflict in the convention," Walker continued. "I am greatly concerned about what will happen to educational institutions.

"We have seen in recent years the distancing" of many Baptist colleges and universities from the conservative resurgence within the SBC, Walker noted. "We do need to recognize, though, that the heritage of Southern Baptists is the unifying force."

Walker urged the commission "to emphasize its role of leadership" and "be as aggressive as we can possibly be in speaking to the SBC." He listed three concerns that need to be communicated.

First, Walker said, the commission "cannot over-emphasize" that education is missions. "Remember, when William Carey went to India he immediately organized a college," Walker said. "His mission in India was not only to bring people to Christ but to educate them to be Christian leaders."

Second, in education there must be an emphasis on integration of personal faith and professional discipline, Walker said. He noted that for more than six years the commission has had a faith and discipline emphasis.

"This is our answer to all of the problems that exist in education and we have to emphasize this continued integration. It ought to last until the Lord comes," Walker declared.

"If we can get Southern Baptists to understand that education is missions, then we will overcome the opposition to educational institutions. If we can get the institutions and the persons involved to realize that there is a necessity of integration of personal faith and professional discipline, we can accomplish our purpose in winning the world to Christ.

"The only way we can accomplish that is by having properly motivated and well-informed trustees," Walker said.

Commissioner E. Douglas Hodo, president of Houston Baptist University, added "the need for academic integrity as it relates to academic freedom" as a fourth concern.

"I'm convinced from my vantage point that one of the real problems associated with this 'distancing' is the question of academic freedom as it relates to academic integrity," Hodo said. "What has happened is we've got people from a theological point of view who have deviated to the extreme left and to the extreme right and have taken license."

Baptist educational institutions "are not operating under education as a mission," Hodo said. "They lose sight of that. I'm sorry, trustees don't know what's going on. They really don't. They don't take the time, the effort, the energy to find out what's going on in these institutions."

The result, he continued, is that "our academic freedom becomes academic licens and the people who are there don't know the difference."

Commissioner Max Kell, pastor of El Camino Baptist Church in Sacramento, Calif., called for specific action to address the so-called distancing problem. "It's great to talk about the problem, but what do we do?" he asked.

Betty Jo Cooley, commission member from South Carolina, suggested now may be the best time for the Education Commission to address such issues.

"I don't think there's a better time -- that we'll have a better opportunity than we do right now with a change of leadership," Cooley said. She expressed confidence Carleton will "take the bull by the horns".

But Walker offered commissioners a word of caution, saying, "Don't expect even a new person to be able to accomplish everything because he can only do what the convention and the institutions and the churches will permit him to do."

Henry defined the problem as one of mistrust. "There is suspicion among the Southern Baptist leadership of the academic community and there is suspicion of the Southern Baptist leadership among the academic community. We stand in the middle," he observed.

Some commissioners disagreed about how to deal with problems in both public education and private Christian schools. But most agreed not enough has been done.

"The reason we've been so ineffective is that we tried to wear gray and blue and walk down the middle," said commissioner Fred Holt, pastor of Catherine Lake Baptist Church in Richlands, N.C.

"I believe it was Jesse Helms who said, 'There's nothing in the middle of the road but yellow lines and dead skunks.' I believe if we take the middle of the road we will kill ourselves," Holt said.

The question, Henry said, is whether commissioners need to do something or "just stand by and let things happen." He predicted the Education Commission will cease to exist unless its members do something to ensure the agency's future. He suggested the distancing issue provides an "opportunity for us do something that will justify our existence."

Gregory Brockman, commissioner from Colorado, agreed action is needed. "To know of something that isn't going right and let it simmer is worse than doing nothing at all," he said.

Carleton, who sat in on parts of two sessions following his election, told commissioners, "Your discussion has not been lost on me. Whatever imprimatur you lay on me, I'll be ready to get to work on it."

Commissioners adopted a motion by Patrick Copley, member from Osage Beach, Mo., instructing the new executive director to examine problems related to Baptist education at all levels and bring historical background and "definitive recommendations" to the commission's 1994 meeting in Charleston, S.C.

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Actress Whelchel hosts  
pro-life video from HMB

Baptist Press  
6/29/93

ATLANTA (BP)--Actress Lisa Whelchel 1 said a pro-life video she narrates for the Home Mission Board offers women facing crisis pregnancies the information they need to consider all their options.

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"It is a great gift to a woman who at that time in her life wouldn't consider anything a gift," said Whelchel, who for nine years starred as Blair on the television series "Facts of Life."

Designed for use in crisis pregnancy centers, "The Heart of the Matter" explains fetus development, risks associated with abortion and pregnancy options.

"I feel that it offered a realistic picture of what abortion really is, and yet it's nothing heavy-handed at all," said Whelchel, a mother of three.

Sylvia Boothe, coordinator for the HMB's Alternatives to Abortion ministries, said it attempts to explain the details of abortion as well as inform women of other options. "Most women are not given all the information they need before an abortion."

The video shows ultra-sound pictures of a developing baby, including movement and a beating heart. It also includes descriptions of abortions, narrated by a former abortion provider.

"Abortion is surgery," Carol Everett says in the video. "Unlike all other surgical procedures, in abortion the doctor is not required to provide you with any information about the abortion procedure, about immediate risk or long-term effects."

The video describes psychological trauma sometimes associated with abortion, and it also explores options for keeping the child and for adoption.

"I think it's a wonderful message covering any questions a young woman would have," Whelchel said. "It's just my great hope that it will get into thousands and thousands of crisis pregnancy centers."

Southern Baptists operate about 100 crisis pregnancy centers, Boothe estimated, adding that the video is suitable for other audiences.

"Any group interested in the subject would find it most helpful," she said. "There's no limit as to who would want to use it."

The 24-minute video costs \$9.50 plus handling. Anyone wanting more information about the video can call the Alternatives to Abortion office at 1-800-962-0851.

Orders can be mailed to the Home Mission Board's customer service unit at 1350 Spring Street NW, Atlanta, GA 30367-5601, or may be phoned to 1-800-634-2462.

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Objectives, convocation plans  
drafted by Elder-initiated group By Bill Webb

Baptist Press  
6/29/93

CHICAGO (BP)--The coordinating workgroup for the "Coalition of Hope," formed on the eve of the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Houston, met June 24-25 in Chicago, drafting a mission statement and six objectives and setting in motion plans for a nationwide "Convocation of Hope."

The workgroup, which includes former Sunday School Board President Lloyd Elder, focused on a 15-page document Elder released in May on the state of Southern Baptist mission trends and his recommendations for "calling the family back together."

Elder's plan calls for reunification of the various factions within the SBC under the banner of missions. Herschel Hobbs, pastor emeritus of Oklahoma City's First Baptist Church and a past SBC president, has joined Elder, now a university professor in Nashville, in the effort.

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The mission statement drafted by the six workgroup members present at the Chicago meeting states: "The purpose of this movement shall be to call Southern Baptists, at a critical moment of opportunity and challenge, to new levels of missions commitment and accountability in response to God's fresh call to world evangelism."

Rodney Osborn, a physician from Peoria, Ill., and convener of the workgroup, drafted the version of the vision/mission statement and objectives released following the session, which was not open to news media or other non-workgroup members.

Those objectives include:

- "To inform Baptist people of the Mission/Purpose of our vision and the opportunity new levels of commitment will mean to world evangelism."
- "To mobilize Southern Baptist church members in support of the historic Baptist organizational missions center."
- "To stimulate state conventions and Southern Baptist Boards and Agencies with the imperative of world evangelism and to new levels of missions support."
- "To call Southern Baptists to prayer and repentance for slowness and intransigence, however unintentional, in our response to God's fresh call to world evangelism."
- "To encourage the building of trust and fellowship among the Southern Baptist family as a missions people."
- "To foster such changes in Southern Baptist structures as may be necessary to better serve the Great Commission and to provide accountability."

"It is our intention to start from this point forward without looking back, without recrimination ... and without rehashing what has happened before" toward the goal of world evangelization, Osborn told the Illinois Baptist newsjournal. Acknowledging the fourth objective called for repentance, he explained, "We think we are all guilty. No guilt is implied unless it is with all of us."

In an accompanying written statement, Osborn outlined a tentative plan for a "Convocation of Hope" involving the heads of every SBC agency and five people from each state convention.

"Our next task will be the invitation of the executive director (or his designee if unable to attend) and president (or the vice president in the president's absence) of every state convention at a meeting in Nashville, Tenn., possibly on Monday, Sept. 20, when they would each be preparing to attend the SBC Executive Committee meetings as observers," Osborn wrote.

At that meeting, the representatives from each state convention would be asked to "call/elect/commission/select" five people from their own states to attend the convocation. The workgroup suggests those who are selected include men, women, pastors, laity, ethnics and other minorities.

"At the Convocation of Hope from the some 300 individuals in attendance will come whatever next steps should be undertaken to complete the mission of the coalition," Osborn said. "This may take the form of a commission that ultimately would have the responsibility, if so determined, for whatever report/recommendation/resolution the convocation might deem appropriate to bring before and/or present to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Fla., in June of 1994."

Any decision as to how to proceed will come from the "broadbased representation that this convocation must represent," Osborn wrote.

During their Chicago meeting, the workgroup met for a time of prayer "seeking the direction of the Holy Spirit in pursuing the will of God for the group before each work session," Osborn said.

Osborn is immediate past president of both the Illinois Baptist State Association and the Fellowship of State Convention Presidents.

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Others present for the meeting were Richard J. Maples, president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas; F. Joe Baker, president of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio; Rodney H. Travis, president of the Missouri Baptist Convention; and R. Quinn Pugh, executive director of the Baptist Convention of New York. Cecil C. Sims, executive director-treasurer of the Northwest Baptist Convention, was unable to attend.

Maples, asked for comment after the meeting, said June 28 the workgroup had designated Osborn as its spokesman. "I don't have anything to add to what he said," said Maples, a pastor in Bryan, Texas.

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Ministers' wives share  
revealing opinions

By Susan Doyle

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6/29/93

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Southern Baptist ministers' wives, for the most part, have several things in common:

- They are satisfied to be ministers' wives.
- They don't assume responsibility in the church just because it is expected.

-- They believe more is expected of ministers' children than church members' children.

If they could change anything, they would:

- assume more personal identity.
- change people's expectations of their roles.
- express their own opinions in business meetings.
- be seen solely for who they are.
- have more personal and family time.
- get rid of the double standard that expects perfection from a minister's wife but not from church members.

These views are among those cited by 138 women who participated in a recent ministers' wives survey. The results were compiled and released in the July-August-September issue of Magazine, a quarterly publication produced by Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union for ministers' wives.

Women who participated in the survey are wives of pastors, associate pastors, missionaries, ministers of music, ministers of education, ministers of activities and retired ministers.

The women represented a variety of demographic areas. Of those interviewed, 26 percent live in the country, 26 percent live in small towns, 25 percent live in small cities and 23 percent live in large cities.

The information they gave showed 18 percent have no children or one child, 78 percent have two to four children, 4 percent have more than four children.

Most of the women -- 71 percent -- married when they were between the ages of 19 and 25. More than 9 percent were older than 26 and 20 percent married before the age of 19.

The majority of the women reported they were satisfied with being a minister's wife. Only 6.5 percent were dissatisfied with her mate's vocation.

"It was nice to me to see that 93.5 percent of the women who took the survey were satisfied to be a minister's wife," said Becky Nelson, editor of Magazine. "It shows me that they see the blessings and don't consider it a burden."

Of the 138 women who responded to the survey, 103 said they felt "called" or "gifted" to be a minister's wife.

One of the shocking statistics found in the survey, Nelson said, was only 13.8 percent of the women whose husbands work in churches with 100 or fewer members indicated they could live on the husband's salary. Over half of the women surveyed who fell in this category work outside the home.

"There was a time when it was uncommon for the minister's wife to work outside the home," Nelson said. "More ministers' wives are having to work outside the home to support the family."

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More than 70 percent of the women who responded to the survey indicated they believe more is expected of ministers' children than other children.

"We have all known this, and the survey just proved that ministers' wives believe it is true," Nelson said. "We joke about it (expectations of ministers' children), but I hope that church members will respond to this and be respectful of the minister's children. They should try to not make it so tough for them."

The women indicated they didn't feel free to express their personal opinions in church business meetings because they are ministers' wives but wished they were able to do so.

"The minister's wife's voice is sometimes considered to be her husband's voice," Nelson said. "Ministers' wives have to be very careful, whether in a business meeting, a committee meeting or talking to someone who has come up to them in the hall at church.

"There are times ministers' wives just have to learn to say, 'You'll have to talk to my husband about that.' Her opinion can be taken as her husband's and that isn't always necessarily true."

Overall, Nelson said she hopes the survey will affirm ministers' wives and remind them others have the same thoughts and opinions.

"My biggest hope is that ministers' wives will see themselves not as having a 'role' to play but that they will see that they are, first of all, a Christian and they do what they do because they desire to serve God and his church. Being a minister's wife is a blessing, and God has placed them in a special place of service."

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Committee approves Flynn;  
Senate vote expected soon

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press  
6/29/93

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved the nomination of Boston Mayor Raymond Flynn as ambassador to the Vatican during a vote June 29.

The full Senate is expected to vote on Flynn's nomination before the July 4 recess.

Prior to and during a voice vote on Flynn and other State Department nominees, only Sen. Jesse Helms, R.-N.C., expressed opposition to Flynn's nomination.

After moving the committee's entire agenda be approved, Helms said he was voting "present" on Flynn because "I don't think we should have an ambassador to the Vatican."

"I have nothing in the world against Mr. Flynn," said Helms, who is a Southern Baptist.

If Flynn is approved by the Senate as expected, it will continue a policy begun by Ronald Reagan when he appointed an ambassador to the Vatican in 1984. George Bush maintained the policy while he was president.

Voting June 17, messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention adopted a resolution reaffirming their opposition to diplomatic ties with the Vatican, calling an ambassador to the Holy See a "violation of the First Amendment's guarantee of separation between the institutions of church and state."

The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission had requested an opportunity to testify against Flynn's nomination, but the Boston mayor, a pro-life Catholic, was the sole witness at the June 23 hearing.

The Christian Life Commission asked the newly elected President Clinton in December to not appoint an ambassador to the Vatican. Americans United for Separation of Church and State, as well as the National Association of Evangelicals, made the same request in December. In February, the CLC, NAE and three other groups -- Church of the Brethren, Presbyterian Church of the USA and Seventh-day Adventist Church -- mailed a similar letter to the president. Clinton is a Southern Baptist.

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Romanian student challenges  
Baptists to 'be thankful'

By Chip Alford

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Romanian Baptist student Corina Tarcau challenged participants in a Church Growth-Sunday School Leadership Conference at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center with only two words: "Be thankful."

"I'm not saying you're not, but most of you grew up in a country that has always experienced freedom. That's all you've known," the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary student said while sharing her testimony at the June 19-25 conference in Glorieta, N.M.

That is not all Tarcau has known. A native of Oradea, Romania, she saw many of her fellow Christians persecuted and imprisoned for their faith before the downfall of communism in the Eastern European country three and a half years ago.

She recounted how the Romanian army destroyed a Romanian Baptist training center, much like Glorieta, then interrogated children who were attending conferences there.

"One of our teachers (at the center) lost her secular job," she said, adding "all of these things happened in Romania when the constitution guaranteed religious freedom."

Things have changed in Romania today, Tarcau said. Though the economy is still in shambles, religious persecution by the government has stopped. People are free to worship and attend Bible studies.

Romanian Christians also are free to attend colleges and seminaries in the United States for specialized training in theology and religious education. Tarcau herself is attending Southwestern on a scholarship provided by First Baptist Church of Brownfield, Texas.

In an interview with Baptist Press, Tarcau said she felt called into religious education work not long after accepting Christ at age 14. Though religious freedom was restricted, she grew up in a Christian home and attended church regularly at Second Baptist Church of Oradea.

"My Sunday school teachers were my role models growing up," Tarcau, who speaks almost flawless English, said. "I just loved Sunday school and everything they taught me. I knew I wanted to be involved in ministry like that."

She worked with all age groups in Sunday school for 12 years before she decided to come to America to further her education.

She described her first year of seminary as "overwhelming because almost everything was new to me, especially in my religious education classes. I've been soaking things up like a sponge. I don't know how much a sponge can absorb, but I think I'm full."

As part of her seminary training, Tarcau is currently completing a 10-week internship at the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. She is meeting with writers and editors to learn about enlisting and training Sunday school writers and developing and publishing Bible study curriculum. As part of her internship, she is attending two Sunday school conference weeks at Glorieta.

"I couldn't believe it; I was so impressed," Tarcau said of her first visit to the BSSB. She told conference participants at Glorieta: "Please, count your blessings. Don't take for granted the 100 years of work of the Sunday School Board. Pray for the people who write, edit and publish your Bible study materials."

Tarcau said she admires the organization of Southern Baptist Sunday schools, but misses the worship services at her home church in Oradea.

"We don't have your building and your organization skills. We could use some of your organization, and you could use some of our worship," she said.

Tarcau will graduate from seminary and return to Romania sometime next year. She already has been offered three jobs, including teaching in the Baptist seminary in Oradea, supervising Sunday school work for the Oradea Baptist Association and serving as minister of education in her home church.

"Obviously, I won't be able to do all three," she said, "but the need is there, and it's a big need."

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