

WOCATI NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE OF ASSOCIATIONS OF THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS

'PARTNERSHIP IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: CONVERSATION AND COMMUNION' WOCATI CONGRESS 96 APPROACHES

Excitement is building as the final plans are being made for CONGRESS 96 to be held from 27 June through 3 July 1996 in Nairobi, Kenya. The Methodist Guest House in Nairobi offers a comfortable and congenial setting for our 1996 meeting. Three outings during the meeting are being planned to take advantage of this wonderful location: a visit to the Nairobi National Park, visits to area churches, and a trip to the Nairobi market which offers a host of indigenous crafts.

The theme of CONGRESS 96 is "Partnership in Theological Education: Conversation and Communion." Our keynote speaker will be Elsa Tamez, Principal of Seminario Biblico Latinamericano in San Jose, Costa Rica. Patrick Matsikeyiri of Africa University in Mutare, Zimbabwe, will serve as music and worship leader. Ian Williams of Parkville, Victoria, Australia, is the program coordinator. Douglas Waruta of the Association of Theological Institutions in Eastern Africa is secretary of the local arrangements committee.

Important materials regarding CONGRESS 96 were mailed to each member association in early November. The mailing included:

- travel and registration information
- a sample delegate visa letter
- a preliminary agenda for the meeting
- proposed changes to the WOCATI Constitution and Bylaws.

Each member association has been asked to designate two representatives to attend CONGRESS 96: one man and one woman. The associations must have paid dues for 1994 and 1995 before WOCATI will cover the expenses of the two representatives. The representatives will be the voting delegates for their associations and will bring responses from their respective associations to the three draft documents that appeared in the last three issues of *WOCATI NEWS* between February and May 1995 on the subjects of: (1) Academic Degrees and Credentials in Theological Education, (2) Theological Scholarship and Research, and (3) Women in Theological Education. The English abstracts of the three drafts are repeated in this issue of the newsletter on pages 5-7. French, Spanish, and Chinese translations of the abstracts are available in the earlier issues of the newsletter.



The Methodist Guest House in Nairobi will be the congenial setting for CONGRESS 96.

Delegates to CONGRESS 96 are asked to bring their associations' responses to two basic questions regarding the draft documents:

1. ***In what ways does this paper relate to your present situation?***
2. ***What challenges does this paper bring to the future of theological education?***

In addition to discussion of the draft papers, the delegates will be asked to take action on proposed revisions to the WOCATI Constitution and Bylaws, new applications for membership, the election of officers and members of the Executive Committee, and future plans for the World Conference.

CONGRESS 96 will not be all business, however. There are plans for lively worship experiences, small-group discussions, free time for exploring the area, and lots of time to make new friends and enjoy one's colleagues in theological education from around the globe.

A full report of CONGRESS 96 will be made in the next issue of *WOCATI NEWS*.

ELSA TAMEZ WILL DELIVER KEYNOTE ADDRESS



Elsa Tamez is a colleague widely recognized for her clear, ecumenical profile as a theologian and biblical scholar. She has long been related to the Latin American Biblical Seminary in San Jose, Costa Rica, where she began her theological studies in 1969. It was there that she obtained her degrees of Bachelor (1973) and Licenciante of Theology (1979). She also holds the Licenciante in Literature and Linguistics from the National University in Heredia, Costa Rica. From 1987-1990 she completed her doctoral studies at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Lausanne, Switzerland, with a thesis on justification by faith.

A native of Mexico, Tamez is Principal of the Seminario Biblico Latinamericano in San Jose. She is the author of *The Amnesty of Grace: Justification by Faith from a Latin American Perspective* (1991), *Justicia de Dios: vida para todos* (1990), *The Scandalous Message of James* (1990), *La hora de la vida: lecturas biblicas* (1985), and *Bible of the Oppressed* (1982).

She is a permanent member of the research team of the Departamento Ecumenico de Investigaciones in Costa Rica, of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians, and of the Latin American Network of Bible Scholars. She has given outstanding leadership to the Programme of Ecumenical Theological Education of the World Council of Churches and is currently Co-Moderator of Unit I.

CONGRESS 96 will surely be enriched by her presence and her message.

PATRICK MATSIKEYIRI TO LEAD WORSHIP AND MUSIC

We are pleased to announce that Patrick Matsikeyiri will lead the worship and music at CONGRESS 96 in Nairobi. Dr. Matsikeyiri is professor of music at Africa University in Mutare, Zimbabwe. Well known in Africa as a choral director and composer, Matsikeyiri has shared his musical gifts worldwide. Through the World Council of Churches and other international organizations, he has participated in numerous world conferences as a leader of worship and music, carrying the liturgical music of Africa around the globe. He recently participated in the Music and Liturgical Commission of the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches, which was held in Canberra, Australia. Due to his enthusiasm and skills, there is a growing appreciation for African liturgical music in the world. Many African songs are becoming available in a number of languages. We look forward to having Dr. Matsikeyiri with us at CONGRESS 96, and we know that we will enjoy his leadership in worship and music.



Ian Williams, program coordinator for CONGRESS 96, outlined the program schedule for members of the Executive Committee at its meeting in Trinidad last July.

CONVERSATION AND COMMUNION DRAFT DOCUMENT

At the conclusion of CONGRESS 96, the delegates will issue a “message” to be carried back and shared with their respective associations. The message will attempt to capture the discussion and deliberations of CONGRESS 96 and to serve as a vision statement for the future of WOCATI and an affirmation of that to which WOCATI aspires. The text that follows is offered as a draft for consideration, discussion, and refinement during the course of the meeting. We thank Heather Walton of the Association of Centres of Adult Theological Education (ACATE) in the United Kingdom for her work on this draft document.

Context

Theological education in the last years of this millennium takes place in a cultural and geopolitical milieu that is characterized by fragmentation and deep division:

- Technological changes, including the development of sophisticated networks of information exchange, are proliferating knowledge while at the same time becoming more distant from the traditional ethical systems where truth is seen to reside. Those without access to the new means of participation in the post-modern exchange of discourse are silenced and excluded from the new pluralism of the powerful.
- Fundamentalism, racism, and sexism are ideologies extremely adaptable to current conditions. They offer great attractions to those who fear the loss of foundational values, as well as those whose perspectives have been marginalized or excluded because they do not have the power to purchase a hearing.
- The economic and political goals of the global market system are seen by governments, financiers, and industrialists as the prerequisite for national and communal development. While it is difficult to find a common alternative perspective powerful enough to challenge the human and environmental consequences of this world order, local communities are often devastated by the impact of the promises promoted by nationalist and sectarian groups.

These developments, while clearly experienced as profoundly threatening, also present many new opportunities. It

is impossible to forecast the liberating potential of emerging forms of information exchange. For example, many heterogeneous networks communicating on health, educational, and cultural issues have already come into existence.

- The challenge to old orthodoxies has resulted in many new social movements, identity politics, and single-issue campaigns. The insights and traditions of minority groups are increasingly shared and offered as points of resistance to dominant ideologies.
- The world market has served to create a growing sense of global interdependence.

Challenge

Within such a context, theological institutions face many profound questions:

- There are strong pressures to seek vitality and life either through restating universal orthodox positions or adopting the passionate but partial insights of particular groups. Tensions between concepts of globalization and contextualization reflect the soul-searching taking place as theological institutions attempt to grapple with these issues.
- There are many who believe that the place of theology within the academy is to provide the sure foundation for core values and ethics. Others believe that theology is most faithful when it is attentive to the many voices in which God speaks to people and, in particular, when it articulates ideas and insights counter to “dominant pluralism.”
- The global divisions caused by poverty and inequality are reflected among us. For example, there are institutions with easy access to electronic publishing and those without adequate library facilities. There are situations in which women offer creative contributions and those in which women are totally excluded from learning and teaching. There are strong desires to achieve common standards and equally strong motivations to focus upon contextual challenges as they are specifically relevant to local settings.

- Churches look to theological education to preserve the inheritance handed down and to anticipate future challenges. However, often the roles that theological institutions take, e.g., in response to pressures from the academy, the inherited agenda of clergy training, and the desperate need to equip workers for growing churches, often preclude prophetic and reflective activity from taking place and separate theological educators from involvement with laity and action at the grassroots.
- *Academic Degrees and Credentials.* That we might seek ways of achieving consensus regarding a general and defining system of degrees and credentials. That we might define and evaluate global standards in a way that fully involves local bodies in the process of accreditation.

In these endeavors we refuse the false contradiction between contextualization and unity, between fragmentation and dominance structures. The difficult challenge before us is to create a *conversation* between contexts and a unity based on our *communion* in God's saving work.

Response

In response to these challenges, WOCATI reaffirms its understanding of the purposes of theological institutions:

- to serve by education the ministry and mission of the church and to be an agent whereby the traditions of faith are preserved, transmitted, and renewed.
- to nurture and advance within the academy a true understanding of humanity, the intellectual struggle and reflection on the fundamental questions of life, and the love of God by heart, mind, and soul.
- to serve the world as instruments which can reconcile and transform human community, especially by furthering the scholarship upon which these endeavors rest.

To these ends WOCATI is committed to developing means whereby resources can be shared and to facilitating the participation of underrepresented groups in theological education. To this end we focus on three areas of concern:

- *Theological Scholarship and Research.* That we might have a wider understanding of the nature of the theological task, the relationship between scholarship and ministerial training, and a sound awareness both of the importance of context and the communion God seeks and initiates throughout the cosmos.
- *Women and Theological Education.* That both the content of theology and the workings of theological institutions be reshaped by the full participation of women whose presence challenges the separation between the spiritual and material, the intellectual and practical, the laity and the priest, intellectual excellence and cooperative quests for meaning.

CONGRESS 96 WILL CONSIDER CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Delegates to CONGRESS 96 will be asked to vote on several proposed changes to the WOCATI Constitution and Bylaws.

The only substantive change to the Constitution relates to the membership of the Executive Committee. The proposed change will increase the Executive Committee from seven persons to eight: three officers and five members-at-large. In addition, it is proposed that half of the Executive Committee be women and at least one officer shall be a woman. It is also proposed that, normally, two members of the Executive Committee be chosen from Asia or Africa on alternate quadrenniums.

Proposed changes to the Bylaws relate to membership fees and the committee structure. It is being suggested that membership fees, currently specified in the Bylaws, be proposed in the future by the Executive Committee and approved by a meeting of the Conference. The section on committees is likewise simplified so that in the future committees are elected by the Conference or appointed by the Executive Committee "from time to time as needed."

Copies of the proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws were mailed to all member associations in November 1995. Copies of the proposed changes will be mailed to all delegates prior to CONGRESS 96.

ABSTRACT: THEOLOGICAL SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH

Theological education is being carried out all over the world. However, as theological education has become more global there is growing concern that standards for theological scholarship and research are being overly influenced by Western/Northern academic traditions which are heavily organized into specialized disciplines.

This paper examines the usefulness of the term "globalization." Within North America, globalization rightly challenges particular theologies and methods that claim to be universal. However, the paper insists that globalization and contextualization should not be placed in opposition to each other. The paper suggests that theological scholarship and research need to seek "a coherent, ecumenical, global perspective." Coherence is important in that it expresses the authenticity and distinctiveness of different contextual theologies, as well as the need to bring these contextual theologies into interrelationship with others. The concept of dialogue is explored and the question of where the locus of Christian faith resides is also addressed.

Excellence of Theological Scholarship

The first section of the paper examines understandings of excellence in theological scholarship, using Robert Schreiter's suggestion that there are four forms of theological expression throughout the world: theology as variations on a sacred text, theology as wisdom, theology as sure knowledge, and theology as *praxis*. Contextualization enables theology to open church tradition to local realities. Globalization enables theology to explore existing unities.

The paper suggests that scholarship involves various methodologies beyond those normally associated with writing and research completed within a university context. It argues that greater attention must be given to critical inquiry, especially as theological scholarship draws upon traditional partner disciplines of philosophy, history, and literary and textual studies, and more recent fields of psychology, sociology, and hermeneutics. It also suggests that the disciplines of political science and economics are increasingly important.

Excellence in theological scholarship must also explore new partnerships with the whole people of God. This means recognition that Christian theology is influenced by people of other faiths and by peoples who have been forgotten and ignored by dominant cultures.

Essential Components in Contemporary Theological Scholarship and Research

Building upon an understanding that theological scholarship and research must come from a coherent, ecumenical, global perspective, the paper outlines four essential components for quality theological scholarship and research:

Quality theological scholarship and research is deeply connected to particular cultural contexts. The starting point of theological scholarship and research is no longer the common Christian core of doctrine but the experience of the people of God in a given context. For this reason it needs to be carried out in the indigenous languages of the people, and great care must be taken when indigenous languages are translated into Western languages.

Quality theological scholarship and research requires that dia-

logue be an essential component, exploring the relationship between dialogue and contextualization, dialogue and theological education, and dialogue and contextual theologies. It is hoped that WOCATI will provide an important forum enabling theological scholarship and research to go beyond what is held in common to encourage new dynamic forms of interaction for our mutual enrichment.

Quality theological scholarship and research must move beyond understandings of unity that perpetuate forms of domination that endanger the autonomy of various contextual theologies, while at the same time centering on the unity of the church received as a gift from God.

Quality theological scholarship and research will use critical inquiry to sustain excellence; evaluating sources, remaining accountable to contexts, and using dialogue effectively to expand critical inquiry beyond the rational and historical forms that dominate most Northern theologies. It will recognize that there are ways of knowing that are outside of the commonly accepted forms of critical understanding (intuitive, artistic, and emotive). This awareness leads to a *scholarship of praxis*, incorporating the nonrational elements of understanding, and the goal of personal and social transformation which is at the heart of the Christian message.

The Emerging Relationship between Theological Scholarship and Ministerial Formation: Ongoing Questions

Is ministerial formation a by-product of theological scholarship and research, or do our efforts to shape ministry define excellence in theological scholarship?

How does liturgy overcome the breakdown between scholarship and the church caused by the fragmentation of theology into autonomous disciplines?

If contextual theology requires active engagement with concrete situations in particular societies, should this lead to a greater involvement of ministerial students in the socio-political life of their society?

Emerging Issues to be Addressed by Theological Scholarship and Research

Human rights, especially the rights of women.
Economies of countries *vis-a-vis* the Divine economy, with special consideration to levels of international debt.
The growth of materialism and the consequent marginalization of religious values.
Increasing ethnic and religious conflict.
AIDS epidemic.
The spread of arms and the incidence of war.
Issues associated with the fullness and the future of human life and human communities.
The use of technology for the enhancement of theological scholarship and research especially in regard to libraries.

This English Abstract and the two that follow were provided by Barbara Brown Zikmund, president of Hartford Seminary, Hartford, Connecticut, USA, and Secretary-Treasurer of WOCATI.

ABSTRACT: WOMEN IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

This paper seeks to respond to the concern of WOCATI CONGRESS 92 to deal with injustices resulting from the “constraints, prohibitions, failures, and denials of persons (particularly women) who seek the services of theological education or who feel called to be theological educators.” It was prepared by four female theological educators from Africa, Europe, Latin America, and the South Pacific.

I. The Present Context

1. *Faith has passed from woman to woman, but formally organized theological education has been largely restricted to men and dominated by the requirements of clergy training.* (a) In some churches theological education is still totally male; (b) Women must continue to struggle as a minority group whose interests are often unseen. Where tokenism is detrimental for both men and women. Women are disadvantaged: in the daily administration of theological institutions; in male models of ministerial formation; in the syllabus based upon a male biblical and theological canon; in having to deal with predominantly male faculty role models and a male “unwritten syllabus” shaping institutional community life; and in situations where a *token* female presence simply maintains the *status quo*; (c) Women students face an insecure future in terms of unemployment, placement, and recognition; (d) Women suffer from a two-tier system of theological education; (e) Women have limited educational opportunities because the full range of ministerial vocation is still not available to women. Their roles are regularly undervalued in the curriculum of theological education.

2. *Theological education is an alien country which many women want to enter.* However, women have not yet built their own homes or planted their own gardens. (a) Theological discourse about key Christian concepts such as sin, grace, and redemption still lean upon the interpretive world of men. Women students must use a new language to voice their female experience; (b) Concerns that determine women’s lives have not been the subject of ethical reflection. Female and male students do not have a framework to respond to: the violence that women suffer at the hands of men; the moral and relational conflicts grounded in women’s reproductive lives; specific cultural traditions, such as female “circumcision” that form and deform women’s lives; (c) Collaboration and “unsystematic” theology produced by women is misunderstood when individual academic achievement is the ideal; (d) Access to communication (publishing and emerging information technology) is often gender-biased against women; (e) Women in influential positions resist being linked to women’s issues, therefore they maintain the *status quo*; (f) Some progressive centers of theological education do enable women to move beyond current expectations.

3. *Obstacles to women’s full participation continue.* (a) Chronic underfunding; (b) A scarcity of trained women because they have left due to a lack of local opportunity; (c) Distress over the upsetting insights of women’s theological work.

4. *Acts of liberation are required to make women full partners in theological education.* (a) Economic recessions and conser-

vative social movements have made the position of women worse; (b) Women themselves need to make some hard choices—academic women need to support local initiatives to train lay women; Western women need to keep silent and share power; women need to stay in their local cultures, even when greater freedom and financial security may be enjoyed elsewhere. Women need to work towards change, not merely ameliorate intolerable situations; (c) Relinquishing privilege and working within systems is essential; (d) Theological imperialism must be broken down by a greater openness to dialogue.

II. Women in Theological Education: The Achievements

In spite of great obstacles, women have become an important presence in theological education during the past 25 years. Feminist theology has emerged. It is not only a new way of doing theology, it is a springboard for divergent forms of theological reflection leading to significant research.

Women are sharing information about the role of women in theology. They are doing theology from a *woman’s* perspective, forming groups all over the world. Women’s theological activities are not merely an additional way to do theology; women are challenging theological narrowness in the curricula and breaking out of establishment theological education. They are widening the space within which theology is to be done, for example, by pushing the curriculum beyond the classroom and the library, and developing international networks and consultations. Continuing watchfulness is needed to sustain women’s participation as *subjects* in theological education, rather than as *objects* of theological analysis.

III. Issues for Ongoing Consideration

(1) WOCATI associations must continue to empower women; (2) leadership patterns within associations should be analyzed to check for gender bias; (3) the activities of teaching institutions in member associations should be surveyed to assess their effectiveness; (4) more research on religion and women is needed; (5) lay theological education for women should be promoted; (6) curricula should be reviewed to see how they liberate men and women and recognize the contributions of women; (7) theological education should relate to matters of direct concern to women, e.g. sexual violence, reproductive issues, etc.; (8) institutions should unambiguously support research and publication by women; (9) residences built for male students need to be adapted for women; (10) more opportunities for teaching and child care are needed; (11) workloads should be equalized and adjusted to meet the needs of women; (12) the elitist structure of theological education needs to be changed; (13) women’s voices need to be heard in practical matters, e.g. faculty selection, budget, buildings, and curriculum; (14) female role models are important; (15) when women leave, institutions need to examine the situation to discern motivations for departure.

IV. Concluding Comment

There are signs of hope alongside gender bias and inertia.

ABSTRACT: ACADEMIC DEGREES AND CREDENTIALS IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

This paper examines the ways in which academic credentials are used by theological institutions around the world. It considers the nature and significance of academic credentials (certificates, diplomas, degrees, etc.) in theological education. It proposes ways whereby various academic credentials can be assessed and interpreted by institutions in countries and cultures other than their sources of origin.

The first section of the paper summarizes various arguments against the use of academic credentials in theological institutions: (1) they are seen as unrelated to competencies for church leadership; (2) “theology by the people movements” believe that academic degrees fail to recognize leadership skills developed outside the academy; (3) academic degrees cultivate a professionalism unrelated to the work of the Holy Spirit; (4) churches need inclusive leadership that can never be produced by traditional credentialing programs; and (5) the variety of credentials offered and what they represent make earlier patterns of credentials obsolete. This section concludes with an argument that contextualizing theological education requires a new appreciation of past traditions AND new efforts to relate emerging indigenous credentialing systems to the global community of theological schools.

The paper proceeds to describe the origins of academic credentials in Europe and their development in the West to certify academic competence and to confer the right to practice the profession of teaching. Such academic credentials were initially considered irrelevant to preparing clergy. Eventually, however, a distinction was made between academic degrees (M.A., Ph.D., Th.D.) and professional degrees (B.D., M.Div., D.Min.). This distinction has been helpful, but it has also created new problems—especially in the recent global expansion of universities and colleges, whereby some churches have founded independent theological institutions to provide education for ministry.

What is the rationale for theological degrees in the preparation for ministry today, and how do they relate to the needs of the churches and the standards of the academy? The paper assumes that degrees “are the structured means of certifying the fulfillment of educational ends by a duly constituted third party.” The contemporary structure of degrees flows from the history of academic credentials in the world. Such certification also carries certain recognized rights and privileges, in order to reassure the church that credentialed graduates can effectively practice ministry. Furthermore, the competency that theological institutions are best able to assess and most qualified to certify is always limited and directly dependent upon a constructive relationship between the churches and academic institutions.

Recognizing that degrees increasingly mean different things in different parts of the world, and are used in different ways by universities and churches, the paper sets forth three standards for quality theological education: degrees should be “theological”; degrees should accommodate the real differences between and among theological institutions, e.g., pluralism; and at the same time there should be a global pattern of degrees to provide an overarching structure for all theological education.

The paper proposes eight (8) types of academic credentials that might be commonly embraced by theological institutions and ecclesiastical authorities to provide a consistent pattern for global theological education. These credentials seek to value the traditions of the academy and also to be responsive to the changing realities of the churches:

1. **Preparatory Certification** (preparatory programs devoted to preparing persons for university or college study)
2. **The First Degree** (general liberal arts education of two to four years beyond secondary education, building upon various patterns of secondary education)
3. **The Intermediate Degree** (one full year of full time study beyond the first degree)
4. **The First Professional Degree** (basic preparation of several years full-time study that prepares graduates for the practice of ministry as it is commonly recognized by ecclesiastical bodies)
5. **The Intermediate Professional Degree** (one full year of full-time study beyond the first professional degree)
6. **The Final Professional Degree** (the Doctor of Ministry in North America is the only degree that presently fits this category; it involves advanced study of ministry in the context of professional practice)
7. **The Academic Doctorate** (a multi-year program of academic preparation for teaching and research)
8. **The Post-Doctoral Degree** (additional academic work resulting in significant publications, thereby qualifying its holder for appointment to a university professorship)

It is hoped that some pattern of credentials similar to this one could be established and commonly understood by all theological institutions and all ecclesiastical bodies. Such a pattern would enable a conceptual framework of equivalents for all degrees and credentials in theological education. It could also challenge theological educators and ecclesiastical leaders to define more accurately the levels of academic achievement needed for appropriate recognition and service within various communities of faith.

The WOCATI CONGRESS 96 is asked:

1. To reach consensus regarding the ingredients of a general and defining system of theological degrees and credentials.
2. To authorize WOCATI to plan and initiate studies and discussions directed to the identification of global standards by which each level or mission of theological education should be defined and evaluated, and to devise means of engaging member associations and organizations in these efforts.

NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



The WOCATI Executive Committee met in July 1995 at the Regional Seminary of St. John Vianney in Tunapuna, Trinidad. While most of the meeting was devoted to planning for CONGRESS 96, the Executive Committee also considered other matters of importance.

The content and distribution of *WOCATI NEWS* was discussed. The newsletter is considered an important vehicle for communicating the goals, work, and activities of the Conference.

Proposed changes to the WOCATI Constitution and Bylaws were drafted for consideration at CONGRESS 96 (see page 4).

If WOCATI is to remain a viable global organization, associations must be responsible about paying their dues and new members must be sought. The Executive Committee discussed promotion and membership expansion, including affiliate organizations. It is important to realize that WOCATI is an independent conference that serves theological education in all confessional traditions and geographical areas of the world. Associations of theological institutions that are interested in membership in WOCATI should contact the Secretary/Treasurer, Barbara Brown Zikmund, at 10 Summit Park Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15275-1103 USA or by fax: 412-788-6510.

APPRECIATING THE PAST, LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions (WOCATI) held its inaugural meeting in June 1989 at Kaliurang, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. At that time, it adopted a Constitution and Bylaws, and established the purposes and goals of the organization.

Three years later, in June 1992, WOCATI convened CONGRESS 92 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA, concurrent with the biennial meeting of The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS). CONGRESS 92 was attended by representatives from 29 countries and 22 regional and international organizations.

The first officers and Executive Committee were elected at CONGRESS 92. These individuals have served for four years, meeting twice to conduct the affairs of WOCATI and to plan CONGRESS 96. Appreciation is expressed to the officers and Executive Committee for their service to WOCATI over the past four years: Yeow Choo Lak (ATESEA), president; Jaci Maraschin (ASTE), vice president; Barbara Brown Zikmund (ATS), secretary/treasurer; Heather Walton (ACATE); Ian Williams (ANZATS); Teresia Hinga (ATIEA); and Diane Jagdeo (CATS).

Funding for WOCATI has been provided through the generosity of The Henry Luce Foundation, Lilly Endowment, and The Pew Charitable Trusts. This support has helped to underwrite the expenses of *WOCATI NEWS* and expenses related to the work and meetings of the organization.

WOCATI NEWS has provided an important international forum for presenting global issues in theological education. The first issue (February 1993) featured an article on "Contextualization from a World Perspective" by Robert J. Schreier of Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, Illinois, USA. The second issue of *WOCATI NEWS* (April 1994) contained an article by John A. Bollier, director of development of the American Theological Library Association, on "Libraries: Bridging the Local and the Global." The last three issues were devoted to the draft documents for discussion at CONGRESS 96, the English abstracts of which appear in this issue.

WOCATI NEWS

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