
FRANCONIA CONFERENCE AND EASTERN DISTRICT CONFERENCE OF MENNONITE CHURCH USA REPORT

October 2017

The start of a new year - Hesston College kicked off the 2017-18 year with Opening Weekend activities Aug. 18 to 20, and the first day of classes Aug. 21. The new year marks Hesston College welcoming the ninth president in the 108-year history, as Dr. Joseph A. Manickam assumed office on Aug. 1. Manickam brings a global perspective to Hesston College that serves as a strong guide as he leads the college into a context that reaches beyond local boundaries. The college celebrated Dr. Manickam's inauguration on Sept. 23, during Homecoming Weekend, with over 700 guests.

Community read proposes a solution for water crisis - For the sixth year, Hesston College has joined the wider community for a community read. The 2017 read is *Blue Revolution: Unmaking America's Water Crisis* (2012, Beacon Press) by Cynthia Barnett. The fall semester will include many presentations and a visit by Barnett on Nov. 2. Church groups are encouraged to join in the discussions by reading the book and using Barnett's resource, "A Christian reader's guide to *Blue Revolution*" for discussions.

Before the Unthinkable Happens: Confronting our role in injustice - Explore how we can help communities be healthier so that fewer trauma-related tragedies happen at the 2018 Anabaptist Vision and Discipleship Series (AVDS) conference Feb. 23 to 25, on the Hesston College campus. The conference will offer a hands-on process where issues of oppression are addressed and begin to be dismantled. In partnership with the Kansas Leadership Center (Wichita), specific leadership strategies will be applied to race relations, gender inequality and economic injustice. Pastors, lay leaders and community participants from many faiths will ask tough questions and find hope for future work. Teacher, author and activist, Dr. Drew G.I. Hart from Messiah College (Mechanicsburg, Pa.) will strengthen participant understanding of a biblical theology of justice around a broad range of cultural inequity.

New programs lead to enrollment boost - New academic and athletic programs added to Hesston College's offerings over the last several years have culminated with an enrollment boost for fall 2017 according to the college's official reporting numbers.

Total student headcount reached 442 in 2017, a 10 percent boost from a headcount of 401 a year prior, and the highest reported enrollment for the college since 2013. Over the last three years, the college has added or expanded offerings in at least 13 academic and athletic programs. Some of the changes include shifting from a two-year to a four-year baccalaureate nursing program and adding an RN to BSN component, adding new programs

including golf, emergency management, sports management and criminal and restorative justice, and expanding curriculum in aviation, engineering, theatre, biology and graphic design.

Of total enrollment, 207 students are new and 403 students – 91 percent – are enrolled at a full-time status. The college continues to build on its global community as 56 students – 13 percent as compared to 10 percent a year ago – are international students representing 17 countries. Domestic students represent 29 states in 2017, including 49 percent from Kansas and 38 percent from out of state. Students of color are 34 percent of the population. Following trends for the college over the last several years, retention of students from fall 2016 to fall 2017 remains high at 77 percent for the new year.

Congregational student aid – Hesston College offers a match grant for scholarships provided by students' churches. During the 2016-17 year, 65 churches contributed \$176,880 in student scholarships to 108 recipients. Hesston College matched a total of \$112,885. The average church aid per student was \$1,637 while the average church-and-college aid per student was \$2,683. **To offer a scholarship program to support Mennonite higher education, contact the Church Relations Office.**

Read these full stories and more at www.hesston.edu. For questions or more information, contact Dallas Stutzman, director of Alumni and Church Relations toll free at 866-437-7866.

2017-18 campus theme verse - If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love . . .
1 Corinthians 13:1-3 (NIV)

Franconia Conference and Eastern District Conference of Mennonite Church USA Statistics and Connections

Unified and Designated Giving – We are grateful for the financial support of conference churches to Mennonite colleges and Mennonite Education Agency through Unified and Designated Giving and for personal contributions given from individuals.

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