

For *the* Glory of God

ANNUAL REPORT 2013

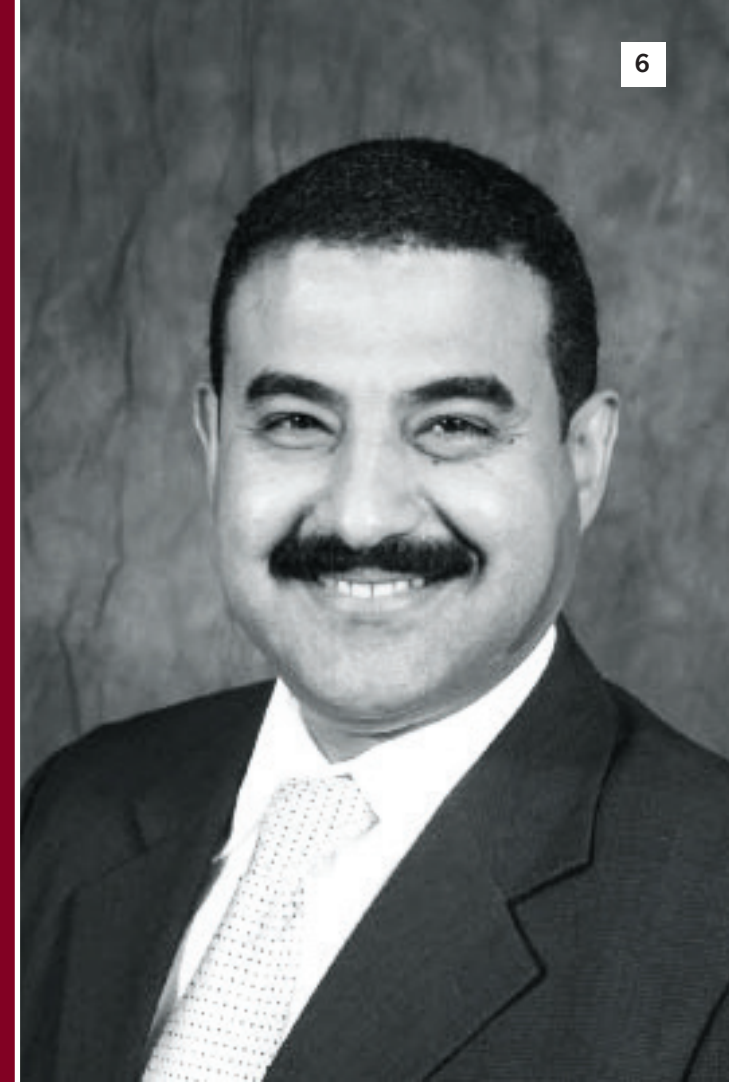
GORDON  CONWELL
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



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A Year of New Initiatives, New Partnerships and Spiritual Renewal

MARK G. HARDEN, PH.D., DEAN OF THE BOSTON CAMPUS



Dr. Mark Harden speaks at Signature Event held at JFK Library in Boston.

Central to this year's progress report for the Gordon-Conwell Boston campus is the positive communication we have received from our students about their seminary experience.

One student told us, "The Holy Spirit lives inside of [our] facility and inside of our staff." Another said, "I was truly inspired by the service, worship and communal fellowship...The Integrative Seminar sessions I participated in were truly orchestrated by God." We think these encouraging words are the result of great strides we have made toward our goal of improving theological seminary education in urban communities. We believe that greater efficiency will help us better serve the Church and our students, and our efforts this year have included developing a cost effective approach to how we offer courses. We now have an efficient course scheduling process that empowers students to complete their degree program in a reasonable time, and ensures that almost all courses are offered within two years. Working to ensure high quality teaching, we have

increased the number of administrative and teaching staff positions, and reduced our reliance on adjunct instructors. This, in turn, has improved our capacity for meaningful faculty-student relationships and ongoing, in-person student advising.

As we continue to revise and develop new degree programs, we expect to increase our ability to meet new demands for in-ministry and church leadership. This year, we have strengthened our programs in content and focus to better serve the needs of the Church, and expect this to increase accessibility to theological education. Progress can be seen in the Mentored Ministry course, now called Field-Based Mentored Ministry. Churches and para-church ministry practitioners have joined forces with us in creating



Top left: Dr. Eldin Villafañe receives the Dean's Signature Award. **Top right:** Dr. Seong Park, Assistant Dean of the Boston Campus, talks with guest. **Bottom:** Attendees at Signature Event.

and launching an action-learning course environment for a transformative experience in learning how to do ministry in a "real-life" setting.

In May, more than 200 participants joined us at the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum as 11 individuals received recognition awards during our new Signature Event, "Making a Difference in Christian Service." This annual awards event honors individuals for exemplary service in their respective churches and communities. Four recipients were presented with the "Dr. Eldin Villafañe Award for High Distinction in Christian Service:" Edward Davidson and Marcus Youksee for their extensive involvement in homeless ministry, Erica Forkner for her anti-human trafficking advocacy efforts and Jasmine Myers for her commitment to performing arts ministry. The award's namesake, Dr. Eldin Villafañe, Founding Director of the Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME), was also recognized for his numerous contributions to urban ministry and theological education in the city of Boston.

In June, we hosted 96 prospective students for our first explore!Seminary event, many of whom indicated that they had attended because of the Signature Event. We believe that by recognizing emerging Christian leaders in Greater Boston, we can encourage and inspire others for Christian service while promoting opportunities to get equipped for ministry at the Boston campus.

Effectively communicating our legacy and vision has brought about a sense of spiritual renewal. The climate at the Boston campus is one of excitement. This became evident in our new fall and spring all-day-Saturday events, which drew 280 students, staff and faculty for orientation sessions, convocation, fellowship luncheon and an integrative seminar series on spiritual formation.

FROM INACCESSIBLE TO IMMERSED



"I DIDN'T THINK SEMINARY WAS ACCESSIBLE TO ME," SAYS CATHERINE MILLER.

A native of Brooklyn, N.Y., Catherine grew up in the church. When she came to know the Lord personally at age 26, she "really took a liking to Bible study and walking alongside new believers." As her passion for the Word increased, she became deeply involved in a number of ministries—from visiting the sick and grieving, to street evangelism and youth prison ministry. But, she says, "I never considered seminary because I always assumed I needed a bachelor's degree."

A 20-year veteran in the legal field, Catherine had started college and dabbled in continuing education courses, but never completed her degree. Rather, she devoted her time to work, ministry and dance. Formally trained in modern dance and ballet, Catherine started a community-based, Christian modern dance program while living in New York. After marrying her husband, Shelton Miller, in 2005, and moving to Randolph, MA, she continued to host Gospel Dance Workshops in nearby Cambridge and Boston.

"In 2008," Catherine explains, "a co-worker and friend, who was also involved in dance ministry, pointed me to the diploma program at Gordon-Conwell—Boston (CUME) where her husband studied. She believed in my gifts and calling, and urged me to consider enrolling."

"I was blown away when I learned that I could apply to a master's program after earning my diploma... The Lord just dropped me into seminary at 40 years old—who would have thought?"

In December of 2011, Catherine completed the Diploma in Urban Ministry and is now pursuing a Master of Divinity degree. In the future, she plans to enroll in the Master of Theology degree program and has her eye on doctoral studies, because, she says, "I can't stop now! I love it, I love it, I love it."

After finishing her studies, Catherine hopes to serve in hospice chaplaincy and provide pastoral care. In the meantime, she uses her education and experience to "equip, undergird and encourage others in the truth of God in and outside the church." At her church, Congregación León de Judá, she is involved in English ministry, facilitates prayer meetings and Bible studies, presents worship dance and hosts worship dance workshops, and occasionally preaches. Alongside her husband, Catherine's current focus is nurturing León de Judá's partnership with the homeless community.

"I have so much gratitude for the vision behind our Boston campus," she says. "People from all over the globe have a place to engage sound biblical and theological study as they participate in God's mission of 'building the new Jerusalem.'"