

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
Greg Bergquist, General Secretary

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) seeks to bring people together to discern, learn, and lead for the church and the academy. As a worldwide agency, GBHEM works with key partners, churches, and institutions in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, and Eurasia; Latin American and the Caribbean; and North America. Our mission is to offer connectional, contextual, and collaborative programs to support the church, the academy, and the world.

GBHEM is responsible for The Methodist Global Education Fund for Leadership Development (MGEFLD) -- which includes the international Grants and Scholarships Program (GRASP) -- and the Central Conference Theological Education Fund (CCTEF). The agency also has ten regional hubs for Leadership, Education, and Development (LEAD Hubs) on five continents. LEAD Hubs supports the International Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges, and Universities (IAMSCU), which works with more than a dozen other United Methodist-related regional education associations worldwide. These key partnerships, along with co-creating with other general agencies, and ecumenical groups, help GBHEM to strengthen theological education and pastoral formation across the world.

In addition to providing access to theological education worldwide, GBHEM also celebrates awarding 1,950 students over \$3 million in scholarships in 2022. The agency administers and awards scholarships from over 80 programs annually, supporting students from all over the world.

For over 150 years, the United Methodist Church has been investing in the education and empowerment of African Americans and other underserved populations. One of the most significant ways this is accomplished is through the Black College Fund, which supports the 11 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) directly related to the United Methodist Church. In 2022 the Black College Fund celebrated 50 years of providing United Methodist HBCUs with millions of dollars in funding that has assisted with operating budgets, capital improvements, and special programs.

The educational institutions affiliated with The United Methodist Church are among the finest in the world and contribute to the greater good of humanity and to the health and well-being of society. The vast expanse of United Methodism's educational footprint cannot be overstated, the 109 United Methodist affiliated educational institutions have made an innumerable impact in the world.

There are 678 United Methodist clergy appointed under GBHEM endorsement providing pastoral care in active and reserve military settings, hospitals, hospices, prisons, retirement communities, workplaces, and other ministries beyond the local church. GBHEM also endorses clergy for volunteer chaplaincies in multiple settings, extending the pastor's ministry into their local communities. Through GBHEM's endorsement, United Methodist seminary students are offered the opportunity to explore military chaplaincy in the chaplain candidate program, offering them a unique learning experience and a source of income to offset seminary costs.

GBHEM continues to develop and align its priorities and staff to reflect an unequivocal commitment to worldwide inclusion, diversity, equity, and access (WIDEA). Through strategic planning, prayer, and discernment, the agency strives to increase understanding, intercultural competencies, and promote appreciation and tolerance for difference among core constituencies. Research and feedback from key constituents remain a critical element in guiding GBHEM's strategic direction and goals, as well as advancing staff development and increasing a deeper understanding of the value GBHEM provides to the United Methodist Church.

The United Methodist Church's commitment to education has been rooted historically in the vision and actions of the founder of the Methodist movement, John Wesley. Wesley encouraged intellectual development alongside spiritual growth and the pursuit of sanctification. GBHEM is honored to be a part of the historic tradition of promoting and providing transformative learning opportunities, offering support, advocacy, and resources to assist with cultivating and empowering a new generation of thoughtful Christian leaders.