

Biography - Dr. E. LeBron Fairbanks

Edward LeBron Fairbanks serves as education commissioner of the Church of the Nazarene. His offices are located in the Global Ministry Center of the denomination, located in Lenexa, Kansas. USA. In this assignment, he serves as the administrator of the International Board of Education (IBOE), a consortium of 54 Church of the Nazarene universities, colleges and seminaries in 35 countries on six continents. A 13 member Board guides the IBOE and is the global church advocate for the Nazarene higher education institutions worldwide.

Dr. E. LeBron Fairbanks earned his undergraduate degree at Trevecca Nazarene University in 1964. He received three master's degrees -- M.A. from Scarritt College in 1967, M.Div. from the Nazarene Theological Seminary in 1970, and M.Th. from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1971.

In 1976, he was designated a Fellow in Pastoral Leadership Education by Princeton Theological Seminary, earning the Doctor of Ministry Min. degree from Nazarene Theological Seminary in 1978. Dr. Fairbanks is a 1991 graduate of the Harvard University Institute of Educational Management being also a Research Fellow while on sabbatical in 1999 at Yale University Divinity School.

Dr. Fairbanks was involved in local church ministries in Tennessee and Pennsylvania for fourteen years, after which he became Academic Dean in 1978 for the European Nazarene College near Schaffhausen, Switzerland. In 1982, he became Associate Professor of Christian Education and Lay Ministry Development, and Coordinator of the Master of Ministry program at Southern Nazarene University.

Two years later, Dr. Fairbanks was elected President of the Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary in Manila, Philippines, where he served until accepting the presidency of Mount Vernon Nazarene University in July 1989. Under his leadership, APNTS received full accreditation from the Asian Theological Association and was granted "recognition" status (accreditation) by the Philippine government Department of Education. The Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary was the first graduate theological seminary not associated with a university in the Philippines to receive this recognition.

The Mount Vernon Nazarene University Board of Trustees elected Dr. Fairbanks in July 1989 as the institutions fifth president. He served as university president for eighteen years, retiring from MVNU in 2007.

During his eighteen years as the university president, the university enrollment grew to 2670 (+150%), the operating budget expanded to \$43 million (+300%), and new and expanded academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels were developed and taught in traditional and non-traditional formats.

The institution transitioned to university standing and received discipline-specific national accreditation and regional academic recognition. New academic and residential life facilities were constructed, including a spacious library/learning resources center and a beautiful student center. Nine satellite campuses were created.

A Campus Ministries Division was developed and cultural diversity initiatives were launched. Campus property expanded from 279 acres to 405 acres. The MVNU endowment expanded to \$12.6 million (+400%).

The cumulative current (or emergency) fund increased to \$2.7 million (+153%). The debt burden ratio was reduced to 2.1%. The university continued a long tradition of closing each school year with a balanced budget. A Foundation Board was created to manage endowment and university reserve funds.

Strategic plans and leadership agendas were adopted to guide the university during his tenure at Mount Vernon Nazarene University. He was elected to the position of education commissioner of the denomination in 2008.

Dr. Fairbanks co-authored the book, *Learning to be Last*, published in 2008 by Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, and has written numerous books and articles, including the modular course of study book, *Leading the People of God: Servant Leadership for a Servant Community*. He has traveled to 38 countries worldwide and serves on a variety of community, state, national, and international boards. His article on "Institutional Collaboration as Institutional Strategy" appeared in several national publications.

From 1995-1998, Dr. Fairbanks served as chair of a Church of the Nazarene Council of Education subcommittee developing a strategic plan for networking and collaboration. He has served since 1977 on the International Course of Study Advisory Committee (ICOSAC). He chaired the committees on "Who Owns Ministerial Preparation?" from 2001-02, and the "Missional Review of the International Board of Education" in 2006-07. He served as secretary of the International Church Committee (ICC) from 2001-05, and as a member of the five member task force of the ICC from 2005-2009.

Dr. Fairbanks was a presenter at the Johannesburg 2000, in Johannesburg, South Africa, an international conference of Nazarene educators worldwide. He has served on the executive committee of the Ohio Foundation of Independent Colleges and as a member of the board of directors of the 500 member strong Council of Independent Colleges. He was a presidential mentor in the Executive Leadership Institute, Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. He spoke before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on "Housing and Community Development," Committee on Financial Services in March 2003, and was an Issue Group Convener at the Lausanne Forum on World Evangelism, Pattaya, Thailand in October 2004.

He was the speaker at 2003 leadership conferences in India and Bangladesh; spoke at the 2006 IberoAmerican Conference in Madrid, Spain; led leadership workshops at the 2007 Eurasia Region Leaders Conference; and served as workshop leader and plenary speaker

at the 2009 Africa Region Leaders Conference on the campus of Africa Nazarene University in Nairobi, Kenya.

Dr. Fairbanks was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He married Anne in 1962 and they have one son, Stephen. The Fairbanks family live in Shawnee, Kansas. He can be contacted at <lfairbanks@nazarene.org.>