



The main entrance to the campus.

Photo courtesy of Montemorelos University.

# Montemorelos University

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## JUAN JOSÉ ANDRADE

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Montemorelos University (Universidad de Montemorelos) is an institution of higher education established in 1942 in the city of Montemorelos, about 50 miles (80 km) south of Monterrey, Nuevo León, [Mexico](#).<sup>1</sup> It is situated on almost 230 acres (93 hectares) of land. Its campus buildings occupy about 40 acres (16 hectares). The

remainder of the property is an orange grove. The institution has 377 employees, 18 of whom have ministerial credentials and 197 of whom are professors. The mailing address of Montemorelos University is Av. Libertad 1300 Pte., Apdo. 16, Col. Barrio Matamoros C.P. 67530, Montemorelos, N.L., Mexico.

The average annual number of students is between 2,000 and 2,500. In 2022, the total number of enrolled students was 2,953. Of these, 1,976 were in on-campus undergraduate programs, 93 were in on-campus graduate programs, and 748 were in distance learning, virtual university, assessment centers, and summer courses. The educational complex also offers secondary education. In 2022, 136 of the enrolled students were in upper secondary education at the Montemorelos University Secondary School (*Escuela Preparatoria Ignacio Carrillo Franco* – Ignacio Carrillo Franco Preparatory School).

Montemorelos University offers 30 undergraduate academic programs, on campus and online, in the following areas of study: health, business and legal, education, engineering and technology, music, psychology, theology, and arts and communication.<sup>2</sup> Montemorelos University also offers more than 25 specialties and programs at the master's and doctoral levels, both on campus and online, in many professional and graduate academic areas.<sup>3</sup>

Montemorelos University's Mission states: Montemorelos University offers an integral education through a sustainable educational model, utilized in carrying out research and selfless service, in alignment with the global biblical proclamation of the Adventist hope for a new world.

## Developments Leading to the Institution's Establishment

The first attempt to establish Adventist education in Mexico happened in 1894, when Ora Osborne began teaching eight preschool children at 109 Carmen Street in Guadalajara. For various reasons, the teaching was brief, yet it demonstrated the church's educational zeal. On September 2, 1910, Professor George W. Caviness founded the *Escuela Superior de Tacubaya* (Tacubaya Secondary School) in Mexico City with the intent to prepare pastors, teachers, and other local employees for the nascent church in Mexico. The first teachers were [George W. Caviness](#) from Battle Creek College, Michigan, U.S.A.; his wife, Ana Walcott; and Waldo Miramontes of Mexican origin.<sup>4</sup>

On September 21, 1910, the school began operations with six students, but the Mexican Revolution (1910-1917) caused its closure. The school underwent many reopenings and closures through the years. It reopened in 1918, closed in 1924, reopened in 1929, and closed in 1932. The school was moved to Laredo, Texas, USA, in 1935 and reopened there in 1936. In 1942, it was relocated to Montemorelos, Nuevo León.<sup>5</sup> The school faced difficulties in its early years in obtaining permits and in dealing with dissent. It also lacked space, hampering its development.

Historian Floyd Greenleaf recounts the Adventist educational struggle in Mexico:

By some standards, Inter-America's most dramatic breakthrough in Adventist education took place in Mexico. ... Several schools for Adventist Mexican-Americans in the Hispanized borderlands of the United States offered an alternative, but they proved to be impractical. The most notable venture was a "Spanish Department" at Arizona Academy during the 1920s, but even the school's invitations to Adventists south of the border brought only a negligible number of students. In 1935 Adventist leaders in Mexico purchased a large house in McAllen, Texas, almost within a stone's throw of the international line, planning to establish a training school for prospective workers. Before their hopes materialized the building burned down, leaving the Mexican church with only the insurance money.

This seemingly impregnable wall barring a successful school began to crack in 1938 when Raimundo Garza, a recently converted physician and a professor of medicine in the northern city of Monterrey, began to speculate about the possibilities of nursing education. ...

Garza's reputation and political connections were crucial, enabling church leaders to put their foot in the door and request permission to establish a school, which, they openly admitted, would prepare workers, but with a strong emphasis on agriculture and industrial education.<sup>6</sup>

On January 18, 1942, church leaders meeting in Monterrey, Nuevo León, formed a committee to find a property for establishing a permanent institution of higher education. The committee was composed of Emiliano Ponce, A. G. Parfitt, José Anastasio Salazar, and Professor Rafael Muñoz y Núñez. To serve as the committee's advisor, they invited Rafael Muñoz, a man with a strong, established track record in education.<sup>7</sup>

After a month of work by the committee, the Mexican Union Mission Executive Committee, comprised of H. F. House, J. G. Pettey, C. E. Moon, Emiliano Ponce, J. A. Salazar, and Max Fuss, met on February 25, 1942. Also present were E. D. Dick and A. W. Peterson from the General Conference; Glenn Calkins and A. H. Roth from the Inter-American Division; and C. P. Crager, A. J. Calderón, C. L. Dinius, Julio Morgado, H. A. B. Robinson, V. A. Sauza, José Quintero, and M. E. Olsen as guests. After much prayer, the board members analyzed the committee's proposal regarding land options but reached no final decision.<sup>8</sup>

On February 27, 1942, the Mexican Union Mission Executive Board presented the following objectives for the permanent institution:

that an institution of higher education be established to prepare its students for ministry, colporteur, business, education, and other denominational work, and that it provide secondary level training to prepare young people in the practical trades

that the training school be established in a rural area with a large concentration of church members, such as Tabasco or Oaxaca, adapting to needs, providing resources, and training workers to serve the rural population

that a system of primary schools be developed as soon as teachers complete their studies, and that local churches be taught to appreciate and support the primary school system

that youth with intellectual maturity and sound spiritual experience be accepted as students, even if lacking educational requirements

that the institution and its location, staff, and work be consistent with denominational standards and objectives, and that it adapt to the needs of and provide appropriate resources for the youth and contribute to strengthening the leadership of the church

that, in its establishment and operation, the institution comply with the country's educational system and meet all the requirements of Mexican law

The committee established several conditions to be considered when looking for the land on which the educational institution would be built. The land should: cover between 25 and 50 hectares; be fertile to have a small farm and cultivate different kinds of vegetables; be approximately 25 to 50 kilometers away from the city; and have suitable road access, an ample supply of potable water, electricity from a commercial power plant, and a proper drainage and sewage system.

After analyzing several options, on May 24, 1942, the Mexican Union Mission Executive Board agreed to offer MXN\$75,000 to purchase a 93-hectare plot of land from a former plantation called *Hacienda La Carlota* (La Carlota Ranch). The agreement was with the understanding that the land would be free of any encumbrances that could affect the property in the future. The property was located near the main avenue into the city of Montemorelos, Nuevo León. The board voted to set November 16 as the opening date for the school, even though the property had not yet been purchased, nor had the board received an official response to the offer. However, the board was firmly convinced that there would be no problems in acquiring this land, which was considered the best option for the new school.

The appointment of Pastor Harold F. House as president of the Mexican Union Mission in 1941 brought new initiatives and significant progress. Pastor [Glenn Calkins](#), president of the [Inter-American Division](#) at the time, wrote:

Elder Harold House, the superintendent of the mission, has had many years of experience in departmental and administrative work in Mexico, and the Lord is blessing his leadership. ... Profesor C. P. Crager, formerly one of the associate secretaries of the Educational Department of the General Conference, and more recently superintendent of the Colombia-Venezuela Union, has accepted the position of educational secretary of the Union. Under his leadership we are anticipating a great expansion in our educational work. Plans are under way to establish a central training school probably in the northern central part of Mexico somewhere...<sup>9</sup>

On June 17, 1942, the purchase was finalized and signed at a hotel in Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico.<sup>10</sup> The establishment of the educational institution in Montemorelos demonstrates God's guidance throughout the long process of establishing this institution of higher learning in Mexico.<sup>11</sup>

Many prayers were answered. Classes began on November 16, 1942, at the new location of the Mexican training school, now named the *Escuela Agrícola Industrial Mexicana* (Mexican Agricultural and Industrial School). The institution's history can be divided into three stages beginning with its establishment in Montemorelos, Nuevo León, Mexico.

## Stage 1: Mexican Agricultural and Industrial School (1942-1951)

The purchased property had one old building. Construction of new buildings began in July 1942. By the time classes started, a women's dormitory and two houses for teachers had been built. The women's dormitory housed the dining room and kitchen and was occupied despite having no doors or windows. The old building was used for the men's dormitory and classrooms. The Mexican Agricultural and Industrial School (MAIS) offered secondary-level courses, secretarial courses, and a two-year religion program, with the school's secondary-level courses serving as the program's general courses.

In 1942, I. M. Angell was the MAIS director, and its faculty were Antonio Alarcán, Mrs. I. M. Angell, L. E. Breitigam, Mrs. Carmen, A. G. Parfitt, Mrs. A. G. Parfitt, and Acevedo de Rodriguez.<sup>12</sup>

1943 was a historic year for the institution as Mexico's President Manuel Ávila Camacho visited on April 24.

Elder House wrote:

The Governor visited our school about three weeks ago, and offered to arrange for the President of Mexico to make a personal visit to our school upon his return from the United States; and on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April we had the honor of receiving him in the afternoon. ...apparently the whole party went away well impressed with the work we are doing. ... The newspapers reported very favorably on this visit, and we feel that our new school at Montemorelos is now really on the map. ... We feel very fortunate to have such a good location for this new training center.<sup>13</sup>

In 1944, Harold F. House, president of the Mexican Union Mission, spent some time in "Montemorelos, where our training school is located. In fact, for a time it was necessary for me to be in charge of the school until help came from the Division, in the arrival of Elder and Mrs. Roth who then took over responsibility of leadership at the school."<sup>14</sup>

On November 13, 1944, the school's programs were registered with the Department of Education and Culture of the State of Nuevo León. Soon after, the accounting program was added, and three additional classrooms were built that same year. In the following academic year, a library and a physics laboratory were built, and the

school's first yearbook, "Alfa 1945," was published.

Beginning in 1946, the school's administration placed its emphasis on infrastructure and academic development. On January 15, 1948, the school began offering its nursing program, and in 1950, an agreement was reached to offer the program through an affiliation with the University of Nuevo León. During this period, the administration building, several classrooms, the men's dormitory, and teachers' houses for teachers.

The Montemorelos Sanatorium and Hospital was built on a plot of land adjacent to the school. This plot of land had been donated by the governor of the state of Nuevo León, Arturo B. de la Garza. On January 23, 1947, the Montemorelos Sanatorium and Hospital was inaugurated. The hospital's first medical director was H. E. Butka. For the first seven years, the hospital was administered by the school's administration.<sup>15</sup>

## Stage 2: Montemorelos Vocational and Professional College (1951-1973)

The rapid growth of the institution and plans to expand its academic and technical offerings made a change of name necessary. Thus, on March 26, 1950, the Mexican Agricultural and Industrial School Board voted to rename the institution Montemorelos Vocational and Professional College. The change was made official in 1951. Its principal was C. F. Montgomery, and its assistant principal was Horacio Hernández.<sup>16</sup> The college became the first Adventist educational institution in Mexico to receive official recognition from the Mexican government.

The ministerial education program has always been the most important program on the Montemorelos campus. During this period, the program expanded from a two-year to a three-year program. Then, an accreditation committee of the Inter-American Division approved the offering of a four-year Bachelor of Theology degree to train pastors better.

The nursing school, in affiliation with the Montemorelos Hospital and Sanatorium for its practical training, quickly gained widespread recognition. Consequently, healthcare and medicine became key aspects in the institution's achievement of academic recognition.

Significant academic progress was being made. An important event was the opening of the preparatory school in October 1956. This initiative provided an opportunity to pursue a higher education degree, as completing preparatory education is a prerequisite for admission to a university degree program.

The college established its basic teacher training school with provisional recognition in 1957 and received official recognition four years later. In 1959, a campus church building with a capacity of 600 was built and dedicated. The college had needed a proper church since it had been using its auditorium, built in the early 1940s, to hold church services.

Between 1959 and 1963, new classrooms were added, the dormitories were expanded, and an elementary school was built. In 1967, the college launched the public accounting and auditing program through an agreement with the University of Nuevo León.

The demand for nurses and medical and technical personnel was high in the territory of the Inter-American Division, but its Adventist institutions could not meet this need. To address this issue, in 1969 the Inter-American Division granted student scholarships to pursue degrees in the required academic fields.

The addition of academic programs and increased enrollment increased the library holdings to serve an ever-demanding and well-prepared student body. Also, the recreational center *Ojo de Agua* (Eye of Water), about three miles from the school, was acquired for the campus community's extracurricular activities.

### Stage 3: Montemorelos University (1973-Present)

The growth of the educational institution during its first 30 years, especially while it was Montemorelos Vocational and Professional College, led its leaders to imagine the possibility that the college would someday become a university.

President Therlow J. Harper's wise administration strengthened the institution financially and reinforced its commitment to the principles of Adventist education. Seeing God's guidance in the college's development, the administration decided to take significant steps that required faith and holy boldness. Professor Harper informed the Mexican Union Mission's administration of the possibility for the institution to apply for a higher academic category. The union administrators agreed, and the application was submitted with the necessary documents to the government of the State of Nuevo León.

Charles B. Hirsch, then General Conference Departmental Secretary of Education, reported:

In the spring of 1971 Adventist Church leaders in Mexico, encouraged by the fact that the state of Nueva [sic] Leon had granted charters for the new private universities, felt it might be the appropriate time to request consideration for recognition of the Adventist school in Montemorelos.

Their thinking was that in applying to the governor for a charter, they would at least accomplish the objective of having the government define conditions necessary to grant a charter.

In their request they also proposed the possibility of developing a medical school in conjunction with Montemorelos Sanitarium and Hospital. Presently Seventh-day Adventist students are studying medicine in several Mexican universities, including the medical school at Guadalajara. ...

After waiting for about one year without any response from the governor, church leaders made a new application when the governorship changed hands. Again months went by without a decision from the government office. The leaders felt that they had made a prayerful attempt, and perhaps that was as far as they

should go.

Then without advance announcement, on April 3, 1973, the governor signed the decree granting the charter. The official journal of the state carried the resolution in its May 5, 1973, publication.

This act, the creation of the University of Montemorelos by executive order, was an unprecedented and unparalleled providential development in the Spanish-speaking Adventist world. Outside the North American Division there are few places where Adventist schools on the tertiary level are given full recognition and authority to serve as degree-granting institutions. Usually only publicly supported schools are given this status.<sup>17</sup>

The governor of Nuevo León's signing of the decree took all the leaders of the Adventist Church in Mexico by surprise. That same month, the Mexican Union Mission Board of Directors passed the following resolution: "Since the government of the State of Nuevo León, by decree, has elevated the college in Montemorelos to the status of a university, it is VOTED: To respectfully request the Inter-American Division to authorize the college in Montemorelos to function as a university."<sup>18</sup>

## Petition to Change From College to University and Establishing New Programs

The Inter-American Division appointed a special committee with representatives from the General Conference, the division, the union education departments, and other administrators and financial representatives. The committee met in June 1973 to determine if the existing school was ready to be upgraded to the university level.

The committee carefully analyzed staff, faculty, finances, and facilities, resulting in a 70-page report. As a result of the investigation, discussion, and final plans recommended by this committee, the Mexican Union Mission Plenary Board voted the following: "To request authorization from the Inter-American Division to proceed with the plans for the establishment of Montemorelos University."<sup>19</sup>

The Inter-American Division then requested authorization from the General Conference for the Montemorelos institution to offer several baccalaureate degrees and be upgraded to university level. The request was presented to the Annual Council of the General Conference on October 4, 1973, and it was:

VOTED, To authorize the upgrading of Montemorelos Vocational and Professional College with the following stipulations:

1. That the request of the Inter-American Division, that Montemorelos Vocational and Professional College be authorized to offer baccalaureate degrees in theology..., secondary education, and business administration, be approved along the guidelines established by the department [General Conference Education Department]...

2. That the Inter-American Division assume responsibility for the operation of Montemorelos in cooperation with the Mexican Union Mission, if this school is to serve as a university with professional schools.
3. That the Inter-American Division and Mexican Union Mission continue implementation of the guidelines for upgrading schools as found in the Report, Board of Regents, 1971...
4. That a special committee be named by the General Conference Department of Education to make an on-site study of the plans for programs in medicine and nursing, and to provide specific guidelines for the same.
5. That on the basis of the 4 preceding points and the receipt of a government charter for developing the present school into the University of Montemorelos, that the Inter-American Division be authorized to move in this direction...
6. That the plan of finance for 1973-1981...of the Survey Committee Report,... be studied by the General Conference Department of Education and the Treasury for their approval.<sup>20</sup>

Following the General Conference's approval, Hirsch noted that an on-site committee was formed to plan implementation of the new program and develop a master plan. Meeting for several days in March 1974, the committee included representatives from the General Conference Departments of Education, Health, and Treasury; corresponding division and union leaders; the dean and a professor from Loma Linda University's medical school; and six Mexican physicians. Their purpose was to guide the initiative in harmony with the counsel of Ellen G. White, recognizing potential obstacles but trusting they could be overcome under God's direction. Representatives from Loma Linda pledged strong support through visiting lecturers and donated resources, including a 5,000-volume medical library, office and medical equipment, microscopic slides, 50 television screens, and an electrocardiogram machine. The committee recommended a five-year building program, a financial plan, hospital and clinical upgrades, and a four-year curriculum, with the first class of 25 students—about 90 percent from Mexico and other parts of Latin America—scheduled to begin in September 1975, and improvements to other programs commencing immediately. This project, the first Seventh-day Adventist medical training center outside the United States, challenged not only the Mexican Union and Inter-American Division but the wider church, and, if operated in harmony with church standards and guided by the Holy Spirit, would strengthen the church's educational work..<sup>21</sup>

## Financing the University

Financing the newly named institution and its new programs was among the necessary tasks for the leaders of the Mexican Union Mission and Montemorelos Vocational and Professional College. The pressure to establish a school of medicine in one year added a greater and more urgent challenge due to the difficulty of obtaining the needed finances to take on such a task. Nevertheless, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Mexico and all its organizations faced this challenge with faith and a spirit of sacrifice.

The Mexican Union Mission's Plenary Board voted to request each of the union's six missions to donate MXN\$25,000.00 for Montemorelos University before the end of 1973. At the same meeting, it was voted to request that the Publishing House donate MXN\$50,000.00 to Montemorelos University before the end of 1973. It was also voted to collect a special offering for Montemorelos University on November 10, 1973, from the churches in all six missions.<sup>22</sup>

All churches, members, and organizations made special offerings with sacrifice so that Montemorelos University and a medical school could be established. As the university celebrates its more than 50 years of existence, Montemorelos University, as well as its Medical School, marches triumphantly toward continued success. More than 1,920 medical doctors have graduated, making the dreams of those who persevered in faith to establish a medical school a reality.

## Construction of the Campus Facilities

Walton J. Brown, General Conference Education director, visited the campus and wrote about six miracles that occurred, allowing the college to become a university. The first miracle occurred when the college president received authorization to operate a full-scale university, granting degrees up to the doctoral level, including the doctoral degree in medicine.

Another remarkable development was the establishment of the new campus. The first structure erected was a two-story building for the Theology Department, followed by a second two-story facility for the School of Medicine, equipped with modern laboratories, classrooms, and offices. With counsel from personnel of Andrews University, a new dining room and kitchen with a seating capacity of 400 were constructed; notably, the cost of the kitchen equipment exceeded that of the building itself, and the facility was capable of serving 300 persons within 20 minutes. All buildings were designed to allow for both vertical and horizontal expansion. A new 50,000-gallon water tank was installed, sufficient to serve a town of 10,000 inhabitants, while two wells, each producing 310 gallons per minute, supplied the necessary water. These developments consumed the majority of the church's financial resources, and although dormitories were urgently needed, funds were unavailable. At this juncture, the Evangelische Zentralstelle für Entwicklungshilfe e. V., a semiofficial charitable evangelical organization headquartered in Bonn-Bad Godesberg, West Germany, contributed more than US\$800,000 toward the construction of two two-story dormitories. The men's residence hall was completed in 1976, and the women's hall was nearing completion at the time of the visit in April.<sup>23</sup>

Although it had existed since 1942 in two-, three-, and later four-year academic programs, the Bachelor of Theology degree was recognized only by the church and not by the Mexican government due to the laws in effect at that time. On November 27, 1970, the Mexican Union Mission Board of Directors voted to authorize the Montemorelos University theology faculty to hand out the degree diplomas for the Bachelor of Theology to past graduates of the Montemorelos Seminary during the upcoming graduation ceremony.<sup>24</sup> The laws changed after

1992, and in 2010, the Montemorelos University Bachelor of Theology program received official recognition from the Mexican government.<sup>25</sup>

With the Second Quarter's 13<sup>th</sup> Sabbath Offering in 1973, the new Food Services Center was built. This building was the first in a series to be built during this period of the university's development. The existing dormitories were assigned for boys and girls in the secondary school program. Buildings with appropriate classrooms for the schools of theology, medicine, and nursing were also built. Between 1974 and 1977, the medical sciences building, theology building, dining hall, rector's office, library and two additional dormitories were constructed and inaugurated. The residential houses on South University Avenue were also built.<sup>26</sup>

This phase of construction experienced its greatest thrust during the administration of Rector Jaime Castrejón Sánchez, whose years of service were known as the "era of miraculous development." The buildings for administration, visual arts, and dental technology, the clinical biochemistry laboratories, the building for graduate studies, and numerous houses for faculty and staff were built within a 15-year time frame. A newly built medical center was inaugurated by José López Portillo, president of Mexico, on April 25, 1981.<sup>27</sup> Above all, the new construction was the university campus church with a capacity of 2,500 and with all of the modern facilities and services available at the time. A new and beautiful university campus had been built.

## Offering of New Academic Programs

The growth of the Adventist movement in Mexico and Latin America demanded the expansion of the university's academic offerings. The establishment of the medical school and the offering of graduate programs attracted a diverse student body to Montemorelos University, with students representing more than 40 countries each academic year. From 1977 to 1981, a summer master's program in religion was offered as an extension of Andrews University.

The university experienced tremendous academic growth from 1983 to 1993. In 1983, under the leadership of Rector Daniel Martínez Cruz, the bachelor's degree in nutrition was launched. This degree offered the option to obtain a dietitian's certificate after completing two years. That same year, the bachelor's degree in clinical biochemistry was also established. The art education program, which later became the modern Bachelor of Visual Arts degree, was first introduced as a specialization within the Bachelor of Education degree. Also in 1983, the university restructured the music program to offer a Bachelor of Music degree with two areas of specialization, instrumental performance and music education.<sup>28</sup>

In 1984, the dental technician program was launched, and, later, the baccalaureate in dental surgery was added. The public accountant and auditor program was upgraded to a baccalaureate degree in public accounting. The baccalaureate programs in elementary education and preschool education were initiated in compliance with the Mexican government's teacher training programs.

Near the end of the 1980s, under the leadership of Rector Ismael Castillo, Montemorelos University adopted a broader expansion plan under its strategic motto “Toward a Global Mission.” Since 1987, the university’s academic offerings have included extension programs to prepare workers to serve in the territory of the Inter-American Division. The first was an extension program in Cuba to train and award their pastors with a baccalaureate degree in theology.

In 1988, the Master of Science degree in administration was launched as an extension program of Andrews University. The year 1989 was full of memorable events. The Montemorelos Vocational and Professional College, which had been maintained for legal reasons and served as the university’s secondary school, was divided to be administered by the nearby conference and the university. The elementary and middle school was to be administered by the Northeast Mexican Conference and was named “Soledad Acevedo de los Reyes Adventist Secondary School.” The secondary school level was retained by the university and named “Ignacio Carrillo Franco Preparatory School.” In 1989, the Master of Education degree was launched with specializations in educational administration, curriculum development and instruction, and higher education. The Master of Public Health degree was also launched with specializations in health systems administration, preventive care, health education, and family health.

## Extension Programs in Inter-America and Beyond

With the development of the graduate programs, extension programs were opened at the campuses of the two Adventist boarding institutions in Mexico: *Colegio del Pacífico* (now Navojoa University) in the state of Sonora, and *Colegio Linda Vista* (now Linda Vista University) in the state of Chiapas.

Extension programs were also offered at academic institutions in Colombia, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Haiti, Martinique, Guadeloupe, and the Dominican Republic to prepare workers to serve in the Inter-American Division. Scholarships were also provided to allow teachers from these institutions to attend Montemorelos University to pursue a graduate-level program.

The extension programs offered through Montemorelos University expanded beyond the territory of the Inter-American Division and reached the countries of Spain, Chile, Romania, and Angola.<sup>29</sup>

## Additional Academic Programs and K-12 Bible Textbooks

In 1990, the Conservatory of Music was established. Today, a program in music education is offered through the School of Music.

In 1992, the following degree programs were launched:

Bachelor of Business Administration

Bachelor of Computer Systems Administration

In 1993, the following programs were introduced:

Specialty in Reconstructive Dentistry

Master of Business Administration

Master of Pastoral Theology

Doctorate in Education

To expand the range of academic offerings, new programs were launched in computer science, psychology, communication, dentistry, and architecture.

*Visión para emprender, pasión para servir* (Vision to undertake, passion to serve) was a Montemorelos University motto in the past that has become a legacy of the university community, embracing the global biblical proclamation with the Adventist hope for a new world.

A project to develop an Adventist educational model for Montemorelos University, begun in the mid-1990s, was completed in 2000. It featured a curriculum built from the ground up within the framework of the Adventist philosophy of education. It was an intellectual movement of studies, exchanges, discussions, and agreements that resulted in the Study Plan 2000 for Montemorelos University. The model was updated in 2010 and again in 2018.

During this period, Montemorelos University created K-12 Bible class textbooks in Spanish and provided these for the K-12 Adventist educational system. During 2025, the Bible textbooks for grades K-9 have been translated into English, French, and Romanian and were delivered to the appropriate unions, and textbooks for grades 10-12 will be delivered during 2026.

## Montemorelos University Today

Today, Montemorelos University is a great institution with a global reach, looking confidently towards the future. It has been recognized both within and outside the church for its commitment to excellence, fulfilling its mission, and its Adventist identity. It is believed that Montemorelos University was created by God's will and is still guided by God.

Montemorelos University enjoys full official recognition of its academic programs from the *Reconocimiento de Validez Oficial de Estudios* (Recognition of Official Validation of Studies). Furthermore, as an institution, and for each of its degree programs, it holds the Official Registration 19MSU1017U with Mexico's Secretariat of Public Education (SEP), the *Dirección de Estadísticas* (Directorate of Statistics), and the *Dirección General de Profesiones*

(General Directorate of Professions). Therefore, each awarded professional diploma has a unique official registry number for its appropriate academic field, leading to the issuance of the corresponding professional license for alumni to practice in their chosen profession in Mexico.

Montemorelos University offers the following academic programs according to its online academic catalog:

#### 1. Health

Bachelor's degrees in:

Nursing

Medical Surgery

Nutrition and Lifestyle

Clinical Biochemist

Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation

Dental Surgery

Higher University Technician in Dental Technology

#### 2. Business and Legal

Bachelor's degrees in:

International Business and Administration

Public Accounting

Law

#### 3. Education

Bachelor's degree in:

Preschool Education

Primary Education

Teaching of:

Natural Sciences

Social Sciences

English

Language and Communication

Mathematics

4. Engineering and Technology

Bachelor's degree in:

Industrial and Systems Engineering

Engineering in:

Electronics and Telecommunications

Information Technology Management

Computer Systems

5. Music

Bachelor's degree in:

Music with an Emphasis on Music Teaching

6. Psychology

Bachelor's degrees in:

Educational Psychology

Clinical Psychology

7. Theology

Bachelor's degree in:

Theology

8. Arts and Communication

Bachelor's degrees in:

Architecture

Visual Arts

Communication and Media

Visual Communication Design

9. Graduate Degrees

Masters in:

Finances

Human Resources Management

Business Administration

Marketing

Accounting

Internet and Security

Public Health

Education with Emphasis in:

Educational Technology

Curriculum Management

Teaching Management

Educational Management

Family Counseling

Family Therapy

Communication Management

Specialties in:

Business Administration

Finances

Marketing

Reconstructive Orthodontist

Crisis Intervention

Teaching

Leadership and Educational Administration

Application of Technological Resources in the Educational Process

Online Education

Curricular Design and Innovation

Doctorates in:

Education

Business Administration

Family Counseling

10. Virtual MU

Specialties in:

Marketing

Business Administration

Human Resources Management

Teaching

Online Education

Leadership and Educational Management

Master's degrees in:

Public Health

Family Relations

Education with Emphasis in Educational Administration

Administration with Emphasis in:

Human Resources

Finances

Baccalaureate degrees in:

Public Accounting

Innovative Education Environments

Business and Enterprise Development

Advertising and Corporate Communication

Theology

Higher University Technician in Music Education<sup>30</sup>

Montemorelos University is currently developing a project named "MU Health" for which La Carlota Hospital will become an academic medical center and be a central piece in the project's success. This project will integrate all academic programs related to the health area with the hospital. The project also includes a *Centro de Investigación e Innovación* (Innovation and Investigation Center) with a specialized simulation area for teaching the medical sciences. Through this project, Montemorelos University will create opportunities for research, clinical care, and worker training.<sup>31</sup>

## Affiliations and Recognitions

In 2013, the State of Nuevo León became the first in the northeast region of Mexico to offer 100 baccalaureate programs from universities within the state. It was recognized for its high academic quality. In March 2013, the *Consejo para la Acreditación de la Educación Superior, A.C.* (COPAES) (Council for the Accreditation of Higher Education, A.C.) recognized Montemorelos University for its accredited baccalaureate programs that had

contributed to the achievement of the State of Nuevo León.

In October 2017, during the Ninth World Meeting on Values, Montemorelos University received global certification as a compassionate university from the Charter for Compassion International for its community service projects and internal policies that promote compassion as a way of life.

In November 2017, Montemorelos University was recognized by the French *Académie nationale de médecine* (National Academy of Medicine) and awarded the Academy's Silver Medal.

In addition, Montemorelos University is affiliated with the *Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior* (ANUIES) (National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions). This non-governmental organization unites major Mexican public and private higher education institutions.

Montemorelos University was designated as a "Healthy University" and is an affiliated member of the *Red Mexicana de Universidades Promotoras de Salud* (RMUPS) (Mexican Network of Health-Promoting Universities).

Then, in 2024, Montemorelos University joined the country's *Sistema de Evaluación y Acreditación de la Educación Superior* (SEAES) (Higher Education Evaluation and Accreditation System).

## Distinguished Alumni

Throughout the history of this academic institution, numerous graduates have distinguished themselves in both the church and society. Among them are: Velino Salazar, the first Mexican president of the Mexican Union Mission; Armando Miranda, general vice president of the General Conference; Agustín Galicia, executive secretary of the Inter-American Division and associate secretary of the General Conference; Jaime Castrejón, rector of Montemorelos University and president of the Inter-American Adventist Theological Seminary; Félix Cortés, author of several colporteur books and editorial director of Inter-American Division Publishing Association; Sergio Balboa, vice president of the Inter-American Division; Ismael Castillo, rector of Montemorelos University; Filiberto Verduzco, treasurer of the Inter-American Division; Abner de los Santos, general vice president of the General Conference and president of the Inter-American Division; Antonio Anóbile, vice president of the North American Division; Félix H. Cortez, professor of New Testament literature at Andrews University; and Greisy de Gracia de Murillo, a published and recognized Panamanian author.

## Accreditations

Montemorelos University is accredited by the Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities (AAA) and *Federación de Instituciones Mexicanas Particulares de Educación Superior* (FIMPES) (Federation of Private Mexican Institutions of Higher Education)

It has the following accredited programs:

Baccalaureate in Nursing - *Consejo Mexicano para la Acreditación de Enfermería* (COMACE) (Mexican Council for the Accreditation of Nursing)

Baccalaureate in Medical Surgery - *Consejo Mexicano para la Acreditación de la Educación Médica*, A.C. (COMAEM) (Mexican Council for the Accreditation of Medical Education)

Baccalaureate in Nutrition - *Consejo Nacional para la Calidad de los Programas Educativos en Nutriología*, A.C. (CONCAPREN) (National Council for the Quality of Educational Programs in Nutrition)

Master's in Pastoral Theology and Doctorate in Ministry (SETAI) - Association of Theological Schools (ATS)

Baccalaureate in Public Accounting - *Consejo de Acreditación de la Enseñanza de la Contaduría y Administración*, A.C. (CACECA) (Council of Accreditation for the Teaching of Accounting and Administration)

Baccalaureate in Clinical Psychology - *Consejo Nacional para la Enseñanza e Investigación en Psicología*, A.C. (CNEIP) (National Council for the Teaching and Research of Psychology)

Baccalaureate in Architecture - *Acreditadora Nacional de Programas de Arquitectura y Disciplinas del Espacio Habitable*, A.C. (ANPADEH) (National Accreditation for Programs of Architecture and Disciplines of Habitable Space)

## Historical Role of the University

Montemorelos University maintains a close and active relationship with its surroundings, from the local community to international organizations. Mutual communications focus on promoting health, community service, missionary work, and professional training. These ventures are primarily focused on addressing the social determinants of health in collaboration with local and state authorities, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, and international networks.

Numerous initiatives have been carried out in conjunction with community leaders and the municipal government of Montemorelos. The university has had an agreement with successive municipal administrations for several years, allowing it to assume responsibilities in the *Dirección de Salud Pública* (Department of Public Health) and the *Dirección de Planeación Estratégica para el Desarrollo Municipal* (Department of Strategic Planning for Municipal Development). Through these interactions, Montemorelos University has promoted healthy lifestyles and well-being by implementing policies focused on the social determinants of health.

Thanks to this collaboration, meaningful strategies – such as Zero Dental Cavities, Zero Preventable Blindness, Zero Diabetes, Health at Home, Young People with a Purpose, and Health Space – have been developed. These programs train community leaders to become “health guardians,” thereby strengthening community

participation and interventions. These long-term alliances with municipal administrations have enabled the coordination of resources and the monitoring of results, ensuring that strategies related to health and municipal development meet the community's actual needs.<sup>32</sup>

At the state level, Montemorelos University participates in the *Red Neoleonesa de Universidades Promotoras de la Salud* (Nuevo León Network of Health-Promoting Universities). It serves on its board of directors, contributing to dialogue and the development of guidelines for health promotion at the university and in the wider community. The university has agreements and collaborations with the Autonomous University of Nuevo León, the *Secretaría de Salud* (Secretariat of Health), and the *Secretaría de Igualdad e Inclusión* (Secretariat of Equality and Inclusion) to develop community intervention and research projects. Furthermore, the university has worked with non-governmental organizations such as the *Encuentro Mundial de Valores* (Global Encounter on Values) on initiatives focused on compassionate action and supporting the certifications of compassion distributed within the municipality of Montemorelos.

At the regional level, Montemorelos University contributes to the work of the Health Ministries Department of the North Mexican Union Conference in 14 states of the Mexican Republic by implementing the *Quiero ¡Vivir Sano!* (I Want to Live Healthy!) program. This program promotes healthy practices and spreads the Adventist Health Message as a strategy for evangelization and community outreach.

The university has established agreements with the *Academia Mexicana de Cirugía* (Mexican Academy of Surgery) for research projects and exchanges. It collaborated with the *Secretaría de Salud* (Secretariat of Health) on the design and implementation of the *Adelante con Cinco Pasos por tu Salud* (Forward with Five Steps for your Health) program, aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles. Montemorelos University has been an active participant in the *Red Mexicana de Universidades Promotoras de la Salud* (Mexican Network of Health-Promoting Universities), holding positions on its board of directors and collaborating on nationwide initiatives.

## Relationship With the World Seventh-day Adventist Church

### Missionary Program

World missionary service attracts university students to train as volunteer missionaries and serve in unreached areas, such as the 10/40 Window. During the 2024-2025 academic year, 29 missionary university students representing 11 different academic majors served in 17 countries from the 10/40 Window.

The university church collects a special offering every Sabbath for the 10/40 Window. The children of the church collect this special offering during the worship service, along with the regular tithes and offerings. Many members regularly contribute to this project as part of their systematic giving plan. Therefore, the amount collected each Sabbath is substantial and supports missionary projects in many countries in the 10/40 Window. Besides sending students to the 10/40 Window, the student missionary program also sends student

missionaries to more than 60 countries.

### International Cooperation

On the international level, an agreement was signed with the *Académie nationale de médecine* (National Academy of Medicine) to participate in a research project on health issues in Mexico and Colombia.

Montemorelos University led the research, which was included in the scientific publication from the *Académie nationale de médecine: Nutrición, obesidad, DBM, HTA, dislipidemias, TCA y salud mental: Mejores prácticas franco-méxico-colombianas* ("Nutrition, Obesity, Diabetes Mellitus (DBM), Arterial Hypertension (HTA), Dyslipidemia, Eating Disorders (TCA), and Mental Health: Franco-Mexican-Colombian Best Practices"). Montemorelos University contributed the chapters *Quiero ¡Vivir Sano!, México y Colombia: una metodología científica y construcción social* (I Want to Live Healthy! Mexico and Colombia: a Scientific Methodology and Social Construct) and *La salud espiritual, su evaluación y su papel en la obesidad, la diabetes mellitus y otras enfermedades crónicas no-transmisibles* (Spiritual Health, its Assessment, and its Role in Obesity, Diabetes Mellitus, and Other Non-Communicable Chronic Diseases). Montemorelos University also contributed to chapters on obesity, diabetes mellitus, and non-communicable diseases.<sup>33</sup>

In addition, Montemorelos University participates in strategic health projects throughout the Inter-American Division's territory. The purpose of these projects is to develop, evaluate, and implement the *Movimiento Salud TOTAL* (Total Health Movement) initiative to promote a healthy lifestyle, share the Adventist health message, and serve communities.

### International Students

Each year, Montemorelos University enrolls international students from more than 51 countries. These students comprise 26% of the entire student population.

### Missionary Alumni

Montemorelos University has become a global benchmark for the Adventist Church, thanks to its strong missionary focus, as shown by its student enrollment from all continents. As of 2025, over 30 dedicated Montemorelos University alumni are working as missionaries and are quietly sharing hope and compassion in parts of the world where access to the gospel remains limited.

## What Remains to be Done to Fulfill the Mission

The university's immediate actions include prioritizing continuous training for volunteers and staff in order to ensure the quality and sustainability of initiatives; strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems through the establishment of clear indicators to measure impact and enhance accountability; seeking diverse funding

sources (e.g., state funds, donations, agreements, and research projects) to ensure financial stability; consolidating inter-institutional communication channels and coordination protocols with the municipality, state authorities, regional partners, and the church; and promoting results and best practices through publications, academic events, and strategic alliances to broaden the reach of the programs.

In the region, efforts include solidifying the implementation and continuation of successful programs, such as *Quiero ¡Vivir Sano!* ("I Want to Live Healthy!"), across the 14 states of the North Mexican Union Conference, with methodologies adapted to local particularities; strengthening the network of health-promoting universities in the region through coordinated interventions and the sharing of resources and best practices; improving regional monitoring and evaluation systems by establishing indicators to measure impact and facilitate comparison of results across territories; expanding continuous education for staff and volunteers to ensure standardized criteria and practical training; and seeking and securing regional funding sources to guarantee the sustainability of the programs.

At the national level, efforts included cultivating alliances with national organizations—such as the Secretariat of Health, universities, and NGOs—to develop national-level projects and evidence-based public policies; promoting publications, academic events, and other materials to disseminate results and best practices nationwide; consolidating agreements and applied research projects that generated evidence regarding interventions addressing the social determinants of health; diversifying and managing funding from private organizations as well as government sources to ensure the continuity and expansion of programs; and strengthening institutional coordination and operational protocols for communication with state and municipal authorities in order to facilitate the replication of successful models.

At the global level, initiatives include scaling and adapting the Total Health Movement initiative and other programs to international contexts within the Inter-American Division; pursuing international collaborations for research, academic exchange, and training, including partnerships with foreign medical schools and universities; promoting the university's participation in international consortia and networks to facilitate funding, visibility, and external evaluation; and publishing studies presenting methodologies, evidence, and results in international forums, with translation undertaken when necessary to support adaptation in other countries.

## List of Directors and Rectors

Mexican Agricultural and Industrial School (1942-1951) Directors: Alfred G. Parfitt (1942); Ivan M. Angell (1942-1944); Arturo H. Roth, H. F. House, A. G. Parfitt, Rafael Muñoz, John Ewing (interim directors - 1944-1945); Herald Ambrose Habenicht (1946-1951); Antonio Alarcón y Fierro (1951).

Montemorelos Vocational and Professional College (1951-1973) Directors: Horacio Hernández (1951-1952); Carl F. Montgomery (1952-1956); F. G. Drachenberg (1956-1958); C. D. Christensen (1958-1959); Carlos R. Taylor (1959-1965); Therlow J. Harper (1965-1973).

Montemorelos University (1973- ) Rectors: Therlow J. Harper (1973-1975); José Luis Muñoz (1975-1976); Jaime Castrejón (1976-1982); Daniel Martínez Cruz (1982-1987); Ismael Castillo Osuna (1987- ).

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