



Santa Catarina Adventist Academy.

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Santa Catarina Adventist Academy

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Santa Catarina Adventist Academy (Instituto Adventista de Ensino de Santa Catarina, IAESC) offers elementary and high school education to day and boarding students. It belongs to the Adventist Church in Brazil and is part of the worldwide Adventist education network. It is one of the institutions of the South Brazil Union Mission. It is located at kilometer 64 of the federal BR-101 highway, Zip Code 89245-000, Corveta neighborhood, in the city of Araquari, in the state of Santa Catarina, Brazil.

IAESC currently has an area of 72 hectares. In this space there are two dormitories with 50 rooms each, that can house 400 students; a school building with 16 classrooms all equipped with multimedia; an amphitheater; an art school; a church building with 830 seats; two chapels, with 400 seats each; a cafeteria for 500 people; a library with more than 10,000 volumes in an area of more than 500 m²; and an 800m² administrative and educational building. In addition, there is an orchard with more than 200 fruit trees and a 10,000 m² vegetable garden.¹

The academy also has two sports complexes. The aquatic complex consists of a semi-Olympic pool, a children's pool, a biribol pool (a sport, which resembles an aquatic variation of volleyball). All pools are heated and, in addition, there are three hydromassage pools for eight people each, and a steam sauna. The second sports complex consists of a sports gym with two multi-sport courts; a weight room and a room for aerobics class; a skate park and a bicicross track. The school currently has 642 students, and a team of 106 employees, including teachers, and deans.²

Developments that Led to the Institution's Establishment

Santa Catarina hosted the first Adventist parish school in the city of Gaspar Alto in 1897, with the goal of training young missionaries to carry the gospel message to other territories of Brazil. In 1900, the city also hosted the first Adventist boarding school in the country, an agro-industrial school with a dormitory for 40 boarding students. The "Colégio Superior" (Superior School) was under the administration of Pastor John Lipke. Three years later the school was transferred to Taquari, in Rio Grande do Sul and from there to São Paulo in 1915. With the school relocation, the state of Santa Catarina was left without an Adventist academy.³

The first years of the Adventist Church development in Santa Catarina was under the administrative unit which led the Adventists in the states of Paraná and Santa Catarina (Santa Catarina-Paraná Conference, presently called South Paraná Conference). The Adventist development in Santa Catarina began in the countryside of the state, with the establishment of the churches of Joinville (April 1896) and Benedito Novo (July 1897).⁴ On June 11, 1919, an Adventist church was organized in the city of Brusque. The meeting took place in Brother Pieper's house and 23 people were present Seven of them were baptized on that occasion.⁵

As the church in Santa Catarina grew, so did the need to have a Christian school. Thus, in 1935, Adventist families of German origin established Benedito Novo School (Colégio Benedito Novo) in the municipality of Benedito Novo. This school offered education equivalent to what is known today as elementary and middle school. However, due to some bureaucratic reasons, the government closed the school, which was reopened in 1938, this time in Butiá dos Colaços district, in the state of Paraná, on the border with Santa Catarina. This school was the beginning of what later became Parana Adventist College (Instituto Adventista Paranaense, IAP).⁶

In the 1940s and 1950s, the Adventist message was expanded to other places of the state, including the capital, Florianópolis. There, in 1944, a group of Adventists was established after a series of evangelistic meetings led by Pastor Araceli Melo.⁷ In May 1952, the Florianópolis group was organized into a church,⁸ and on May 25, 1953, a

church building in the capital (presently known as Central Adventist Church of Florianópolis) was inaugurated. Four years later in 1957, Santa Catarina Mission (Missão Catarinense), presently Santa Catarina Conference (called Associação Catarinense), was organized to serve the Adventists of Santa Catarina.⁹

There is no exact date for the Adventist message arrival in the municipality of Araquari, the city where IAESC is established. What is known is that the Adventist community in that city was formed mostly by Adventists who migrated from the region of Lageado Baixo, in the municipality of Guabiruba, around 120 kilometers from Araquari.¹⁰ In 1976, there was a small primary school with around 20 students in the church of Araquari. The students had classes in the church hall. At that time, the community was already interested in providing its children quality Christian education based on biblical principles, following the model practiced in Gaspar Alto and Benedito Novo.¹¹

The Adventist work expanded in Santa Catarina and, in 1982, Santa Catarina Mission changed its status to Santa Catarina Conference (Associação Catarinense, AC).¹² The conference planned to establish an Adventist boarding school in the state of Santa Catarina. Thus, during the 1990s, the Adventist businessman Arno Becker, from Joinville, began to look for a suitable property for the school in the north of Santa Catarina. At first, the Adventist church received a land donation offer in the municipality of Alfredo Wagner, located 111 km from Florianópolis; however, the location was not suitable for a school.¹³

The second option was a piece of land in the municipality of Massaranduba that was eventually purchased. The place, however, was uneven and those responsible for the project anticipated extra expenses with the preparation of the land for the construction. In addition, the property was far from the highway BR-101, making the arrival and departure of students and acquiring supplies for the school quite difficult. Thus, the church sold the property in Massaranduba. The South Brazil Union Mission and the Santa Catarina Conference leaders continued to look for an appropriate place for the new academy's establishment.¹⁴

In 1997, following Brother Becker's recommendation, a property in the municipality of Araquari was purchased. The Becker family also donated a large amount of money for the purchase of the land, which was a 72 hectares farm. The property was located between Curitiba and Florianópolis, close to the BR 101 highway and 20 km from the city of Joinville, a prestigious location. This was rightly seen as the ideal place for the boarding school, which has remained there until the present time.¹⁵

The Founding of the Institution

Establishing a boarding school in Santa Catarina was not easy. Building works started in 1997 and completed nearly 10 years later. It took many sacrifices, dedication, and prayer from church leaders and members.¹⁶ At the time, the project's budget was USD \$ 5 million. The cornerstone of the new school was laid on August 9, 1998. On the occasion, a concrete urn was placed in the central monument of the boarding school square, containing a Bible and a copy of the book Education by Ellen G. White, which was sealed with a stone symbolizing Christ,

the Cornerstone.¹⁷

The IAESC's architectural project was designed by the Adventist architect Luiz Kaminsky from Curitiba.¹⁸ In July 2001, the two dormitories, the cafeteria, the school, and a central building had already been erected. That year, the works reached the R\$ 2.5 million (around USD \$ 1 million).¹⁹ In the following year (2002), even before the conclusion of the work, the academy was chosen by the General Conference to receive the worldwide Church Sabbath School offering that would be collected in the first quarter of 2003.²⁰ To add to the resources needed for the completion of the work, the South Brazil Union Mission leadership appealed to each administrative unit of that Union field to contribute with 0.75 percent of its tithing (resources from the Department of Education). The field leaders accepted the challenge, and with that, the Conference was able to establish a plan for the academy's completion within a few years.²¹

On January 19, 2004, the then governor of Santa Catarina, accompanied by other civil authorities and the Santa Catarina Conference administration, visited the IAESC construction site. The governor was committed to obtaining funds for the school through the Federal Law for Cultural Incentives and the Programa de Expansão da Educação Profissional (Professional Education Expansion Program) of the Ministry of Education of Brazil.²² In the following year (2005), as decided in the 9th Santa Catarina Conference Quadrennial Assembly, another R\$ 3 million (around USD \$ 1,352,000.00) were devoted to the finishing building work of IAESC.²³ In 2006, the South Brazil Union Mission authorized the inauguration of the school with the name "Instituto Adventista de Ensino de Santa Catarina - IAESC" (Santa Catarina Adventist Academy - IAESC). Following the Union's decision, the Santa Catarina Conference also authorized the inauguration of the academy in its territory through vote 2006-118.²⁴

The academy's first director was Laureci Bueno. The school inauguration was planned for 2007. For two years, Bueno and everyone involved in the school's project worked hard to finish the first three buildings: the administrative building, the cafeteria, and the female dormitory. The paving of the access road to the new school was done by the government of Santa Catarina. Thanks to the efforts of around 100 people at work, the inauguration of the school took place on January 28, 2008, only a few months later than expected.²⁵ The academy's goals included to "educate professionals who, through technical-scientific knowledge, promote the well-being of society;" develop in students "social and ethical-Christian relationship skills;" and "inspire to transmit the love of Christ, by precept and example."²⁶ The academy started with 86 boarding students, divided into two freshman classes and one sophomore class of the high school. These students were served by approximately 30 staff.²⁷ In the following year (2009), the school already had 186 students.²⁸

History of the Institution

Since its establishment, IAESC has grown significantly. The facilities were gradually completed and new buildings were built, including the multisport gymnasium, the heated swimming pool complex, several houses for workers, and the pavement project for the entire perimeter of the school was also carried out. To that end, in

2010 IAESC received USD \$ 250,000.00 from the government of Santa Catarina.²⁹ In June 2016, the multi-sports complex and IAESC School of Arts (EARTI) were inaugurated. In this School of Arts, the use of 18 instruments is taught. There are eight individual study rooms for various instruments and singing classes, one classroom for piano, and one for orchestra practice. In addition, the school has a youth choir. The sports complex is comprised of three multi-sport courts, bleachers, a weight room and a room for aerobic classes, a living center, and a 30 meters long stage for presentations.³⁰

On August 16 and 17, 2016, the Adventist Educational Network promoted the Brazil Publishing House National High School Exam Interactive Simulation (Simulado do Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio Interativo da Casa Publicadora Brasileira). The academy's students participated in the activity, obtaining the first six places among the top 10 in all of Brazil. In 2017, the School celebrated its first ten years of operation, in a celebration attended by more than 1,000 people. In addition, on November 10 and 11, 2017 a new library and a recording studio were inaugurated.³¹

Santa Catarina Catarina Adventist Academy currently offers early childhood education (preschool starting from age 4), elementary school and high school education with the *TerceiraAço*, a preparatory program for college entrance exams made for senior year high school students. English speaking students are given the opportunity to complete a high school program in partnership with Griggs International and Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, U.S.A., besides the intensive English course available to all students.³²

Historical Role of the Institution

Supported by the Adventist Volunteer Service, IAESC maintains its own School of Missions that provides opportunities to students to participate in weekly training and monthly social and evangelistic projects in the region. Every year, the School of Missions promotes missionary trips to the Amazon, Uruguay, and Argentina.³³ At the beginning of 2012, 40 students spent 24 days in the city of Las Piedras in Uruguay.³⁴

The School of Missions seeks to “carry out the mission in three levels of activities. The first, in the school neighborhood, with the planting of a church. The second, in remote places of Brazil. And the last, in other countries.”³⁵ The students participate also in Caleb Mission projects.³⁶ One such project was carried out in the municipality of Monte Castelo, resulting in 41 baptisms. IAESC School of Missions also maintains a training school for children of missionaries who study in the academy. Prayer meetings are held every fortnight for the parents’ ministry, as well as events throughout the year to encourage the missionary spirit. The academy’s choirs and instrumental groups periodically visit the nursing homes and orphanages.³⁷

The school also hosts several events of public interest in the region of Araquari and Joinville. In December 2019, for example, IAESC hosted a graduation ceremony from the Educational Program of Resistance to Drugs and Violence (Programa Educacional de Resistência às Drogas e à Violência, Proerd), an initiative of the military

police of each state of Brazil with the goal of preventing the use of drugs among children. On that occasion, 624 children from eight public and private schools of Araquari, graduated in this program.³⁸ IAESC continues to play an active role in society through its educational, social, and missionary activities and programs.

What Remains to be Done to Fulfill the School's Mission

The mission of IAESC is to carry out “the educational process in a full and restorative way, encouraging the interaction between theory and practice, thinking and doing, reason and emotion, the individual and the collective, the cause and the effect, because then, both students and educators teach and learn, preparing them to be competent citizens and committed to society and to God.”³⁹ To some extent, the fruits of this project are already beginning to be harvested.

At the annual Adventist Education Meeting in the South of Brazil in 2019, IAESC was awarded four trophies: 1st place in growth; 1st place on ENEM (the National Entrance Exam); 1st place on ENEM's essay; and 2nd place on attracting students. These awards are evidence that the serious educational work carried out at this institution, with its emphasis on wholistic development, has significantly benefited its students. And as the heir of the first missionary school in Brazil, IAESC continues to fulfill its mission of caring for the children of the Church, preparing leaders, and taking the gospel to the unreached.⁴⁰

Chronology of Directors

Laureci Bueno do Canto (2006-2009); Flávio Pasini (2009-2010); Walter Teixeira (2011); Sebastião Damaceno (2012-2014); Wagner Pena (2015); Wesley Zukowski (2016-present).⁴¹

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