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Announcing the Association of Christian Graduate Researchers

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As the cadre of veteran Young Earth Creation researchers ages and declines in numbers through retirement, God is raising up an organization that has the potential to not only replace those who are becoming inactive, but to significantly expand their numbers.

If you were privileged to attend the International Conference on Creationism 2008, in Pittsburgh, you will recall that only a minority of the 35 to 40 presenters were under the age of 50 and the four keynote speakers in the evening sessions were either nearing 60 or were older. And the numbers of papers that utilized either empirical data collection/analysis procedures or computer simulation methodologies, while in the majority, were less than the totality.

One encouraging sign at ICC 08 was the presentations of three young doctoral students who are studying at secular institutions and whose dissertations are focused on YEC topics and employ empirical data collection/analysis procedures. These three budding YEC researchers represent the initial forward edge of what is hoped to be a groundswell of doctoral students who will be partnering with the Association of Christian Graduate Researchers (www.acgr.org).

ACGR came into existence in 2009 to assist young, able graduate students in achieving four vital goals. The first partnering goal is to help identify faculty members who are associated with universities offering doctoral programs in the academic disciplines that are strategic to YEC research and modeling and enlist their cooperation in the ACGR partnership venture.

The second partnering goal is to determine how these YEC faculty members' time and talents can best be utilized. Two options are: (1) serve as Chairs and Members of the Dissertation Supervision Committees (DSCs) on their respective campuses where ACGR students are enrolled in their degree programs, and (2) become members of the ACGR Technical Advisory Board. This latter option can involve not only identifying potential dissertation topics that are strategic to the YEC knowledge base but also being available to students to answer questions as proposals are being developed, data are being collected and analyzed, conclusions are being drawn, and Oral Defenses are being scheduled. This determination process is currently under way with the faculty members who have already agreed to partner with ACGR.

Recruitment of prospective doctoral students, who are willing to join forces with ACGR and commit to a career of YEC research, is the third partnering goal. While students who meet these criteria can come from a variety of sources, the screening process is rigorous in order to insure the presence of appropriate spiritual maturity, academic acumen, and career commitment. Again, the network of YEC faculty members is instrumental in nominating candidates for consideration as ACGR partners.

students with ACGR financial resources. Students who must depend on funding from university sources are often assigned to a major professor who has a research grant and the students' dissertation topics are closely tied to the professor's grant. When these faculty members do not embrace the YEC model, students have little, if any, chance of developing research that can build the knowledge base supporting this model. By providing ACGR fellowships that are sufficient for both living and academic expenses, ACGR students can be more selective in their topics, and in their choices of DSC Chairs and Members, both of which are potentially critical components in ACGR efforts to generate relevant YEC research.

In this latter regard, ACGR has become incorporated in the State of Mississippi, its Board has reviewed and approved its By-Laws, and federal tax exempt status has been obtained, so donations are both greatly appreciated and tax exempt.

Further, an ACGR administrator has been identified and is ready to continue and accelerate the work on the partnering goals as funding becomes available. If, during the remainder of 2009 and 2010, funding increases, the forward edge of the potential groundswell, represented by these three students who presented their research at ICC 08, will become the first in a series of larger and larger waves of YEC researchers. They will not only contribute through their dissertations to support the YEC knowledge base, but have the potential, throughout the remainder of their research careers, to take their places alongside the veteran YEC researchers.

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