



# OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY

7000 Adventist Blvd., NW  
Huntsville, AL 35896  
Phone (256) 726-7000  
Fax (256) 726-8272

**Contact: Michele Solomon**  
Director of Public Relations  
Direct Line: (256) 726-7508  
Email: msolomon@oakwood.edu

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
August 1, 2010

## **Oakwood University Bids 10th President a Tearful Goodbye**

**Huntsville, Ala. —** Oakwood University bid its 10<sup>th</sup> president, Dr. Delbert W. Baker, a tearful goodbye at a special farewell program held Saturday, July 31, at the Oakwood University Seventh-day Adventist Church, in Huntsville, Alabama. The program, which took place in the Oakwood University Church sanctuary, began at 7:30 p.m., followed by a reception at Oakwood University's Student Dining Hall, in Oakwood's main administrative facility, Blake Center.

The Bakers received numerous awards, gift certificates, and commendations, including the Key to the City from Mayor Tommy Battle's office and a special resolution presented by City Councilman Richard Showers. An overwhelming number of Oakwood administrators, faculty, staff, students and Board members, Huntsville education and government representatives, family members, and well-wishers from the community at large joined Oakwood's first couple as they made their departure.

Baker, who has served as president of Oakwood University for the past 14 years, was nominated by a 246-member Nominating Committee at the 59th General Conference Session of Seventh-day Adventists, held at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, Georgia, June 23 through July 3. The General Conference is the governing body of

Seventh-day Adventist Church, which appoints nine general vice presidents who serve the global church of Seventh-day Adventists, each overseeing an assigned national/international region. Baker's new appointment took place on Sunday, June 27.

During the reception, Oakwood's outgoing president passed the baton to Dr. Mervyn Warren with an official sounding of the gong. Warren had been voted interim president in Atlanta on July 2 toward the close of the 59<sup>th</sup> General Conference Session. Warren has served as the University's provost during Baker's administration, in addition to having held numerous faculty and administrative positions at the University over the past four decades.

During the interim period, an 18-member search committee will assume the challenging task of reviewing the long list of candidates hoping to serve as Oakwood University's 11<sup>th</sup> president. The Oakwood University Search Committee, chaired by the vice chair of the Oakwood University Board of Trustees, Doris Gothard, is comprised of a representative group of the University's Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and students. Its goal will be to decide on the names of three ranked candidates that will be presented to Oakwood's Board of Trustees by the end of 2010.

Baker will assume his new position at the General Conference, headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland, on August 31, as he goes on to serve the 16.3-million member global church. Under his administration, Baker facilitated progress in various areas, including peak enrollment, maintaining a strong financial base for the institution, completing numerous major facilities on campus, and leading out in record fundraising. During his administrative watch, Oakwood achieved university status and began offering graduate degrees in 2008. Baker credits success to providence, his wife, an excellent administration, faculty and staff team, the Board of Trustees and the gracious support of alumni and friends.

Dr. Susan Baker, a licensed physical therapist and an associate professor and director of the Allied Health Program in the Chemistry Department at Oakwood University since 2002, will also be leaving the community.

–OU–