



SAN FRANCISCO
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Whole Leaders for the Whole Church

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SFTS welcomes 51 new students from around the Pacific Rim

San Anselmo, Calif., Sept. 1 -- San Francisco Theological Seminary will continue to provide culturally rich and innovative approaches to theological education when its 2009-10 academic year begins on Sept. 8.

As the only Presbyterian Church U.S.A. seminary located on the Pacific Rim, SFTS is drawing students from nations such as Korea and Taiwan as well as U.S. states from Hawaii to North Carolina. SFTS expects to welcome 40 Master's degree students and 11 Doctor of Ministry students to its campuses in San Anselmo and Pasadena.

Of the 40 new Master's degree students, 55 percent are men and 45 percent are women. The average age of incoming M.Div. students is 37, but ages range from 27 to 61.

"We are impressed with the academic and church service backgrounds of our incoming students, as well as the broad range of perspectives that come from a student body enriched by cultural, theological, and experiential diversity," said Rev. Wendy Tajima, associate dean of enrollment. "We at SFTS continue to strive to prepare leaders that anticipate Christ's future church."

Tajima notes, for example, that an incoming student from Korea has already been active in mission work in Moldova. Returning students Kaz and Naomi Nakaoka worked this summer in a Japanese church in Thailand.

With a vision to prepare whole leaders for the whole church, SFTS enters its 139th year of theological education under the leadership President Philip Butin and Dr. Elizabeth Liebert, the Seminary's new dean. A very popular professor of Spiritual Life at SFTS and a member of the doctoral faculty at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Liebert brings more than two decades of experience, and respect from faculty, alumni and students, to her new post.

SFTS will branch out with a new Doctor of Ministry concentration during the January 2010 winter term when the Program for Christian Spirituality and Office of Advanced Pastoral Studies offer The Pastor as Spiritual Leader emphasis. SFTS

expects 10 new D.Min. students for The Pastor as Spiritual Leader emphasis for Intersession.

At a time when other seminaries are dropping D.Min. degree programs or postponing admittance for one or more years, SFTS's commitment to doctoral education is unwavering with courses offered throughout the year, including its popular summer terms.

For those who may not have the time or are unable to commit to seminary full time, SFTS offers "Take 3 and See" as an introduction to theological education. Not only does "Take 3 and See" provide a 50-percent reduction in cost for three courses, but course credits will be counted toward graduation if students are admitted to a degree program. SFTS has enrolled seven new students in "Take 3 and See" at its campuses in San Anselmo and Pasadena.

"Take 3 and See" has become a very useful way for ministers who attended seminaries affiliated with other denominations to satisfy PC(USA) ordination requirements. Some ordained ministers take advantage of "Take 3 and See" to stay up to date on current trends and issues in theological education.

"Take 3 and See" has gained momentum," Tajima said. "For highly-qualified prospective students with good careers, it's a great way to find out what seminary is like before making the life changes involved in a full-time commitment. Before 'Take 3' they would have never tried seminary because it seemed too risky, or come to seminary and felt stuck or a failure if it didn't work out for them."

SFTS offers many forms of support with 85 percent of all M.Div. students receiving financial assistance to pursue God's call. The annual merit scholarships awarded by SFTS to second-year students are: Watermulder Scholarships to Matthias Peterson-Brandt and Carol Prichard; the Foreman Scholarships to David TenBrook, Lucas Walker, Kaz Nakaoka, Naomi Nakaoka and Amy Klinskovsky; the Shields Scholarship to Natasha Hicks.

The Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation has awarded the Silas G. Kessler Scholarship to Peterson-Brandt, and the Robert K. Adams Scholarships to Hicks, Erin Musolf and Erin Tamayo. The Calvary Presbyterian Church Foundation scholarship has been awarded by SFTS to second-year student DongWoo Lee. Joshua De Rosas has been awarded a scholarship from the United Church Funds. The Richard and Helen Brown Endowment for Pastoral Scholarships are given to those who are studying to become actively engaged in ministry in the UCC. Eleven SFTS students were awarded PC(USA) study grants.

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San Francisco Theological Seminary, a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) graduate school, has prepared whole leaders for the whole church since 1871. One of the founding members of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, it offers theological degrees at two campuses, in San Anselmo and Pasadena. Its innovative Program in Christian Spirituality is open to clergy and non-ordained individuals. For more information please call SFTS at 1-800-447-8820 in San Anselmo or 1-800-473-8772 in Pasadena. Also find information on our Web site: www.sfts.edu.

