

TIBI HERALD

Editor

Steve Austin
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THIS ISSUE

Welcome 2023 Students!
TIBI's partners and values

*"I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one...so that the world will believe that you sent me."
John 17:20-21*

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Welcome to the 2023 Students!



Romel Rodriguez, a new student from Carupano, Venezuela, with a recent baptism in the sea

As always in August, we are happy to welcome the new students who will be studying with us for two years. According to the stats shared with me by Kevin Montgomery, our assistant director, we have 117 students currently taking live courses with us, many of them full-time. This number reflects a 25% increase over last fall, for which we are grateful.

A large number of our students come from the Churches of Christ. But others come from various groups such as the International Church of Christ, Pentecostal, Baptist, Catholic, or other Protestant backgrounds. As we have mentioned before, we are happy to welcome anyone who wants to learn more about Jesus and the Bible!

Of these students, 70% are males and 30% females, from 17 different countries. Venezuela has the most students in the group at 25%, followed by Mexico, Colombia, and the US, then the other 35% come from 13 other countries, including Perú,


Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, and Uruguay. It's exciting to see this growth, especially from new countries we have not had before, such as Paraguay and Uruguay.

Of course, a significant part of this group are our scholarship students. This year, out of 44 applicants, 11 were selected, from 5 different countries. From left to right in the first row below are Jafet Hidalgo (Mexico), David Arrubla Lopez (Colombia), José Luis Jimenez (Bolivia), and Allan Velasquez, (Nicaragua).



A large number of this year's recipients are from Venezuela. Below, from left to right, are Ana María Calderón, Heladio Graz, Heladio Gomez, Milexis Martinez, Lenin Perera, Aristóteles Rodriguez, Romel Rodriguez, and Winston Rodriguez.





These students come from a variety of backgrounds. Some had studied with us part-time before applying for a scholarship. Some have been involved in ministry and church planting for years and already have solid records of success. Some are relatively new to ministry. Many of them have faced and overcome significant personal challenges which helped mature and shape them and their ministries.

We are grateful for them and every other student who have chosen to invest in themselves, the church, and the Kingdom of God by studying with us. We are also grateful to so many of you, whether individuals or churches, who have partnered with us to make these scholarships possible, and the people and infrastructure of TIBI, now in our 21st year.

Finally, we ask you to pray with us that the Lord will bless, encourage, and lead each of them as they continue on this journey.

TIBI's Partners and Values

The Lord has blessed TIBI through the years with many partners in this ministry. First, our donor list shows 17 churches, 48 individuals, and 4 foundations, just for this year alone. Plus we have small amounts of income from our online courses, YouTube channel, and Zoom contributions. We are grateful for this varied generosity and are always pleased to receive donations from new individuals and churches.


Second, we are glad to be connected in various ways to other academic institutions such as Baxter Institute (Honduras), EQEB (Quito), Sunset (Lubbock), Abilene Christian University (Abilene), ILEB (Mexico), IBBC (Mexico), and IBLAM (Mexico), as well as other institutions like IBN (Nicaragua) and BICA (Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua) from which we receive occasional students and applications.


Some of these send students for us to teach. Others partner with us in programs like the Masters of Practical Theology (EQEB and Sunset), or the Certificate of Hispanic Ministerial Training (ACU).

Third, we are in contact with over 200 churches through our students and programs. Besides the training and knowledge which the students apply directly and immediately in their congregations, we also learn from them what is happening in their countries and congregations, and this helps inform our teaching. TIBI professors often are invited to speak in person or by Zoom for special events, seminars, or services which the local congregations host.

Fourth, the Lord has provided our faculty of 26 men from 9 countries, with hundreds of years experience in teaching and ministry. Of these, 19 are from Latin America, and the other 7 have spent significant time in missions and ministry in Latin America, and speak Spanish fluently.

Among these are a mix of young and old—one professor is still teaching well in his 80s! And several are younger graduates of TIBI's bachelor and masters' programs, in their 30s. All of them try to learn and grow, and all are involved in their local congregations, which helps season and form their teaching.





Fifth, we have connections to other church leaders and institutions through AETH (in English, the Association for Hispanic Theological Education), who in conjunction with the Association of Theological Schools, certifies our undergraduate Bachelor of Ministry and Biblical Studies. It is helpful to see what other schools and churches are doing in different parts of the US and Puerto Rico. In addition, AETH is helping us gain access to more theological and ministry resources, in Spanish, which aids our students in their research.

Obviously, with so many different individuals, churches, schools, teachers, and organizations, we do not see perfectly eye to eye on every single matter of biblical interpretation or congregational practice. (I doubt there is 100% agreement on everything even in any one church or group of people!) Yet we have seen that with all these groups and people, we have much more in common than not.

At our core is Jesus Christ as the center of our faith, our Savior, and our example to follow. Our goal is to know him, grow closer to him, and be more like him every day, in every way. And we try to learn from each other and help each other do that, along the way.

Other core values include genuine love for and openness with each other, even (and especially) when there are differences. We promote an atmosphere of respectful dialogue and a genuine desire to learn. We try to keep the good and discard the bad, recognizing that in each of our journeys, we have made mistakes in doctrines and practice.

So we try to offer grace, understanding, and good humor to everyone as we work together in this ministry of equipping God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature (Eph. 4:12-13). And we ask for your prayers and continuing support as we do so.

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