



The Inauguration of
Christon Arthur, PhD
Sixth President of La Sierra University

May 20, 2025
La Sierra University Church
Riverside, California

About La Sierra University

Mission Statement

As members of the diverse La Sierra University community, we are committed to inquiry, learning, and service. Our community is rooted in the Christian gospel and Seventh-day Adventist values and ideals. Our mission is:

TO SEEK *truth, enlarging human understanding through scholarship;*
TO KNOW *God, ourselves, and the world through reflection, instruction, and mentoring;*
TO SERVE *others, contributing to the good of our local and global communities.*

We pursue this mission with excellence, integrity, compassion, and mutual respect.

La Sierra University is a Seventh-day Adventist coeducational institution that began as La Sierra Academy in 1922. Between its founding and 1946, La Sierra underwent several name changes as it grew in degree offerings and earned accreditation.

In 1967, La Sierra College merged with Loma Linda University and became its College of Arts & Sciences. When the two campuses were reorganized in 1990, La Sierra University again became its own entity.

Today, La Sierra is a thriving and diverse university made up of the College of Arts & Sciences, the School of Education, the Tom & Vi Zapara School of Business, and the H.M.S. Richards Divinity School. La Sierra has received awards and strong rankings over the last decade, including being ranked number one in the nation for environment (diversity) by the *Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education*.

At La Sierra University, outstanding faculty and dedicated staff encourage students not only to change their own world, but to positively impact the world around them. The university provides an environment for learning, personal and spiritual growth, and service.

To learn more about La Sierra University, please visit www.la.sierra.edu.



Meet the President, Christon Arthur, PhD



Dr. Christon Arthur began his tenure as president of La Sierra University on July 1, 2024. He is La Sierra's sixth president since the institution became a university in 1990 and is its 19th leader since the school was founded in 1922.

Since his arrival at La Sierra University, Dr. Arthur has led campus initiatives to foster transparency, inclusivity and community, implemented strategic marketing and enrollment investments and the development of core values and purpose toward re-shaping campus culture.

Dr. Arthur arrived from Andrews University in Michigan where he served as provost for eight years. In this position he oversaw an approximate \$70 million academic budget and a total enrollment of about 10,000 students.

Prior to serving as provost, Dr. Arthur served as dean of the School of Graduate Studies & Research at Andrews. Before that, he held

administrative posts for four years at Tennessee State University where he also taught as an associate professor in educational administration.

Dr. Arthur holds multiple graduate degrees including an Ed.S. and a doctoral degree respectively in curriculum and instruction and in educational administration from Andrews University. He completed post-graduate studies at Harvard University's Institute for Management and Leadership in Education. In 2023, he earned a graduate certificate in finance from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill where he is currently an MBA candidate. He also holds a B.A. in theology from the University of the Southern Caribbean in Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr. Arthur and his wife, Carmelita have one adult son, Christon Arthur, Jr. Dr. Arthur is a native of Grenada where he was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist faith at the age of 22, a decision that set in motion a trajectory that led to his present position. He serves as the first Black president in La Sierra University's 103-year history and is shaping a campus ethos rooted in inclusivity, a safe space where all are welcome.

Inauguration Ceremony

Prelude	<i>Festal Flourish</i> by Gordon Jacob	Kimo Smith, <i>organ</i>
Fanfare	<i>From Diversity, Community</i> by Giovanni Santos	La Sierra Brass & Percussion
Processional	<i>Marche Triomphale</i> by Sigfried Karg-Elert <i>arr. Santos</i>	Kimo Smith, <i>organ</i> La Sierra Brass & Percussion

The Marshal
The President's Party
The Trustees
Delegates of Colleges and Universities
The Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Invocation		Iki Taimi <i>Lead Pastor</i> <i>La Sierra University Church</i>
Opening Hymn	<i>Great is Thy Faithfulness</i>	Iman Asher-Haq <i>Cantor</i>
Welcome		Leslie Martin <i>Interim Provost</i>

Greetings From

The Students

Nyla Provost
President, Student Association

The Faculty

Maury Jackson
Past Chair, Faculty Senate

The Staff

Victoria Carreon
Director, Office of Student Involvement

The Alumni

Maggie Carillo-Blades
Alumna

The City of Riverside

Patricia Lock Dawson
Mayor

Local Academia

Wolde-Ab Isaac, *Chancellor*
Riverside Community College District

Local Community

David Morrow
President, 100 Black Men of the Inland Empire

The Board of Trustees

Bradford Newton
Chair, Board of Trustees

The Seventh-day Adventist Church

Juan Antonio López de la Torre
Director, Adventist Colleges Abroad

Presentation Of Written Greetings

Carlos Parra, *Professor*
World Languages Department

Scripture Meditation

AAPI: Zion Taito
Chinese: Yilang Liu
English: Morgan Schmitz
Indian: Sireen Pydimalla
Korean: Hyo Eun Jun
Spanish: Lupita Sandoval

2 Samuel 9 :1, 11-13
The Message

Inaugural Address	“The Power of Yes”	Dr. Andrea Luxton <i>President Emerita, Andrews University Associate Director, Higher Education North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists</i>
Installation of the President		Dr. Bradford Newton, <i>Chair, Board of Trustees, President, Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists</i>
Response		Christon Arthur, <i>President</i>
Special Music	<i>My Life is in Your Hands</i> Kirk Franklin <i>arr. Carol Cymbala</i> Director, Gian Dudley Simmons	Gospel Choir
Prayer of Dedication		Jonathan Park <i>Trustee and President, Southeastern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists</i>
Congregational Hymn	<i>It is Well with My Soul</i>	Iman Asher-Haq <i>Cantor</i>
Recessional	<i>Praise the Lord</i> Sigfrid Karg-Elert <i>arr. Santos</i>	Kimo Smith, <i>organ</i> La Sierra Brass & Percussion

Keynote Speaker



Dr. Andrea Luxton began her career in education in 1982 as head of English for Stanborough School in England, her home country. After spending four years at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., as both a student and part-time teaching assistant and lecturer, she returned to England to chair the English Department at Newbold College from 1986–1991. Beginning in 1991, she held multiple responsibilities as education director, Sabbath School director and women’s ministries coordinator of the British Union of Seventh-day Adventists. In 1993, Luxton returned to her roots at Stanborough, this time as principal. She remained there until 1997, at which time she became president of Newbold College, England. In 2001, Luxton relocated to Canada where she served as vice-president for academic administration at Canadian University College (now Burman University) in Lacombe, Alberta, from 2001–2003. She served as associate director of education for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

from 2003–2006, during which time she was also the executive secretary of the Adventist Accrediting Association. In 2006, Luxton accepted the role of president of Canadian University College. She served in that capacity until her transition to Andrews University as provost in 2010, and then as president in 2016. She retired from Andrews University in 2023 and accepted a part-time role as executive director of the Association of Adventist Universities and Colleges and associate director, higher education at the North American Division in July 2023.

Luxton received a BA in Theology and English from Newbold College, an MA in English from Andrews University, a PhD in English from Catholic University of America and a Postgraduate Diploma in Institutional Management and Change in Higher Education from the University of Twente, Netherlands.

Past Presidents

- 1922 – 1925** **James I. Robison**
Principal, La Sierra Academy and Normal School
- 1925 – 1927** **Louis C. Palmer**
Principal, La Sierra Academy and Normal School
- 1927 – 1928** **William W. Ruble**
President, Southern California Junior College
- 1928 – 1930** **H. Martin Johnson**
President, Southern California Junior College
- 1930 – 1942** **Erwin E. Cossentine**
President, Southern California Junior College (La Sierra College)
- 1942 – 1946** **Lowell R. Rasmussen**
President, La Sierra College
- 1946 – 1954** **Godfrey T. Anderson**
President, La Sierra College
- 1954 – 1960** **Norval F. Pease**
President, La Sierra College
- 1960 – 1962, 1964 – 1965** **William Landeen**
President, La Sierra College
- 1962 – 1963** **Fabian Meier**
President, La Sierra College
- 1965 – 1974** **David J. Bieber**
President, La Sierra College (Loma Linda University)
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President, Loma Linda University
- 1984 – 1990** **Norman J. Woods**
President, Loma Linda University
- 1990 – 1993** **Fritz Guy**
President, Loma Linda University-Riverside (La Sierra University)
- 1993 – 2007** **Lawrence T. Geraty**
President, La Sierra University
- 2007 – 2019** **Randal R. Wisbey**
President, La Sierra University
- 2019 – 2023** **Joy A. Fehr**
President, La Sierra University
- 2023 – 2024** **Richard Osborn**
Interim President, La Sierra University

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Special thanks to all our inaugural sponsors for this event. Your donation will go toward a Presidential Scholarship fund that will aid our students.
Without your support, this would not be possible, thank you.

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Congratulations

Dear Dr. Arthur:

On this momentous occasion of your inauguration as the sixth President of La Sierra University, my wife and I extend our warmest congratulations and best wishes. It is an exciting time for the university, and we believe you are the administrator who can take advantage of the opportunities to make the most of it.

Your vision for La Sierra as a place for all and your dedication to its mission are both inspiring and reassuring. You can count on our support for the advancement of our shared goals. We look forward to the many ways in which your leadership will further elevate the university's legacy of excellence, faith, and service.

May this day mark the beginning of a transformative era, one defined by bold leadership, a collaborative spirit, and unwavering dedication to student and faculty success. Congratulations again on this well-deserved honor, and may God's guidance and blessing attend your administration.

With great respect and enthusiasm,

Lawrence T. Geraty
President Emeritus
Executive Director, University Foundation

And Mrs. Gillian Geraty
Former First Lady



A Proclamation of Welcome and Support on the Inauguration of Dr. Christon G. Arthur as the Sixth President of La Sierra University

On behalf of the members, churches, schools, and ministries of the Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Christon G. Arthur on his inauguration as the sixth president of La Sierra University.

The Pacific Union includes the Arizona, Central California, Hawaii, Nevada-Utah, Northern California, Southeastern California, and Southern California Conferences, as well as Adventist Health, Holbrook Indian School, Pacific Union College, and the Western Adventist Foundation.

Our diverse membership of more than 220,000 believers seek to serve the communities of the Pacific Southwest. We celebrate La Sierra University's vital role in this shared mission. We especially value La Sierra University's commitment to creating a welcoming environment that is focused on excellence in academics, personal and spiritual growth, and a tradition of service to others.

Dr. Arthur brings a distinguished record of leadership in Adventist higher education and a deep dedication to student success, along with a clear vision for a campus that is both academically strong and spiritually nurturing. He champions a sense of community and belonging that reflects the core values of our Union and the broader Adventist community. His thoughtful administration and commitment to the church's educational mission make him exceptionally well-suited to lead our school.

The Pacific Union Conference affirms our commitment and support for La Sierra University—its faculty, staff, students, and leadership. We are thankful for Christon G. Arthur! We pray for God's continued blessing on Dr. Arthur and for the continuing work of La Sierra University under his leadership.

With gratitude and hope,

Bradford C. Newton
President

Congratulations

Dear Dr. Arthur,

On this momentous occasion of your inauguration as President of La Sierra University, we extend our warmest congratulations and best wishes. It is a true honor to welcome you into this pivotal role during such an exciting chapter in the university's history.

Your vision for La Sierra's future and your dedication to its mission are both inspiring and reassuring. As a donor/President's Council member and member of the Board of Trustees, we are deeply committed to supporting the advancement of our shared goals, and we look forward to the ways in which your leadership will further elevate the university's legacy of excellence, faith, and service.

Under your guidance, we are confident La Sierra University will continue to thrive as a place where scholarship deepens understanding, faith inspires purpose, and service uplifts communities both near and far.

May this new chapter be marked by vision, unity, and continued blessings and may it mark the beginning of a transformative era, one defined by bold leadership, collaborative spirit, and unwavering dedication to student success. Congratulations again on this well-deserved honor.

With great respect and enthusiasm,

Victor Tolan, Donor, University Supporter, and President's Council Member
Alina Tolan, Pharm.D., Donor and member of the Board of Trustees

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Fax: 310-794-7083
Marilene B. Wang, M.D.

Christon Arthur, PhD
President, La Sierra University

Dear Dr. Arthur:

Congratulations on being named the President of La Sierra University. You have assumed a challenging and rewarding role and already have made a tremendous positive impact on our community. May God bless your leadership and this university as it continues to train students to serve and change the world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Wang MD".

Marilene B. Wang, MD
Professor
Director of Endoscopic Skull Base Surgery



PROCLAMATION

Honoring the Inauguration of Dr. Christon Arthur 6th President of La Sierra University

WHEREAS, La Sierra University, a distinguished Seventh-day Adventist Christian institution, has, for more than a century, stood as a beacon of academic excellence, spiritual growth, and service in the Inland Empire and beyond; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Christon Arthur, a native of Grenada and respected academic leader, has been appointed as the 6th President of La Sierra University, bringing with him more than 30 years of experience in higher education, a solid foundation in academic administration, and a passion for cultivating inclusive, Christ-centered learning environments; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Arthur holds multiple advanced degrees, including an Ed.S. and Ph.D. from Andrews University, and has completed additional studies at Harvard University, and is currently pursuing doctoral-level studies in business administration at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and

WHEREAS, under the guiding principle, "There is a place for you," Dr. Arthur has championed accessible education, collaborative leadership, and a deep commitment to faith-based values; and

WHEREAS, his inauguration, scheduled for May 20, 2025, marks a historic milestone as he becomes the first Black president of La Sierra University, signifying both the legacy and the forward momentum of the institution and the broader community it serves; and

WHEREAS, La Loma Federal Credit Union is proud to recognize and support this significant moment in La Sierra University's history, and to stand alongside its leadership in advancing the cause of education, equity, and innovation;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DANIEL PENROD, Chief Executive Officer of La Loma Federal Credit Union, do hereby proclaim: We at La Loma Federal Credit Union are deeply honored to celebrate this pivotal occasion and look forward to the future Dr. Arthur is helping to shape.

MAY 20, 2025

as

DR. CHRISTON ARTHUR INAUGURATION DAY

in honor of Dr. Arthur's exemplary leadership and in celebration of the renewed vision and spirit he brings to La Sierra University.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of La Loma Federal Credit Union to be affixed this 21st day of April, 2025.

Daniel Penrod
Chief Executive Officer
La Loma Federal Credit Union



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