

## **HISTORY OF GNAAS**

GNAAS Stands for Ghana National association of Adventist Students. In 1980/81, Seventh-day Adventist young people in public universities in Ghana conceived the idea of an association for Adventist students. They wanted to find out whether they could make a difference in the church and in the world by taking seriously the claims of Biblical Adventism. These young people came from different walks of life, a spectrum of socio-economic, ethnic and academic backgrounds. The result is what we have today; GNAAS. The interest for the formation of the association was aroused when there used to be a forum for Adventist Educationist and Intellectuals. The agenda then was to create a common platform where they could meet periodically to plan on how to build a resource base for the Church's education department and offer professional consultation.

The idea to organize a students' body was, however not on agenda. It came only as side issue. The issue of students in arose because fellowships on various campuses were not organized as one body. Senior comrades then saw that, without starting from campuses, the task will be daunting. Another pressing issue had to do with the infringement on our right to free worship because Adventists are a minority. Therefore, to be able to fight for a common goal, the need for a unified body of Adventist students was critical.

In 1982, a meeting was held at SDA Teachers Training College, Asokore for the Educationist and Intellectuals. The meeting ended with the formation of GNAAS. The first secretariat was hosted by University of Ghana with the following as executives:

1. Pastor Kwasi Ansah Adu - President
2. Mr. J Nyantakyi - Vice President
3. Mr. Francis Amo - Secretary
4. Mr. Akuoku Konadu - Treasurer
5. Mr. Akuoku Frempong - Coordinating Secretary

Other Lawyer Kofi Ameley, Mr. Offeh Gyimah, Prof. Yaw Ankomah, and many nice men and women who are now playing various important roles in the Church and the country. Nonetheless, the beginning was difficult and frustrating. The leadership of the Church was not prepared to grant them any concession. They were very skeptical about the mission as well as the loyalty of GNAAS to the Church. This was regardless of the clearly stated objectives of the association. But the leaders of the time could be pardon since GNAAS was formed at a time when students' "ALUTAS" and PROTESTS were prevalent. They felt it was a formation of disgruntle students who wanted to revolt against church leadership. It is on record that, a white missionary at the time cautioned his Ghanaian counterparts to keep close watch over activities and meetings of GNAAS, lest they became "rebels". But Glory be to God that the church leadership was able to overcome its fears when they realized that GNAAS meant church-growth business. Very well, the journey to where we are today has not been all smooth. Yet, God's grace has been sufficient to GNAAS. Today, GNAAS continues to fulfil its mission; raising young God-fearing intellectuals to contribute towards the Gospel Commission and Ghana's development