

Interview of Dr. Christine Hempowicz, Vice-chair UTS Board of Trustees

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Dr. Christine Hempowicz with her husband, Rev. Krystof "Chris" Hempowicz

In early October 2017, Dr. Christine Hempowicz was elected as the first woman to hold the position of Vice-Chair on the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) Board of Trustees. Her appointment took place on the same day Canadian-born Rev. Franco Famularo was elected as Chairman of the Board, filling the position previously held by Dr. Michael Balcomb, now Continental Chairman of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification/Europe (FFWPU/Europe).

Dr. Hempowicz and her husband, Rev. Krystof "Chris" Hempowicz,- both individually and as

a couple - have held many leadership positions in the FFWPU in the USA and abroad since they graduated from UTS. Currently Dr. Hempowicz is serving as Director of the [Office of Sponsored Research and Programs](#) at the [University of Bridgeport](#), where she has been on staff since 1995.

Along their professional accomplishments, Dr. Hempowicz and her husband are also parents to four grown children - two boys and two girls – aged 21-30.

In a recent interview with UTS News, Dr. Hempowicz shared about her time as a student at UTS, what she's done since graduation, and how she sees the future of UTS.

Question: What do you remember about your time at UTS?

One thing I appreciated a lot about our seminary education was studying other religious traditions. Being full-time Unification members we were all well educated in [Divine Principle](#), and [Unification Thought](#) too. Studying Divine Principle was part of the curriculum, but we also studied other religious traditions which was a really valuable experience and education.

I attended the last seminar of the [Youth Seminar on the World's Religions](#) (YSWR), and then the next year (1986), I participated in the first RYS ([Religious Youth Service](#)) project in the Philippines. I spent most of my time in Manila, holding down the fort, so to speak, but we did get to meet the Philippine president, Corazon Aquino.

Question: What have you done since your graduation in 1986?

First I was appointed as the Unification Church state leader of Montana. Later I became a church leader in Eugene, Oregon. My husband and I were then together in CARP ([Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles](#)) in Washington, D.C., where our first baby was born. After that we were in Madison, Wisconsin, and then Chicago where, as part of CARP's Campus Ministry providence, I started campus ministries on three separate campuses before we volunteered to work overseas. After that, just prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of the CIS ([Commonwealth of Independent States](#)), we went to

Tashkent, Uzbekistan for the CARP-ILS (International Leadership Seminars) providence. We were the first couple to take on that type of mission with (our) kids.

We stayed in the CIS for three years and then came to CARP New York for a year. In 1995 we became CARP campus ministers at the University of Bridgeport (UB) and I started working at UB at the same time. So, I've been at UB for 22 years now and have had three different jobs there. I'm currently the Director of the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs.

Question: What does it mean to you to be elected first woman vice-chair of the UTS board of trustees?

The first year I was on the Board (2015) there were no other active women members on the board because Crescentia (DeGoede) had just had a baby and she was on leave of absence. I've been active on the board since I joined, and I have never really thought about women's positions. We live in the United States and women contribute at all levels. I enjoy adding a different dimension to the board. I've had multiple conference calls with Dr. (Hugh) Spurgin and with (newly-elected Chairman) Rev. Franco Famularo and I really do enjoy the dynamic. I think the energy is very different with a woman in the mix.

Question: What role do you see for the UTS Online courses that have started recently?

I think it's a good plan. I actually teach a grant writing class for the master's degree in dental hygiene online program at UB and people are registered into that program from all over the country. There are only a few local universities that have that kind of program, so for those students who are working professionals it's the way they can actually earn that degree. And with our (Unification) movement I would say, even more, people around the world can study without having to actually move to the United States. I think it opens up a lot of opportunities for people who otherwise would never have the chance to go to the seminary. And, when you think about it from a distance education point of view, you need internet access but you don't need to be in the heart of Manhattan to run an effective internet program.

Question: What do you see as the future for UTS and the Barrytown property?

I think it's a special property and it has a beautiful spiritual environment; but it needs a lot of work. The question is, "Do we have the resources to invest?" We have to be proactive and manage the use of the property. Hopefully, the resources can be secured, and then the property can be restored and Barrytown can operate multiple educational and recreational programs. I'm hoping that would be the way to go with the property.

We're at a crossroads with UTS. I think one really important point going forward is to engage younger stakeholders and ask them, "What is the benefit of a UTS education for you?" I think we need to include their perspective in the future of UTS.