

HONORARY DEGREE—MAY 2023

Juan R. Prestol-Puesán

Doctor of Laws

Juan R. Prestol-Puesán has worked for the Seventh-day Adventist Church since 1969. Guided by his strong commitment to service, he was the first person of color to assume top financial leadership roles in Adventist church entities worldwide, including as CFO/treasurer of the North American Division and CFO/treasurer of the General Conference.

Born in the Dominican Republic, Prestol-Puesán was baptized as a Seventh-day Adventist at the age of 14. He received a BA in business administration from Antillean Adventist University in 1969 and an MBA in 1980 and PhD in Leadership in 2014, both from Andrews University. He was ordained as a minister in December of 1976.

His first finance-related employment within the church was as an accountant for the Dominican Conference in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. He went on to serve as secretary-treasurer for the newly created North Dominican Mission from 1972–1977 and as its interim president from 1976–1977.

As Prestol-Puesán's career progressed, he went on to serve as a financial officer in North America and Euro-Asia, responsible for assignments that covered a wide spectrum of church organizational issues. He helped re-establish the financial operations for the Euro-Asia Division, including the creation of a division office in Moscow. In North America, he was instrumental in planning, organizing and implementing changes to the remuneration system in 2003, establishing the North American Division Corporation and casting the vision of an accounting system for church entities in 2007—initiatives that remain in place.

As the CFO/treasurer of the General Conference, Prestol-Puesán strategized and guided the tithe reduction initiative of 2019 between the General Conference, North American Division and overseas divisions. He engineered the sale of the Review and Herald printing plant and managed successfully through the destabilizing economic challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

In addition to these accomplishments, he has served as a professor, planned giving and trust services director, stewardship director, literature evangelist, Bible worker, pastor and elder. From his wealth of career experience, Prestol-Puesán has advised church leaders and institutions in multiple projects and initiatives. He is a public speaker and an author of multiple articles and reports in academic and denominational publications.

Prestol-Puesán has been married to Belkis Dominguez for 53 years, and they have two adult daughters, Johanna and Idaía. They have a granddaughter Elisa, grandson Ian and two sons-in-law, Abel and Samuel. He owes much to the influence of his deeply committed Adventist grandmother, to the love of his family, the guidance of mentors and friends, and to many that extended him opportunities to serve throughout his almost 50-year career.

Now in retirement, Prestol-Puesán devotes his energies to leadership development through a joint initiative of the General Conference and Andrews University Global Leadership Institute (GLI) in the development and worldwide implementation of Leadership Laboratory (LeadLab). He is a special assistant to the GC treasurer and an adjunct professor of leadership at Andrews University.

He remains an avid learner, a devoted Bible student, a leadership and stewardship educator, a committed Sabbath School teacher, a music lover and an enthusiastic baseball fan.

For his outstanding service to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in financial leadership and deep commitment to Seventh-day Adventist education, Andrews University takes great pleasure in honoring Juan R. Prestol-Puesán with the degree Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.