

"...whatever you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others well."
2 Timothy 2:2 (NRSV)

THE *SOURCE* NEWSLETTER

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Equipping Christian
leadership for church
and society in
developing nations

EST Poland – A Rewarding Partnership

The Evangelical School of Theology (EST) in Wrocław, Poland, is a successful, well equipped seminary, situated in a beautiful 18th century building overlooking the river. It is now one of the most promising seminaries in Eastern Europe, but it was not always so. This is the story of how a school developed from its humble beginnings to what it is today, with the help and investment of *reSource Leadership International* and other organizations.

It is the story of how we can impact the church in a nation through strategic investment in the education of Christian leadership for church and society. It's a story that we at *reSource* want to duplicate in many nations across the developing world.

The original school, Biblical Seminary of Theology (BST) started out in 1990, in the Baptist church in Krakow, led by Rev. Zygmunt Karel and Dr. Mark Young (an educator from Dallas Texas.) They

Evangelical School of Theology, Wrocław



had previously worked together under Communism, and now began a Bible school in the church with a small group of students. They had no library other than their own personal books.

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Continued on page 2 ►►►

Our investment in EST

By 1991, they had moved to Wrocław, and established the school in the new and larger quarters of the First Baptist Church. They occupied a section of the church, including student rooms, offices and a small, mostly English language library in a small upper room. There were only a few students during that first year, but among them was a young man named Wojtek Szczerba, who is the present rector of EST.

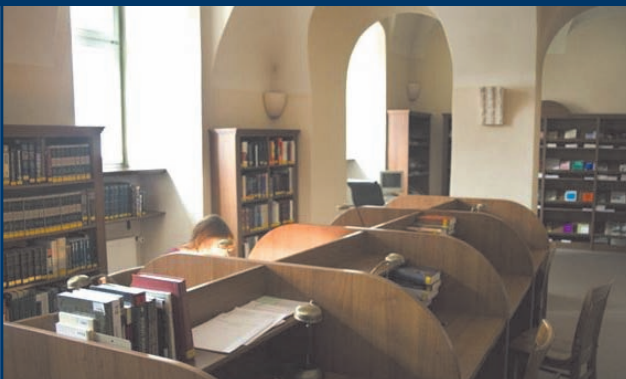
Wojtek Szczerba, Bill Armerding & Zygmunt Karel



Bill Armerding – President of *reSource* (then Overseas Council Canada) between 1994 and 2003 – recalls:

In December 1995, during one of my many visits to Poland, I met with the faculty, discussed their progress and plans, and got to know Wojtek personally. Of particular interest was the new library facility in a renovated garage. We agreed to seek funds for the library as well as scholarships.

The new library at EST has over 18,000 volumes



The school quickly outgrew their facilities, and were looking for a new building. In September 1999, Bill Armerding took a group of donors to BST to look at potential sites for a new seminary building. By this time Wojtek had joined the faculty full time while pursuing doctoral studies. Bill recalls:

In June 2002, we were able to visit and celebrate the opening of their new building, which Canada had a major part in planning and funding. At the celebration Wojtek was announced as Academic Dean, and we were also able to see the beautiful new library, with thousands of volumes added with the help of OC Canada (*reSource*.)

Over the years *reSource* invested in many scholarships for students and faculty at EST.

Today the school is a fully accredited institution, and is included in a list of schools of higher education in Poland. It is the first accredited, non-public, theological vocational school in the country. It presently has around 80 students and 20 faculty, is situated in a spectacular building in the best location in town, and the library contains 18,310 volumes and subscribes to 25 theological journals.

The renovated 18th century building



A word from Dr. Wojtek Szczerba, the present rector of EST:



I remember from the point of view of a student the very humble beginnings of BST in 1990. While thinking of the place where we are now as a school, I want to express my thankfulness to many people and organizations who laid the foundation of BST and who have helped in the process of its development through the years. A special place in that list belongs to *reSource Leadership* (formerly OC Canada), which has assisted us from the very beginning. A few easily identifiable elements of assistance from *reSource* are: scholarships for our students, supporting and equipping the library, helping our faculty in the process of getting their degrees, first doctorates, and now habilitations (2nd

doctorates required by the Polish system of education), finding support for our building and operating budget, and helping us to set up an effective structure and operating procedure. Beyond that though, I should mention hours of prayer, spiritual support, lectures and workshops, and simply friendship. The involvement of *reSource Leadership* in EST is a great example for me of practical operating as one Body of Christ, where we care for each other and depend on each other. Without that we would probably not be here today. Thank you.

Faculty Development opportunities

Wojtek is a great example of how faculty scholarships can impact an institution. *reSource* is seeking funding for several other faculty development scholarships around the world, and here are two of them:



Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary (UETS), Kiev **Faculty Development: CDN \$ 20,500**

Theodor Raychynet is one of the new emerging leaders and theologians of the church in Eastern Europe. He is currently the Academic Dean of the graduate program MA in Transformational Leadership at Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary in Kiev, a program which was designed and developed by Theodor. His doctoral studies will focus on the Justice of the Cross – researching how through the cross justice is found, not in revenge, but in forgiveness.



Macau Bible Institute (MBI) **Library Faculty Development: CDN \$ 24,000**

Shirley Ma is the assistant librarian at MBI. As a new librarian with little experience and no formal training in theological librarianship, she decided to enroll in the M.A. in Theological Librarianship program in the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Hong Kong. Shirley will finish her degree within the next 3 years.



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Board Update

The Board of Directors of *reSource Leadership International* meets twice a year and at its most recent meeting we had some noteworthy transitions:

Welcomed to the board as a newly elected member:



Ellie Ross began her career as a teacher in the public school system, and after 15 years embarked on a successful career in real estate sales. She became Director of Training for a national real estate firm, and later ran her own real estate business. She also studied part time at Regent College, which made her appreciate the tremendous value of effective and sound theological education, and gave her the vision to help facilitate similar opportunities for others. Ellie's time is spent between Vancouver and Pender Island, and she attends St. Helen's Anglican Church in Vancouver.

And then with sadness we also said our farewells to two colleagues who have completed their terms and are not eligible to be re-elected (limited tenure!).

Eleanor Irwin, retired as Professor of Classics at the University of Toronto, who has been on our board since 1995; and who served as the chair of the board for a number of years.

Jay Gurnett, co-director of Vision Ministries, who has been on our board since 2001, and who most recently also served as vice-chair of the board, and who chaired the search committee for a new president back in 2003.

We will miss Eleanor and Jay, who have played an invaluable role in the development of Overseas Council Canada, now *reSource Leadership International*. Their farewell from the board has been an opportunity for us to thank them for their service, and their commitment to our mission.

Online Donations

You can now make donations directly through the *reSource website*: www.resourceleadership.com

Our website also contains a weekly blog posting from our president, Gordon T. Smith – notes and observations on critical issues in theological education and pastoral training for the church today.

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#200 - 5726 Minoru Boulevard, Richmond, BC Canada V6X 2A9
O: (604) 270-6045 • F: (604) 270-6046
administrator@resourceleadership.com • www.resourceleadership.com
A Member of the Overseas Council Network