

## **2009 NAPCE Conference: Highlights and Reflections**

**Freddie Cardoza, Conference VP**

Last fall's NAPCE 2009 meeting in Louisville, Kentucky was an intimate time of learning and fellowship between familiar friends and close colleagues, along with some two dozen *first-time* NAPCE National Conference attendees. What a joy it was to gather with these choice men and women across our discipline!

The conference convened the weekend of October 15 in the historic Brown Hotel—just a stone's throw from the banks of the Ohio River, in the heart of downtown. The facilities and their appointments were outstanding, as was the hotel staff—perhaps the most attentive we have ever experienced.

Despite the challenging U.S. economic climate, this year's attendance was relatively robust and surpassed our enrollment estimates. Part of that was due to the strong commitment of our NAPCE members to this organization. There were many reported cases where members funded part or all of their trips... and that sacrifice made all of the difference. *Thank you!*

Our conference had a number of highlights I wanted to recount. One was the stirring plenary sessions provided by Dr. David Dockery, our keynote. In this time of rapid change within the guild-at-large, Dockery provided clarity regarding the nature of our task as Christian Educators and a sure way forward to even greater disciplinary impact. This was coupled with very strong professional development and theme application seminars by some of the brightest minds in our field, in addition to 12 stimulating samples of research currently being conducted by those in our field.

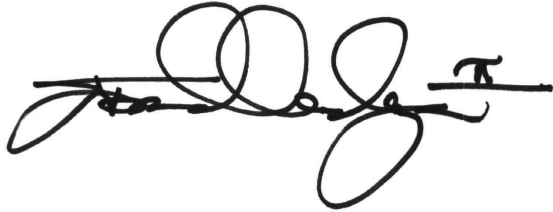
This year's conference also featured new program elements including Study Initiatives which advanced critical issues of concern within Christian Education, all of which had been identified by the Mapping Christian Education study recently completed by a team of NAPCE leaders. We also incorporated meaningful and diverse networking opportunities within the CE community, and added even more Affinity Groups than ever before on our last evening together. What an exciting time we had, though many of our beloved colleagues were absent and sorely missed.

There were also some poignant times during our conference that will not be forgotten soon. Michael Lawson read a powerful memoir honoring Dr. Roy Zuck who, though in absentia, was one of two recipients for our Warren Benson Award for Distinguished Educators. The other honoree was our very own Dr. Rick Yount of Southwestern Seminary who received the award from his respected colleague and NAPCE Board Member Wes Black. Finally, current NAPCE President, Michael Anthony, provided several stories and warm remarks in memory of the late Kenneth Gangel who went to be with the Lord earlier in 2009.

As the outgoing Vice-President, I would like to thank all of those who made this year's conference a success, and especially the Board, Executive Administrator Dennis Williams, and a few special friends who helped in many unsung ways—my deepest gratitude to each of you.

Looking ahead, let me encourage you to support NAPCE in 2010 as we turn the reins over to Dr. Jim Dekker who will be serving as the Conference VP and who is working to make this coming year a great success. In order to fulfill contract obligations, we are returning one last time to Louisville and the Brown Hotel for an encore conference and encourage you to begin making plans now to attend!

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Freddy Cardoza', written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with several loops and a prominent 'F' at the end.

Freddy Cardoza  
*Vice President, NAPCE 2009*