

Geeks of the Army unite

Salvation Army technology managers meet for sixth annual International Technical Exchange.

From the keynote address delivered by Chief of the Staff, Commissioner Robin Dunster, it was clear that this conference was different—computer keyboards clicked, Blackberries buzzed and the strange language of computer acronyms was the dominant dialect spoken.

The sixth International Technology Exchange (ITX)—a conference for Salvation Army technology leaders from around the globe—was held this year in Atlanta, Georgia (USA Southern Territory). Commissioner William Roberts, international secretary for Business Administration (International Headquarters), chaired the conference of 35 delegates from 14 countries: Australia, Canada, Democratic Republic of Congo, Denmark, Germany, Hong Kong, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, The Philippines, Singapore, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

In her keynote speech, Dunster asked the delegates to consider the risks and challenges technology brings to the Army as it expands in both traditional and non-traditional ways. Following her presentation, Roberts briefed delegates regarding the status of “The Way Forward,” the international financing plan for The Salvation Army. USA Southern Territory leaders, Commissioners Maxwell and Lenora Feener, and members of the cabinet hosted a meal of Southern cuisine following the opening session. That was the start of several days of traditional Southern hospitality that for many delegates was a conference highlight!

Mark Calleran, Information Technology manager, IHQ, led the remainder of ITX. Included were demonstrations of new software applications, discussion of IT performance indicators and examples of “best of breed” applications used throughout the Army world. Agenda highlights included two presentations drawing attention to technology challenges faced in developing nations: an “African Perspective,” by Jean Marc Mbumu from the Democratic Republic of Congo, and a “South East Asian Perspective,” by Victor Benganan Jr from The Philippines.



Two delegates attended ITX from the Western Territory—Clarence White (IT secretary and CIO) and Kenneth Mowery (director of IT Support). The USA Western Territory has long been a leader in the field of information technology, and kept that tradition during this ITX. White and Mowery were proud to represent the past accomplishments of the Western Territory, but humbled by the work that is yet to be done around the world and at home.

Clarence White
Head Geek, USA Western Territory