

New SPS Executive Director

(2019) Dr. Margaret “Peg” English de Alminana passed the Executive Director baton to Dr. Adrian Hinkle at the 48th Annual Society for Pentecostal Meeting in College Park, MD.

We caught up with Adrian for a brief interview and were able to find out more about her background and interests, as well as her hopes for the Society in the future.

Welcome, Adrian. Could you tell us a little bit about yourself?

My first love is teaching Old Testament literature. I am currently serving as the Vice President of Academic Affairs at Southwestern Christian University in the Oklahoma City area. I grew up in Oklahoma but moved around just a bit to Arizona and Nevada between 1988-1992. Though I grew up in a Christian home, I gave my life to Christ in 1997 in a small pentecostal church in Kingfisher, OK and haven't looked back since. God has completely transformed my life and opened doors to experiences I would never have dreamed for myself. My work these days focuses on finding creative ways to grow the institution and support the faculty, which means I spend a good deal of time listening for needs and building the resources needed to respond to them. I love my work but do miss the classroom. When I go home, I immediately shift gears to play time with my children, ages 9, 12, and 15. I am fortunate to have a husband, Leland, who supports and encourages me to keep digging in. This August we celebrate our 19th anniversary.



What do you like to do to have fun?

I love being outside! I am an amateur gardener and find lots of stress relief in landscaping and raising vegetables. We have a small pop-up camper that we take to the woods or lake several times each summer. As you can imagine, a family of five in a small pop-up is like trying to stuff the biscuits back into the can. We have a lot of laughs and those are some of my most favorite family memories. As our kiddos get older, we are trying to be very conscious to take them to places we want to be sure they see. We visited Mt. Rushmore last summer and have plans for Colorado this summer. I also LOVE fishing and hope to get back to that some day when we are no longer filling our weekends with sports for the kids.

How long have you been a member of the Society for Pentecostal Studies? What is your favorite memory or experience from that time? What have you enjoyed most about the Society?

My first conference was in 2012 at Regent University. This is also one of my most memorable conferences because I submitted a paper proposal on the Song of Solomon, honestly just to appease my Dean. I didn't think there was any way a paper so candid would be accepted and I could say I submitted a proposal but wouldn't be presenting. Much to my surprise this was not the case. I was mortified to present on this topic and blushed just reading my notes, much less have to say everything out loud. It was certainly a defining moment and a lesson learned. However, it's also a

favorite memory; go big or go home.

The thing I enjoy most through this Society is the camaraderie. From day one, I've never once felt like an outsider. I've been so grateful for the friendly phone calls and email exchanges with colleagues. In the last few years, I know I've build some incredible friendships with people I can count on to challenge my thinking and who are encouragers in the faith. I look forward to continuing to build on that in the years ahead.

The Executive Director position, a five-year term, is an important one for the Society that requires a lot of work. What interested you in the position?

Prior to last year's conference, I hadn't really considered the possibility. A friend of mine encouraged me to consider the position. As I read the description, I recognized this role speaks well to the things I love to do. I enjoy being creative and thinking outside of the box to accomplish big tasks with small means. I've done this day in and day out in the 14 years I've served at my institution of less than 1,000 students. My default setting is an introvert so I work well behind the scenes to equip others to look good and excel in their roles. I think the Executive Director role is a natural fit for who I am. My love language and spiritual gift is acts of service. Based on what I've learned so far, I will exercise that gift regularly! On a more serious note, every organization needs people who are willing to step forward and help lead. I am grateful for an opportunity to be an example for future young women within the Society and the Church that they do not have to be sequestered to women's ministry or feminist theology to be heard. It is an honor to be a part of a Society that allows women to serve in lock step with their male counterparts as equals and be considered theologians, not female theologians (there is a difference). I am interested in this position because I am grateful for an opportunity to give back to the Society that has poured so much into me.

What talents and skills do you think are necessary for an effective Executive Director?

One of the main skills needed from the Executive Director is the ability to lead from the middle. This person needs to have an ear for suggestions and constructive input from all stakeholders and be able to funnel these into action by giving data and support needed for the elected leaders of the Society to make sound decisions. This person needs to be organized and detail oriented because so many people are depending on the Executive Director to execute decisions that represent the culture and mission of the Society.

What do you see as some of the strengths of the Society for Pentecostal Studies and what are your hopes for it in the days ahead?

One of the greatest strengths of the Society is giving a prominent place for the Pentecostal voice within the academy. As a Society, we've shown time and time again that the research, forethought, and theology from Pentecostals is a valuable contribution. I am someone who has been fortunate enough to be continually challenged to build infrastructures and processes for growing programs. I believe this is a contribution I can make within SPS. As I step into the footsteps of the giants who have served before me, I hope this new role allows me to continue building. Over the next five years, I seek to work with our leaders and stakeholders to find new platforms for the Pentecostal voice to be heard. I commit to using my creativity to suggest ways to build the society and its

impact on theological perspectives.

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