

KIM HWAL-LAN (HELEN KIM) AND PRUDENCIA L. FABRO



Photo: General Commission on Archives and History

Prudencia Fabro



Photo: General Commission on Archives and History

Dr. Helen Kim giving a presentation in the New York offices of the Board of Missions, 1950s.



Photo: General Commission on Archives and History

Dr. Helen Kim greets Mrs. Ralph Ward at the 1954 Women's Society of Christian Service Assembly in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Led Mission-Founded Educational Institutions

Dr. Kim Hwal-Lan (Helen Kim) was a pioneer in many areas: the first Korean woman to receive a doctoral degree; the first Korean woman to become a university president; and the founder of Korea's first English-language newspaper. Kim also founded the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) of South Korea.

In 1931, Kim returned to Korea to become dean of Ewha College, and in 1939 she became its president, a post she would have until 1961. Under her leadership, Ewha became the largest women's university in the world. With an enrollment today of more than 8,000 students, it still holds that distinction.

After her retirement from Ewha University, Kim took up the work of evangelism in South Korea, visiting and working among construction, industrial, and farm workers in the country. "Win 30 million Koreans for Christ" was her motto.

Prudencia L. Fabro was the first Filipino president of Harris Memorial College in the Philippines, founded in the early 1900s as a Bible training school by the Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was named in 1906 for a benefactor, Norman Waite Harris of Chicago. One of Harris' main concerns was the training of deaconesses around the world.

As a Crusade Scholar (now World Communion), she studied at Drew University, earning a degree in rural sociology. Fabro returned to teach at Harris School in 1948 and became director in 1951, succeeding an American missionary. When Harris became a four-year college in 1968, she became president, a post Fabro held for a decade.

Fabro is credited for steering Harris in the direction of equipping young women for service as deaconesses, in large part through her personal qualities of courage, integrity, spirituality, quiet dignity and humility.