

Darlene Cunningham

Darlene Cunningham was born in Vancouver, Canada to Pastor Ed and Enid Scratch. From an early age, she was aware of a distinct calling from God on her life. The course of that call became clarified forever when she met a handsome, single young man-with-a-vision named Loren Cunningham. Upon marrying Loren in 1963, she became the Co-founder of Youth With A Mission, the ever-expanding global missions movement Loren had started in 1960, which has now reached into every nation on earth (www.ywam.org).

The work of YWAM encompasses evangelism, training and mercy ministries and is manned by tens of thousands of full-time staff from 200+ countries and a wide variety of denominations and Christian traditions who serve at more than 2,000 YWAM locations in 191 nations. By the time of YWAM's 50th anniversary in 2010, more than five million participants had served in YWAM programs as students, short-term volunteers and full-time staff. From that point, YWAM went "viral" and they decided to stop trying to keep a count. Now only God knows the numbers.

Darlene is also the International Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Nations (UofN), a global ministry of YWAM (www.uofn.edu). Since the university was established in 1978, it has grown to offer more than 600 different kinds of courses and seminars (some of which are offered in nearly 100 languages), held at more than 800 locations/campuses in 163 countries. The ten colleges of the UofN are: Applied Linguistics & Languages; Arts; Christian Ministries; Communication; Counseling; Education; Health Care; Humanities & International Studies; Science & Technology and Sports & Fitness. Hundreds of thousands of students have registered within the global UofN system and taken at least a Discipleship Training School (DTS), the entry course and pre-requisite for all other UofN courses and/or for becoming YWAM staff.

Darlene is a "prime mover" in the areas of leadership development and implementation of vision. One of her greatest heart motivations is to discover leadership giftings in young men and women and help them to reach their full potential in God. Over the past four decades, she has led scores of YWAM Leadership Training Schools and DNA Infusion leadership training events on every continent of the world, in response to a call from God to "take a banquet of leadership training to those who have not had opportunity to eat," especially those in the Global South, making it accessible geographically, financially and in the languages of the regions where they have been held.

Darlene is eagerly sought as a speaker worldwide because she is recognized as a woman of wisdom who hears from God. Whatever the context, she constantly points the hearer to God's faithfulness in every situation, and to His great grace.

She is uniquely qualified to give leadership to those within Youth With A Mission because she understands the lifestyle, pressures and joys of the Mission from an inside perspective. Darlene is the one who first began to identify and teach on YWAM's Foundational Values in 1985. That teaching was later formalized as one of YWAM's cornerstone documents: The Statement of Purpose, Core Beliefs and Foundational Values of Youth With A Mission. Her book *Values Matter – Stories of the Beliefs and*

Values of YWAM expands on these topics through many inspiring, live-giving narratives, and includes one of her core teachings for life and decision-making, "The Belief Tree."

Darlene and Loren reside in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii investing their wisdom and influence into the leaders and staff of the University of the Nations Kona campus which they pioneered in 1977. (www.ywamkona.org).

The Cunninghams have two adult children, Karen, who has a University of the Nations Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Education, and David, who is a graduate of University of the Nations and University of Southern California. Karen is a preschool teacher and David is a film director. David and his wife Judy have also given Loren and Darlene their most cherished title, promoting them to the role of "grandparents," by producing three wonderful grandchildren, two of which (so far) have attended University of the Nations and are called to various aspects of the film industry.

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