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Cedarville Boat Team Aims for Third Solar Splash Championship

CEDARVILLE, OHIO – The World Solar Splash Competition will return to the Miami Valley June 7-11 at the Clark County Fairgrounds. Cedarville University, the defending 2016 overall champion, will host the 23rd annual event that features solar and electric boats built by college students.

The 2017 event will include 14 teams from universities around the United States, including students from the University of Dayton, University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez, Carnegie Mellon University, the University of Arkansas and the University of New Mexico.

Cedarville is the most decorated participant in Solar Splash history, having won the event nine times in the last 13 years, including the 2015 and 2016 championships.

“We are truly blessed to have had such great success,” said Dr. Timothy Dewhurst, senior professor of mechanical engineering. “Success is never guaranteed, even with a very good boat; anything can go wrong. We strive to be humble, friendly and have an attitude of service toward all participants and guests.”

This year, Cedarville’s team consists of seven mechanical engineering seniors. The Solar Splash event is part of their senior capstone project.

Solar Splash tests the engineering design and production skills of each team through a technical inspection and a series of on-water contests. Each team creates a piloted boat up to six meters long, powered by 480 watts of solar power with one kilowatt-hour of stored energy in batteries.

Teams earn points based on their performance in a qualifier, high-speed sprint race, long-endurance races and slalom event. The event judges also review technical reports submitted by each team, which factor into the final score.

“The value of this kind of competition is incredible,” said Dewhurst. “When you have to build what you design, you learn so much more. This type of competition greatly prepares students for industry by teaching them how to approach ‘open-ended’ problems for which there is no set solution.”

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,760 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 100 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and leading student satisfaction ratings. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.