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"Phone-Free" Zone Builds Community

CEDARVILLE, OHIO – [Cedarville University](#)'s Student Life Programs office is working to change the perception that college students are glued to their phones, and it's using discounted coffee to make it happen. The office's new program, Coffee & Community, takes place on Tuesday nights from 7-10 p.m., at Rinnova, the campus coffee shop.

The event is hosted by the campus community committee of Cedarville University's Student Government Association.

The idea originated five years ago as Brian Burns, director of [student life programs](#), watched students interact more with technology than with their peers. Burns' solution, Coffee & Community, is an easy way for students to come to a casual environment and experience true community.

Burns' goals for the new program are threefold: build community on campus, create intentionality in conversation and encourage authentic relationship-building.

"I hope students stop and take the time to learn each other's stories, think, debate and come back to truth," he said.

Brett Sumrall, director of campus community for Cedarville's student government association, heads a team that will come up with the topics, which will include questions about important current issues like the upcoming election.

"We want to get at issues that we don't like to talk about a lot but that we need to face, especially as a community of believers," Sumrall said. "The goal is to foster casual conversations about intentional issues."

Burns pointed out that what a university celebrates and focuses on shows what it values, so through this program, Cedarville wants to focus on community to show its value.

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.