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Champions of the Truth

Clem Boyd

Cedarville University, clemboyd@cedarville.edu

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>--WHAT IS DINE
OUT FOR
HUNGER?

--EACH YEAR

Champions of the TRUTH

When CNN looked for an expert to speak on the Tamir Rice shooting in Cleveland, Ohio, they came to Patrick Oliver, Cedarville University Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and Director of the Criminal Justice Program.

When Dayton-area media needed a balanced, professional perspective on the release of American Jeffrey Fowler from North Korea in 2014, they sought out Glen Duerr, Cedarville University Assistant Professor of International Studies.

When radio and television journalists sought opinions about the Ebola outbreak in 2014, they reached out to Ginger Cameron, Cedarville University Assistant Professor of Pharmacy, who is also a Disaster Management Responder.



by Clem Boyd

COMPELLING EXPERTS

Why is Cedarville University a go-to source for high-caliber insight about local, national, and international news?

“Cedarville professors provide balanced insight, which is so necessary in the news and so welcome,” commented Katie Ussin, evening news co-anchor for Dayton, Ohio-based WDTN, Channel 2. “That’s what you owe your audience. They give you the facts, and they don’t go off on personal biases. It’s what we want to give our viewers.”

“When you’re looking for a person to advise an audience, you want someone who will give them a biblical perspective with a good, strong evangelical understanding,” commented Mark Elfstrand, who produces and hosts *Let’s Talk with Mark Elfstrand* on Christian radio station WYLL in Chicago.

“The bottom line in radio is the word ‘compelling,’” added Elfstrand. “You want [sources] with edge, passion, and the right tone of voice. Cedarville professors provide compelling conversation.”

INCREASED PRESENCE

During the past few years, newspaper, television, radio, and online journalists have sought out Cedarville professors for perspectives on everything from same-sex marriage and legalization of marijuana, to Russia’s involvement in Syria, to John Boehner stepping down as Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Media have interviewed 89 Cedarville faculty and staff during the 2015–16 school year so far. They have appeared in 877 stories for television, radio, print, and online, including interviews on the Moody Radio Network, the K-LOVE national radio network, and *World* magazine.

When media reached out to Cameron, she saw it as an opportunity to bring truth and a calming response to all the hype. “Ebola was so out of perspective in the national spotlight,” she said. “There was so much happening, so many countries impacted, and so much information. I wanted to help people understand the truth of it and the reality of what was really happening. I felt like that was important.

“Helping people to see, hear, and know the truth helps reduce fear and panic,” Cameron added.

“It gives people hope and reassurance. That is our responsibility.

“God gives us a knowledge base in an area of interest for a reason. He spreads us out through all the professions so we can be a voice within those professions. It is so critical there are Christian people with truth in every field to say, ‘Here’s what’s really happening.’”

Oliver, a former Cleveland police chief, has appeared on CNN three times, once to address the Cleveland police shooting of 12-year-old Rice. He’s also appeared on Dayton-area television a number of times.

“The Lord has created the opportunity for Christians to speak on these issues,” Oliver said. “It’s an opportunity to speak into the profession from a biblical worldview that understands those virtues, values, and principles that should be practiced in the profession and understands with a degree of expertise how the profession functions.”

Duerr has been called on to comment on a wide range of stories with global impact: the release of Fowler, the West Carrollton, Ohio, man who had been imprisoned in North Korea; the threat of terrorist attacks at the 2014 Winter Olympics; Scotland’s bid for independence; and Russia’s involvement in the war in Syria.

He’s done a host of interviews for radio stations throughout the Midwest and has appeared on every local Dayton, Ohio, TV station.

“At the end of the day, we stand for the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ,” Duerr said. “It’s about bolstering the relationship of the University with the rest of the world, as well as the reputation of the University. My prayer is that people are drawn to Cedarville as a result of having competent people at the University who can speak to these issues.”

BROAD IMPACT

Besides offering a balanced perspective on current events, Cedarville University faculty members also shine a light for the Kingdom, even as they represent the University.

“I think [these media interviews] are a ministry opportunity,” Duerr said. “There are times when one needs to share the Gospel. There are many times when that cannot be done in a short five-minute

interview, but when I have the longer interviews I can often bring in Scripture. But it will also point people to Cedarville University, where we stand, and what we stand for — the Gospel.”

“We practice biblical integration here at Cedarville,” Oliver added. “Not to add on, sprinkle in, or season with the subject matter, but it’s woven into the discipline. You’re integrating biblical virtues into the interviews without referencing the Bible. It’s important that people who are committed followers of Jesus Christ speak on these issues from a biblical worldview.”

“I hope this is telling people we are current and relevant; we’re interested in what’s happening in the world,” Cameron added. “We’re offering people truth, knowledge, and comfort in the midst of what’s happening and a unique perspective that maybe a secular person wouldn’t have. I hope parents of future students are seeing that.”

LASTING IMPRESSION

“The impression I would get as an audience member is that Cedarville faculty are well-spoken, well-informed, and eager to dig into the issues with the community,” Ussin said. “They have charisma and obvious passion for what they’re speaking about, and they don’t pontificate.”

As people listen to Elfstrand’s show, they’re evaluating guests. “They’ll think, ‘That guy makes a lot of sense; that person is obviously well educated; his mind is well-developed,’” he added. “Whenever I finish a segment, I always make a point of saying, ‘And, by the way, that’s the kind of education you can find at an outstanding school like Cedarville.’”

And there’s one other upside, according to Ussin: Cedarville professors broaden perspectives. “Many times I’ve walked away from an interview [with a Cedarville faculty member] and thought, ‘Hmm, I hadn’t thought of that!’” she shared. “I hope folks at home experience that, too.”

Serving the public by bringing a biblical worldview to the issues of our day is a worthy quest for Cedarville’s champions of truth.

Clem Boyd is *Managing Editor of Cedarville Magazine*.

Opening doors for faculty to engage with the media is spearheaded by Cedarville University Public Relations. Comprised of (L-R, front) Mark Weinstein, Executive Director; Ryan Bower '08, Assistant Director; and student writers (L-R) Brandon Best '18, Rae McKee '18, David Long '18, and Victoria Stearns '18 (not pictured: Kathryn Sill '16), the team is dedicated to telling the Cedarville story in ways that advance the Gospel, support Cedarville's mission, and build awareness for what God is accomplishing in and through the University community.



Spotlight Helps Faculty Shine for Future Students

Current freshmen did their homework when determining whether to attend Cedarville University. A 2015 survey of all admitted students revealed that two of the top five reasons they chose Cedarville were related to the quality and reputation of our faculty. But it wasn’t just the high caliber of the professors’ instruction; it was also how they keep a Christian focus in their teaching.

The results affirmed the importance of keeping Cedarville faculty in the public eye, especially when it comes to recruiting future students.

“I think it sends a huge message in terms of the competency of the University, that not only will your child get a Christian education here, but they’ll be well educated in general,” said Glen Duerr, Assistant Professor of International Studies. “We prepare students well for the workforce and graduate school and give them a background and foundation in Christian education with the Bible minor.

“We’re raising the profile of Cedarville and ultimately the cause of Christ,” he added. “When people see our professors out there, they will realize this is a great place to send their son or daughter. We are one of the top choices.”

“It’s an opportunity one has to take advantage of,” noted Patrick Oliver, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and Director of Cedarville’s Criminal Justice Program. “We have subject matter experts who speak competently, eloquently, and professionally on current issues and from a biblical worldview. Potential students will realize they can get a quality, Christ-centered education here.”

Media exposure helps the public and future students see “we’re current, we know what’s happening, and we’re knowledgeable,” commented Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Ginger Cameron. “It lends credibility to the University.”

“I’m an epidemiologist, so that’s my area of specialty — infectious diseases, spread, outbreak, and containment,” Cameron added. “I’m uniquely positioned, as one of the few epidemiologists in the area, to use my knowledge to benefit the University in more than the classroom.”

“Our faculty bring a perspective that is fresh and informative,” noted Mark Weinstein, Executive Director of Public Relations. “This influence is helping with overall name recognition that affects student enrollment.”

“It’s impactful to students and prospective students that faculty members are respected enough they’re sought as subject matter experts by the popular press,” Oliver said. “Then students realize, ‘I’m studying at the right place; I’m learning from the right people.’”

As a result, Cedarville’s reputation grows. “We continue to move forward and show we are a leader in baccalaureate education, especially in Christian higher education,” Duerr offered.