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PHARM.D. GRADUATES EXCEED EXPECTATIONS

by Beth Ford

In May 2016, Cedarville University granted its first doctoral degrees to 48 individuals seeking to honor Christ and serve spiritual and physical needs in the field of pharmacy.

The doors of opportunity that have opened for the first School of Pharmacy graduating class are remarkable. Cedarville's pharmacy alumni have landed positions in highly competitive residency programs nationwide. They're working in respected chain pharmacies, hospital settings, and opening their own stores. They have far exceeded expectations.

"The inaugural class is an extremely ambitious, risk-taking group of students who will rise to leadership in their field very quickly," said Marc Sweeney, Dean of the School of Pharmacy.

FULFILLING A VISION

In 2006, Bill Brown, Cedarville's President, and his leadership team met to determine the feasibility of building a School of Pharmacy. Two years later, Cedarville recruited Sweeney, a Registered Pharmacist with a doctoral degree in pharmacy and a master's in divinity, to cast vision and create a plan for the new endeavor.

Determined to lay a biblical foundation rooted in leadership, character development, and ethics-based practice, the journey to develop a program began. "After a decade of planning and implementing a casted vision, the hope was to see students become pharmacists known for professional excellence, innovative solutions, and filled with Christlike compassion," said Sweeney.



So far, the vision is becoming reality. Of the 2016 graduates who pursued a residency, 79 percent were admitted to a program. The national average is 66 percent.

Kasandra Chambers '13, Pharm.D. '16 was chosen for a two-year program of postgraduate work (PGY2) as a health systems pharmacy administration resident at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. "Looking back at my time here, I can guarantee

The graduates are continuing to serve the underserved communities in their areas of practice, which is a strong focus of the school's curriculum.

I would not have become the bold, confident, Christian pharmacist that I am at any other program," said Chambers.

Josh Arnold '13, Pharm.D. '16 is completing Postgraduate Year 1 (PGY1) as a Pharmacy Practice resident at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. His wife, Melissa (McNicol) Arnold '13, Pharm.D. '16 was offered a position in the Mayo Clinic's clinical outpatient pharmacy. *U.S. News and World Report* ranked the Mayo Clinic as the No.1 hospital in the nation on its 2016-17 best hospitals honor roll.

"Our professors invested in us and wanted to see us succeed," Josh Arnold said. "They did an excellent job teaching us not just textbook information, but skills that will help us apply knowledge to care for our patients effectively and compassionately."

Three graduates were chosen for PGY1 residency programs at the two largest hospital systems in the Dayton, Ohio, area. Premier Health Network chose Ashley (Benjamin) Scherreik '13, Pharm. D. '16 and Kettering Health Network is home to Jon Wilkie '13, Pharm.D. '16 and Bethany Sibbitt '07, '13, Pharm.D. '16.

"It is so exciting to see how well the class of 2016 did during the rigorous residency match process," said Aleda Chen, Assistant Dean of the School of Pharmacy. "I am proud of their hard work and accomplishments, and I am thrilled to see what God has in store for their futures."

FINDING JOBS

Chain pharmacies in the Dayton, Ohio, area, such as Rite Aid, CVS, and Walgreens, along with a host of Ohio hospital systems, offered positions to nearly 40 percent of Cedarville professional pharmacy graduates. Others are serving the profession throughout the United States, including in Pennsylvania, Minnesota, and Michigan.

As many advance in their newly minted careers, another graduate, Kacey Adams, Pharm.D., M.B.A. '16, has moved back to her hometown of DeGraff, Ohio, to establish her own independent, specialty pharmacy. While Adams pursued her Pharm.D. and M.B.A. (online) dual degree at Cedarville, she always knew she wanted to return home to offer her community something it was lacking when she left. She also is working part time as the Pharmacy Operations Manager at Mary Rutan Hospital in Bellefontaine, Ohio.

Juanita Draime '13, Pharm.D. '16 is the first recipient of the School of Pharmacy's new academic fellowship. During this two-year fellowship, Draime will serve as an Instructor of Pharmacy Practice while conducting research and working in the clinical setting. "I knew that I wanted to be able to teach and continue to do research, which involved doing a residency or a fellowship," said Draime. "However, due to family requirements, I was limited to the local area for residency possibilities, which was a small field, and the Lord opened the door for me to pursue Cedarville University's first-ever fellowship offering. It was an answer to prayer."

FOLLOWING CHRIST

The graduates are continuing to serve the underserved communities in their areas of practice, which is a strong focus of the school's curriculum. They are practicing in free clinics in Columbus, Cincinnati, and Dayton. Paul Srnis, Pharm.D., M.B.A. '16 and Draime have relaunched the Miami Valley Pharmacist Association, which focuses on pharmacy and public-related issues, being a voice for pharmacy in the local arena.

"I believe this first class truly desires to glorify God with their skills," noted Sweeney. "They see their profession as more than just a way to make a living, but to make a difference for the Kingdom of God. They inspire me with the choices they're making."

Beth Ford is the Director of Community Engagement for the Cedarville University School of Pharmacy.