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Clem Boyd

Michelle (Cummings) Solomon

Nicole J., Hackett

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# STEPPING UP

BY CLEM BOYD, MICHELE (CUMMINGS) SOLOMON '91, AND NICOLE HACKETT '21

Sometimes it's about being in the right place at the right time. Sometimes it's about looking for the opportunities around you. Sometimes it's about stepping outside your comfort zone. But always, it's about listening to that still, small voice and obeying when God tells you to give, to act, to serve.

This COVID-19 season has uncovered heroes from the Cedarville family in the unlikeliest places. And all it took was letting God use them right where they were, with whatever He had given them, for such a time as this.



## COVID-19 PLASMA DONORS

As a police officer, firefighter, and emergency medical technician, Steve Norris '01, M.Min. '20 may seem like an expected hero. But Norris' act of selflessness was something no one could have seen coming, and when he became ill with COVID-19, he had no clue that he would be able to bless someone else because of it.

Norris came down with the novel coronavirus in March. He tested positive for COVID-19 at the University of Dayton. He self-quarantined and recovered.

Then he heard about an area cardiologist who became critically ill with the coronavirus and learned the plasma from recovered patients may help him.

Norris had given plasma only once before, but this need was immediate, and he was one of only a handful of people who might be able to help.

*I became sick with COVID-19 and came out the other side. Now I could be used to help someone else.*

*Steve Norris '01, M.Min. '20*

"I knew there had not been that many confirmed COVID-19 cases in the (Miami Valley) area," said Norris. "I realized the pool of donors was probably not very large."

Norris admitted he's no fan of needles. "But how do you not donate when you know how much it might help someone?" he said. "I spend all day helping people; this just made sense. It would have been the supreme act of selfishness not to give."

Norris called the Community Blood Center (CBC) in Dayton about donating his plasma. When he arrived on the morning of April 14, he was met by Mark Pompilio, the CBC's marketing and public relations manager. The CBC and Miami Valley Hospital had just officially launched a program April 10 to collect coronavirus convalescent plasma (CCP), and he was one of the first donors.

"God does all things for our good and the good of others," Norris said. "I became sick with

COVID-19 and came out the other side. Now I could be used to help someone else. I am grateful for this."

In September, former Yellow Jackets men's basketball forward Adam Clouse '10 also became a CCP donor. Clouse began donating blood while he was a student. His CCP donation marked his 24th overall to the CBC. He gave again in October, marking his 25th overall donation.

"I know there's always a need," said Clouse. "As soon as I found out they were specifically looking for those who had tested positive, it was a no-doubter. I was absolutely coming to do it. I'm happy to do it."

## PHARMACY STUDENTS CONTACT TRACING

In October, Cedarville University School of Pharmacy students began helping with COVID-19 contact tracing in Greene County, where the University is located.

The students are collaborating with students from Wright State University School of Medicine and its Master of Public Health program and the Greene County Public Health team to notify and provide medical insight to Miami Valley residents who have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

To participate in the contact tracing project, students completed more than 10 hours of training to prepare for this service opportunity. Cedarville's students were then placed in teams. Each student will volunteer a minimum of five hours a week to call individuals in self-quarantine. They will continue contact tracing into December and 2021, as long as there's a need.

"This has been a way for our students to follow the Lord performing a crucial service for the community during this pandemic," said Thad Franz, vice chair of experiential programs and associate professor of pharmacy practice. "We are proud of their efforts to help limit the spread of COVID-19."





## INTERNSHIP OF PANDEMIC PROPORTIONS

For social work major Hayley Penrose '21, her summer internship took an unexpected turn. You might even say it took on a significance of pandemic proportions. But for Penrose, it was about letting God use her right where He already had placed her.

Penrose had been serving with the Clark County Combined Health District. Her work experience began with the health district's "Help Me Grow" program for mothers and their young children, but by the middle of May, she was one of 16 staff members, plus several epidemiologists, contact tracing positive COVID-19 cases.

In addition to contacting clients, Penrose sent isolation orders to individuals with a positive test and 14-day quarantine orders for those who had been in contact with them. She also completed well-check visits with positive test patients to see how they were doing.

In June, Penrose switched from contact tracing to the Housing and Support Needs Team, where she fulfilled requests from Clark County residents who were isolated or quarantined. "We delivered essential items like food, water, cleaning supplies, thermometers, hygiene products, etc. to people all over Clark County," she explained.

## PRINTING 3-D MASK CONSERVERS

Connor Hart '22 was already using his engineering skills to help others when he shifted those abilities to make a difference during the pandemic.

As a freshman, Hart, the founder of Hands of Hope Foundation, started creating 3-D prosthetics for children with limb differences, with manufacturing space provided courtesy of the School of Engineering and Computer Science.

When social distancing became protocol in March to help flatten the COVID-19 curve, Hart had to stop meeting with his clients, but switched to printing conserver masks to help medical professionals and nursing homes facing mask shortages.

"It is normal practice for medical personnel to switch out masks between each patient check-up," Hart said. "However, the supply shortages in the months of March and April got so bad that, in some cases, medical personnel were issued only one or two masks per week, if issued one at all."

Conserver masks are made from plastic using a 3D printer and have an air vent where the user inserts a small piece of medical mask fabric, about one-sixth the fabric of a normal mask, which allowed healthcare professionals to get more from limited supplies available at the beginning of the pandemic.



"I was devastated when I learned Hands of Hope wouldn't be able to work with the families it serves for a full four months due to COVID," said Hart. "Having the opportunity to serve others by using my engineering skills to help fight the mask shortage was truly a blessing for me."

Hart, who is majoring in mechanical engineering, was able to make up to eight masks a day with his 3D-printing

equipment and shipped a total of 150 masks between March and May. Each mask is completely reusable, meaning one mask can last for months if it is sanitized effectively and the filter is changed regularly.

Hart distributed the conserver masks to the Spring Valley Fire Department, in Spring Valley, Ohio, about 20 minutes south of Cedarville; to multiple nursing homes; to a number of families with members at high-risk of complications from COVID-19; and to healthcare workers in the communities near the University.

"I don't have any plans of making more masks since the shortage is over and I am back to serving families with Hands of Hope," Hart said this fall. "However, if I see an opportunity to use my skills to serve others in a similar way in the future, I won't hesitate to jump into it."

## 61 DAYS THROUGH THE BIBLE

Last spring, the COVID-19 pandemic brought dramatic change, from health to sickness, from employed to unemployed, from face-to-face to virtual. For Cedarville University students, the pandemic brought an immediate switch from on campus to online. But in this unique, disruptive time, three students saw an opportunity to make this season transformative.

Zac Griffith, M.Div. '20; Andrew Hile, M.Div. '20; and Joshua Lankford '20, M.Div. '22 spearheaded a 61-day journey through the Bible.

"The pandemic provided an opportune time for a holistic reading of Scripture since many of us had more time on our hands," Hile said. "People might know certain stories or verses, but might not know how they fit into the biblical authors' composition of the Scriptures. God has given us 66 books, and each is vitally important and relevant on its own terms for every believer."

Hile reached out to his good friends Griffith and Lankford, who were groomsmen in his September wedding, to see if they wanted to participate. The team of three then advertised the 61-day read-through-the-Bible program on their social media, with approximately 200 responding. Between 75 to 80 joined the Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday Zoom calls, where they reviewed, discussed, and learned about the reading for the week.

God has given us 66 books, and each is vitally important and relevant on its own terms for every believer.

The virtual sessions were populated with current Cedarville undergrads from a wide variety of majors: business, nursing, engineering, worship, communication, Bible, and education. But parents also joined in, as well as students from other universities.



As for Hile, Lankford, and Griffith, this pandemic-inspired deep dive in the Scriptures turned a time that many see as an interruption into a moment for meaningful instruction.

"We probably wouldn't have done this if not for the stay-at-home order," Hile explained. "The Bible faculty has equipped us as students with awesome tools and resources, and we were excited to share these with others. I want to teach God's Word till I die."

*Andrew Hile, M.Div. '20*

**Clem Boyd** is Managing Editor of Cedarville Magazine.

**Michele (Cummings) Solomon '91** is the Copy Editor for Cedarville University Marketing and Communications.

**Nicole Hackett '21** is a student writer for Cedarville University Public Relations.