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Cedarville University Celebrates Diversity with World Fair

CEDARVILLE, OHIO – On March 23, the quiet midwestern village of Cedarville, Ohio will transform into a hub of cultural diversity. An immersive experience of flavors, sounds, and sights from around the globe will be imported to Cedarville University's campus for an evening of activities, food, live music and more in a celebration of diversity.

The Educational Culture Fair Celebration will be held in the Center for Biblical and Theological Studies (BTS) from 6 to 9 p.m. and is open to the public. Authentic Argentine and Vietnamese food will be available for purchase from food trucks.

Informational table displays and samples of ethnic cuisine will offer a taste of each country's unique culture. "We want people to know what it is to walk in someone else's shoes," said Brenda Reid, coordinator of international student services. "So we are creating the opportunity to, in the space of an evening, literally walk around the world."

Throughout the night, groups including "The Koreans" and "The Munoz Family" will feature live music from different cultures. A didgeridoo is expected to make an appearance as well.

Visitors will have the opportunity to watch or participate in Indian, Korean and Irish dance, learn the art of Korean Calligraphy or Japanese origami, and get a Henna tattoo.

A petting zoo of exotic animals from the Jungle Island Zoo will be set up outside of the Dixon Ministry center. Anyone attending the event will be able to interact with kangaroos, miniature pygmy goats, yak, and more. Visitors will also be able to snap a picture with a baby animal.

Reid developed the culture fair concept and organized it with the help of students within Cedarville University's Multicultural International Student Organization (MISO) of which she is the advisor. Reid explained that the goal of MISO "is to educate and share culture on campus and give other students opportunity to engage other cultures."

Sixty different countries are represented by students on Cedarville's campus, and the flag of each country will be on display during the fair. The flags are one small way to help these students share and celebrate their cultures and backgrounds.

Through a grant received from Walmart, the flags, along with the petting zoo, were made possible.

Reid explained "This event says that we at Cedarville are eager to engage with people outside of our geographic location, to explore the world and that we're ready to learn and embrace people from other cultures."

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,963 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 150 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.