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# Tremendous Opportunities to Serve Native American Populations

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Tremendous Opportunities to Serve Native American Populations**

**CEDARVILLE, OHIO** -- Four professional pharmacy students from Cedarville University traveled to the American Southwest on a health care mission trip during spring break. Their experience showed them the great need that still exists within Native American populations in the United States.

Third-year professional pharmacy student Austin Lail (Hamilton, Ohio) and second-year pharmacy students Joshua Pearson (Cedarville, Ohio), Matthew Swett (Morrice, Michigan), and Jinho Son (South Korea and Cedarville, Ohio) traveled to Tuba City, Arizona, to serve Navajo and Hopi communities and assist at various medical centers.

The students split their time between two health care campuses: Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation, the main hospital in Tuba City; and the Sacred Peaks Health Center Community Clinic, a full-service health clinic in Flagstaff. They filled more than a thousand prescriptions a day for both inpatients and outpatients. A pharmacist spoke with each patient who received a prescription to counsel on intended and appropriate use, potential side effects and individualized therapy plans to better achieve desired health outcomes.

Students also accompanied health care providers on house calls to members of the tribe who lack transportation. Traveling between neighboring houses took as long as 40 minutes, and many homes they visited lacked access to clean running water, septic systems and on-demand electricity.

"It broke my heart," said Son. "The people I encountered were so encouraging and hospitable. Although it was a short period of time, I feel like I have gotten to know so much more about the native culture and customs through this trip. All the connections I made with the pharmacists at Tuba City were truly a blessing."

"What was perhaps most surprising to me was the important role that spirituality has in the lives of many of the tribe members," said Pearson. "One man, in the middle of a diabetes education session, began telling me about his morning religious routine. I was able to then have a conversation with him about his spiritual health in addition to his physical health."

"What an honor to have had the chance to so easily and respectfully integrate faith and practice while serving an underserved population," he continued. "A week was not enough time, and I am looking forward to returning to the reservation as soon as possible."

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,193 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](http://www.cedarville.edu).