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Big-Time Showing for Cedarville Pharmacy Students

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- Three Cedarville University pharmacy students demonstrated their competency at the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP) Clinical Research Challenge by placing third at the 82-team competition. Cedarville's team finished behind Oregon State University and the University of Michigan.

With their strong placing, the Cedarville students have the opportunity to present at the 2019 ACCP annual meeting in New York City. The national event takes place October 25-29.

The challenge pushed pharmacy students Rachael Tollerton, Brianne Potter and Nicole Stute to develop a research proposal for implementing practice-based improvements for patient care.

"The challenge allowed me to practically apply the skills I learned in a research course to an assigned patient population," said Tollerton, second-year professional pharmacy student from Evans City, Pennsylvania. "We were able to critically look at existing literature to establish a gap in current services offered by pharmacists using this as a framework to establish an innovative new service proposal."

Knowing that thyroid disorders are common but often untreated in type 2 diabetics, the Cedarville students proposed a way to utilize pharmacists to test thyroid hormone levels to make medication adjustments.

"We ran through so many different ideas before we settled on the thyroid clinic proposal. Sometimes we would spend hours on one idea just to realize that it wasn't feasible, and we had to be okay with that and move on," explained Stute, third-year professional pharmacy student from Columbus, Ohio.

The challenge consisted of three stages. First, all 82 teams competed against each other online. The second round required the teams to write a letter of intent for their health care solution, and from that letter, a national panel of experts — in the third round — decided which teams could submit a full proposal detailing their solution that would decide the finalists.

"This challenge helped teach me just how time consuming research can be, specifically creating a quality proposal," said Potter, third-year professional pharmacy student from Goshen, Indiana. "As we advanced further into the competition, we put more and more time into our letter of intent and then the proposal. It definitely helped me to better appreciate those who put much of their time and effort into research for the benefit of others."

“We have seen the model of care provided by pharmacists changing,” said Zachary Jenkins, assistant professor of pharmacy practice. “We are moving from traditional pharmacy services to direct patient care. This clinical challenge prepared the students for this shift and showed them how to identify a problem in care and effectively use limited resources to solve the problem.”

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.