

5-8-2020

COVID-19 Leads Ohio Graduate to Anchor in New York City

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/news_releases



Part of the [Organizational Communication Commons](#), and the [Public Relations and Advertising Commons](#)

This News Release is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Cedarville, a service of the Centennial Library. It has been accepted for inclusion in News Releases by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Cedarville. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@cedarville.edu.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 8, 2020

CONTACT: Mark D. Weinstein
Executive Director of Public Relations
[937-766-8800](tel:937-766-8800) (o)
[937-532-6885](tel:937-532-6885) (m)
Mweinstein@cedarville.edu
[@cedarvilleneews](#)

COVID-19 Leads Ohio Graduate to Anchor in New York City

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- She passes by three tractor trailers on her way to work each day. It's a somber reminder to Rachel Hartley, a critical care nurse and 2015 Cedarville University nursing graduate, of the reason she came to New York City in the first place.

The tractor trailers are a temporary morgue set up in the parking lot outside New York University's Langone Brooklyn Hospital for those who have died from COVID-19. While the hospital has discharged 650 patients suffering from the novel coronavirus, the death toll is like a flood.

"The mortality rate is through the roof," she said. "Two weeks ago, 98% of the patients in the whole hospital of 300 to 350 beds were COVID-19. They normally have about 26 intensive care unit (ICU) beds, but they have converted medical/surgical units, telemetry wards and recovery rooms into more than 100 ICU beds. At one point, 95% of the patients were intubated.

"I haven't seen anybody turn around. I've heard it happens, but I've not had the privilege of seeing it."

Still, Rachel knows this is the place God has called her to be, in this moment, for as long as he needs her there. She is anchored in that thought.

Prior to New York, Rachel was working as a preoperative surgical nurse in Lynchburg, Virginia. When the hospital stopped scheduling elective surgeries in mid-March, the caseload dropped from 30-50 a day to 10 to 20.

Around the same time, she began receiving emails from recruiters looking for nurses and health care workers to help out in New York City, which was staggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. Hartley felt the Lord nudging her to go.

"That is so in line with my passions and my husband Taylor's passions and giftedness," she said. "From the moment I made the decision to call the recruiter and asked him about what they needed in New York, God confirmed this decision time and time again."

For one, Hartley and her husband own a sailboat, Turning Points, which has four state rooms, and planned to sail it to NYC and live in it for however long they were serving there. But like the cost of living space in New York and its boroughs, marina fees were sky high. Taylor, a photographer and college recruiter, had booked a rental condo, but Rachel joined a Facebook group called "The Sailors of New York" and started asking about places to dock.

"Within a half hour, they had put me in contact with a marina, and they instantly offered us dock space for free. Normally, they charge \$11,000 a month. So quickly, God went above and beyond what I could have imagined, and we were given this massive gift of being able to sail to New York."

Rachel and Taylor have experienced plenty of other blessings, from the support of the Brooklyn Heights community near the marina, to the continued generosity of the marina, which has offered food to the Hartleys, to their friends who are also serving in New York and living on the boat – critical care nurse Tom Huling and physician assistant-in-training, Emily Chafins.

While the support has been an encouragement, the opportunity to serve has been the greatest blessing of all — from having the chance to pray over the phone with a family grateful for her care of their dying loved one to sharing her hope in Christ with beleaguered and weary co-workers.

“A Cedarville education prepares you to minister and to serve the Lord,” Rachel Hartley said. “I know I received a really good education, from the experiences I got to have to the training in spiritual care.”

Because of that, she’s also certain that New York City, at this moment in time, with all of its challenges and risks, is the place where she is anchored. “God has gifted me to be a nurse, and in that calling he’s placed on my life, I will find joy and satisfaction,” she said. “I’m where he wants me to be.”

Although Hartley currently works and lives in Virginia, she's really an Ohioan at heart. She grew up in a suburb of Columbus, graduated from Worthington Christian High School before studying at Cedarville University.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,380 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, including its [doctor of pharmacy, master’s in global public health, M.S.N. family nurse practitioner, healthcare mba, pharmd/mba dual degree, and M.S.N. nurse educator](#) programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings and high student engagement ranking. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.