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Greek to Me: Ancient Language Stimulates Modern Faith Conversations

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- Proclaim the Name is a thriving student-led company that sells everyday products in hopes that they will spark conversations about faith in Jesus.

Students involved in Proclaim the Name are a part of Cedarville University's Integrated Business Core (IBC), a program that was recognized in the Washington Post. The IBC includes a set of classes that teach students how to begin and run their own businesses, including sales, marketing and product or service delivery.

The company's current merchandise includes shirts and hats featuring the Greek words "dikiaow," meaning "justified," and "epaggelma," which means "promise." They also sell mugs with the symbols of a palm branch, crown of thorns, cross and empty tomb — all images traditionally associated with the Christian faith.

"Our whole mission as Proclaim the Name is to assist in and serve as a catalyst for evangelism conversations through products that we provide to customers," said Nicole Seagraves, a junior business management major who got involved in Proclaim the Name halfway through her sophomore year and now works as a supervisor. "So whether that be through a hat, a shirt, a mug or whatever we come up with in the future, our goal is to spur that gospel insight and conversation."

But this raises the question: Why the Greek words? "Our products are different from normal Christian apparel," said Logan Ball, a sophomore business management major who also works as a team supervisor. "They draw in non-believers rather than repel them. By using gospel-centered words in an unfamiliar language, conversations are created naturally and have the potential of planting seeds that could grow into devoted followers of Christ."

On its official company launch day on September 10, 2020, Proclaim the Name registered 65 total sales, both on and off campus.

"The amount of sales on and off of Cedarville's campus were actually a more balanced ratio than we had expected," said Liv Aronsohn, a junior accounting major and member of Proclaim the Name's marketing team. The team is planning ways to build off-campus awareness and sales even further.

COVID-19 has presented challenges that most new businesses do not typically face. "Some of my teammates have been put in quarantine, so we've had to learn adaptability in communication," said Seagraves. "After going through difficulties, transitions and changing plans, we are so much stronger as a team."

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,550 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 [Master of Business Administration](#) program, 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.

By Brianna Coffey