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Cedarville University Names Dr. Will Smallwood Vice President for Advancement

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- Will Smallwood has been named vice president for advancement. The Cedarville University Board of Trustees approved his selection during its traditional homecoming weekend meeting on Friday, Oct. 1.

Smallwood is replacing Dr. Rick Melson, who served as vice president for advancement at Cedarville from July 2016 to August 2021. Melson was named the president of Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Missouri, in August.

“We are blessed to have Dr. Will Smallwood serving as our vice president for advancement,” said Cedarville president Thomas White. “I have known Dr. Smallwood for many years and has always been struck by his humility, professionalism and desire to give God the glory. We look forward to all that the Lord will do through him at Cedarville in the years to come.”

Smallwood will be leading the university’s One Thousand Days Transformed: A Campaign for Cedarville, which was announced during homecoming weekend. The \$125 million dollar campaign, of which \$95.6 million has already been committed, will transform the university’s facilities, campus experience, affordability, and long-term sustainability.

Smallwood came to the University in April as associate vice president of development. Previously, he served at Louisiana College as executive vice president, where he led enrollment management, development and alumni relations and marketing and communications. Under his leadership, Louisiana College recruited the largest class in institutional history.

Prior to joining Louisiana College, Smallwood served as senior vice president for advancement and university relations for Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU) for 10 years. In his decade of service, Smallwood led the advancement team to launch and surpass the five-year \$42 million goal for the OBU Vision for a New Century comprehensive campaign more than a year early.

During the campaign, his team established 180 new endowed scholarship funds for students and 11 new endowed faculty positions, resulting in 42% growth in overall endowment, from \$87 million in 2010 to \$150 million in 2020. His development team’s efforts also led to completing 11 major capital construction and improvement projects. In total, OBU received more than \$100 million in gifts during his tenure, including the single largest gift in university history — the OBU Green Campus — from Hobby Lobby and the Green family.

Before joining OBU, Smallwood served four years as director of development for The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He began his career in Florida as a commercial printing sales consultant for Fortune 500 firm Consolidated Graphics. In addition, he served as a bivocational pastor while in Kentucky and preaches frequently at churches in Oklahoma, Kentucky and Florida.

Smallwood earned his bachelor's degree in public relations from the University of Florida. He earned a master's degree in theology and a Ph.D. in biblical spirituality and American religious history from Southern Seminary. Additionally, Smallwood holds a Master of Business Administration from Louisiana State University and has completed postgraduate studies in higher education leadership at the University of Massachusetts.

“The Lord has been good by providing this opportunity at Cedarville University, and it is with a grateful heart that I begin my service as vice president for advancement,” Smallwood commented. “I have long observed the excellence of Cedarville at every level, from the administration to faculty and staff and its outstanding student body. There is also a rich history of generous and faithful support from alumni and friends committed to preparing students who will honor the Lord with their careers and bring Gospel intentionality into all aspects of their lives. To play a small role in this worthy and crucial mission is an incredible blessing.”

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,715 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is one of the largest private universities in Ohio, recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, including the [Bachelor of Science in Computer Science](#) 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.