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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](https://twitter.com/cedarvilleneews)

National Firm Is a Fan of Her Work

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- One recent graduate of Cedarville University has a new job that has helped her develop many fans ... literally.

Julia Shaffer, a 2019 graduate of the industrial and innovative design (IID) program from Plymouth, Michigan, began a position as an associate industrial designer at Hunter Fans in January 2020. Hunter Fans is one of the leading companies in the domestic lighting and fan industry.

Prior to this position, Shaffer interned with Kichler Lighting, a lighting and fan company based in Cleveland, Ohio, and another leading company in the industry.

"My internship at Kichler was wonderful because rather than doing typical intern tasks like getting coffee, I was truly experiencing industry," Shaffer said. "I designed products that could see the market, used the design process I'd learned at the International Center for Creativity and conducted competitor research."

Shaffer's degree in innovative and industrial design greatly shaped her undergraduate experience, preparing her for the transition to industry. Cedarville IID students spend their first two years on campus and the last two at ICC's facilities in Dublin, Ohio, a suburb of Columbus.

Shaffer learned about Hunter Fans through her research work at Kichler. She loved their work and southern location, so when her internship ended in August 2019, she applied.

"My Kichler experience was a huge help in the interview process," explained Shaffer. "Even though I couldn't show pictures of my designs because the companies are competitors, I was able to talk through the design process I'd learned at the ICC and implemented at Kichler, which got my foot in the door."

After a handful of interviews, Hunter called Shaffer back for a product test, where she had to design a fixture to see if her work was up to standard.

Hunter loved her work, which led to her hire in January 2020 — less than a month before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I've been blessed because I've been able to continue work the whole time," said Shaffer. "We've been home since March 2020, but I've adjusted well."

Now on the Hunter Fans team, a workday for Shaffer includes tasks ranging from brainstorming to sketching to computer-aided design (CAD) to rendering to consumer testing. She works heavily with engineers and Hunter's marketing team as well.

Her first set of designs for lighting fixtures and fans hit the market Christmas 2020, and she's created [additional products](#) every quarter since.

As Shaffer reflects on her journey in the industry, she is grateful for how well Cedarville and the ICC prepared her.

“With the ICC, that fact that you’re off campus, treating school days like workdays, practicing the design process, working internships and looking at trends all help you adapt to the workforce easily,” added Shaffer.

The ICC is a Columbus, Ohio-based firm that delivers "creativity" consultation for companies, artists and individuals, and partners with Cedarville University to deliver a cutting-edge, IID major.

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 Arts in Innovative and Industrial Design](#) program, strong graduation, and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and high student engagement ranking. For more information about the University, visit cedarville.edu.

Julia's views do not represent Hunter Fan Company, other Hunter employees, vendors or customers.

Written by Heidie Raine