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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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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](mailto:Mweinstein@cedarville.edu)  
[@cedarvilleneews](https://twitter.com/cedarvilleneews)

## **New Vice President, Campaign Update Highlight Trustee Meeting**

**CEDARVILLE, OHIO** -- Cedarville University's Board of Trustees approved the appointment of a new vice president, financial aid for 2021-22, revised academic requirements for the doctor of pharmacy program, 10 new faculty members, and two new trustees at its regular board meeting Thursday, September 30, 2021.

### **Dr. Will Smallwood**

Dr. Will Smallwood was unanimously approved as vice president for advancement, replacing Dr. Rick Melson, who became president of Southwest Baptist University.

Smallwood joined Cedarville University in April 2021 as associate vice president of development until Melson's departure in September, when he was named interim vice president.

Smallwood came to Cedarville from Louisiana College, where he served as executive vice president. In this role he led enrollment management, development, alumni relations and marketing and communications.

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.

"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 have 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: The Campaign for Cedarville*, which was announced this past homecoming weekend. The \$125 million campaign, of which \$95.6 million has already been secured during a two-year quiet phase, will transform the university's facilities, campus experience, affordability, and long-term sustainability.

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.

## **Campaign Update**

University administration updated the trustees on *One Thousand Days Transformed: The Campaign for Cedarville*, including announcing the \$95,609,432 that has currently been committed by donors during the silent phase of the campaign.

“The *One Thousand Days Transformed* campaign will enable Cedarville University to equip students from career success and lifelong impact for the Gospel,” said White. “We give thanks to God for the privilege of stewarding the resources he has so graciously provided.”

The **One Thousand Days Transformed campaign** includes the following initiatives:

- \$92.5 million for university facilities
- \$15 million for scholarships and affordability
- \$10 million for enhancing the student experience
- \$7.5 million for long-term sustainability through planned giving

## **Financial Aid**

Trustees reviewed and approved a financial aid program for fall 2022 new students that includes modest increases to merit-based scholarships. The university continues to focus on affordability with new students this year receiving an average of more than \$20,000 in grants and scholarships.

## **Pharmacy Curriculum Adjustments**

The school of pharmacy’s proposal for addressing prerequisites and corequisites were adjusted to provide greater flexibility to future Pharm.D. applicants to satisfy admission requirements.

Specifically, the trustees provided more clarity to the “minimum of grade of C” requirement for prerequisite courses and provided flexibility for students to repeat courses. Also, the board approved replacing Cell Biology as a prerequisite course with a biology elective for all applicants and will allow for exceptions on an individual basis for prerequisites to be completed prior to the second year of the Pharm.D. program year, so that students can start the program sooner.

## **New Faculty Appointments**

The board approved the hiring of 10 faculty members:

- **Robert Bechtol, M.S., assistant professor of pharmacy practice**  
Robert Bechtol is currently pursuing his doctoral degree in social and administration pharmacy from the University of Minnesota. He has a master’s and bachelor’s degree in pharmaceutical sciences from the University of Toledo. Since 2015, he has served as a graduate teaching assistant in social and administrative pharmacy at the University of Minnesota.
- **Jonathan Burson, Ph.D., assistant professor of finance**  
Jonathan Burson earned his doctoral degree in business (finance) from Auburn University. He has a master’s degree in military operational art and science from Air University and an MBA from Touro University International. Burson’s undergraduate degree is in computer information systems from Cedarville University. Since 2018, Burson has been an instructor at Auburn University.
- **Michele Dodds, D.N.P., RN, assistant professor of nursing**

Michele Dodds earned her doctoral degree in nursing from Indiana Wesleyan University. She has a master's degree in nursing from Wright State University and a bachelor's degree in nursing from Morehead State University. Since 2018, she has been a family nurse practitioner with Wright State Physicians.

- **Bryana Fern, Ph.D., assistant professor of English**

Bryana Fern earned her doctoral and master's degrees in English from the University of Southern Mississippi. Her undergraduate degree is in English from the University of South Florida. Since 2015, she has been an English instructor at the University of Southern Mississippi.

- **Karen Graham-Burnet, Ph.D., PA-C, professor of PA studies**

Karen Graham-Burnet earned her doctoral degree in higher education administration from the University of Toledo. Her Master of Physician Assistant Studies is from the University of Iowa, and she earned an undergraduate degree in pre-med from Pensacola Christian College. Since 2009, she was a clinical professor at the University of Wisconsin for the La Crosse-Gundersen-Mayo PA program.

- **Brenda Miller, M.S.N., RN, assistant professor of nursing**

Brenda Miller earned her master's degree in nursing from Indiana Wesleyan University and bachelor's degree in nursing from Wright State University. Since 2014, she has served as the manager for clinical education for Premier Health.

- **Amanda Minor, M.S.N., RN, assistant professor of nursing**

Amanda Minor earned her master's and bachelor's degrees in nursing from Cedarville University. Since 2016, she has served as a nurse sonographer for the Pregnancy Resource Clinic of Clark County.

- **Ruth Mosher, D.N.P., RN, assistant professor of nursing**

Ruth Mosher earned her doctoral degree in nursing from Chamberlain University and her master's degree in nursing education from Indiana Wesleyan University. Her bachelor's degree is in sociology from Miami (Ohio) University. Since 2003, she has served as an ambulatory surgery charge nurse at Kettering Hospital.

- **Veronica Peters, M.S.N., RN, assistant professor of nursing**

Veronica Peters earned her master's degree in nursing from Indiana Wesleyan University and a bachelor's degree in nursing from Roberts Wesleyan College. Since 2020, she has served as a nurse for Family Health Services in Greenville, Ohio.

- **Marcia Williams, M.S., assistant professor of nursing**

Marcia Williams is currently pursuing her doctoral degree in nursing from the University of Utah. She earned a master's degree in nursing and a bachelor's degree in nursing from Cedarville University. Since 2015, she has led the graduate nursing clinical education program and served as an adjunct professor at Cedarville University.

## **New Trustees**

- Connie Jenkins of Paoli, Indiana, was appointed to the board of trustees. She also serves on the Selective Service Board in Orange County, Indiana.

- Joel Wayne of Hudsonville, Michigan, was appointed to the board of trustees. Since 2014, Wayne has served as the lead pastor at Chapel Pointe Church.

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 recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic 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](http://www.cedarville.edu).