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## **Shooting for the Stars: Theatre Major Takes on NYC**

**CEDARVILLE, OHIO** -- When Hannah Bradley was 4 years old, she sat mesmerized as she watched her first Broadway musical, "Beauty and the Beast." Now, 16 years later, she is in New York City to spend the summer studying theatre performance at one of the most prestigious conservatories in the United States.

Bradley, a junior [theatre](#) major from Pittsboro, Indiana, will be studying at the [Stella Adler Studio of Acting](#) in New York City, founded in 1949 and famous for training actors using the method approach, an intensive physical and emotional preparation for a role that allows actors to empathize with their character. Alumni of the academy have become household names, including Marlon Brando, Candice Bergen, Warren Beatty, Mark Ruffalo and Robert De Niro.

"The entire application process, the way everything worked out, so clearly pointed to God's direction in my life," said Bradley. "I found out about the summer program at a theatre convention in Kentucky, which I went to with a few friends from Cedarville just to go to breakout sessions and get familiar with internship opportunities. I never expected this!"

After several canceled summer plans and what felt like door after door being shut, Bradley decided to apply for the summer conservatory. Within three days of applying, she was accepted to the program.

"I received an email to schedule an interview the day after I turned in my application," said Bradley. "My parents sat in the kitchen listening to me interview in the dining room. I was told I was in the program on the spot. I truly just stood there with my mouth open because the whole thing felt so surreal."

Bradley has loved the stage for as long as she can remember. Her parents have collections of home videos of her self-staged productions, as she directed her parents and siblings while standing on a box. At age 7, she participated in her first production, "The King and I" — an event that only furthered her love of performing.

"My mom remembers me coming to her after a play in middle school and saying that the only place I felt truly at home was on the stage," said Bradley. "Not much has changed since then."

Bradley participated in performances throughout middle and high school and has taken part in seven shows while at Cedarville University, performing in four.

"My time at Cedarville has given me experience in different areas of theatre," said Bradley. "I have stage managed and understudied and set designed ... but my heart has always been with performance. I was able to play the lead in "Anne of Green Gables" my sophomore year, and it was one of the best experiences!"

Bradley will be living in New York City with a 2021 Cedarville theatre graduate, another opportunity that seemed to confirm God's provision in the process. Over 10 weeks, she will take eight different courses, training her in skills like voice and speech, acting technique, acting for film and screen and movement.

"I will be studying smack dab in Manhattan, right off of Broadway and Wall Street!" said Bradley. "The entire experience is so exciting and so surreal."

Despite her lifelong passion for theatre, Bradley did not expect to pursue theatre full time.

"I always wanted to perform, but I felt resigned to choose a more practical major," said Bradley. "But there was nothing else that I felt I could do for the rest of my life. My parents sat me down in my senior year and said that they thought I should pursue theatre — my mom told me to 'shoot for the stars' and that they were behind me whatever I chose. I am so thankful to have parents that support me, who are behind my dreams. I think they see the gifting the Lord has given me and trust his direction for my life."

For Bradley, theatre is not only a passion, but a mission field.

"I have seen firsthand how broken the theatre community is," said Bradley. "If the Lord has given me this gift and opportunity, then I will use theatre to open doors for gospel conversations. I want to learn and explore this summer, but I first and foremost hope to love people well so that I can share Jesus."

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 5,082 undergraduate, graduate and high school dual-enrolled students in more than 175 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, including the Bachelor of Arts in [theatre](#), high graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and high student engagement rankings. For more information about the University, visit [www.cedarville.edu](http://www.cedarville.edu).

Written by Halle Johnson