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8-24-2023

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**August 24, 2023**

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## **Bon Voyage ... Again: Cedarville Study Abroad Students Return to the UK**

**CEDARVILLE, OHIO** -- Four months in Oxford, England, just wasn't enough for four 2023 Cedarville University graduates, all of whom will be returning to the United Kingdom this fall to begin graduate education at St. Andrews, Glasgow and Oxford Universities.

Anna Grace Galkin, from Murray, Utah, will be pursuing a Master of Letters in Theology and the Arts at the University of St Andrews, Scotland; Brendan Rowland, from Westford, Massachusetts, will be pursuing a Master of Letters in English Literature degree with a concentration in Modernities at the University of Glasgow, Scotland; Hannah Dunham, from Southgate, Michigan, will be pursuing a Master of Letters in Middle East, Caucasus and Central Asian Security Studies degree at the University of St Andrews, Scotland; and Summer Bohannon, from Clarksville, Virginia, will be returning to the University of Oxford to pursue a Master of Studies degree in theology.

"When I first went to Oxford, I had never been outside of the United States," said Dunham, who studied political science at Cedarville. "There were so many little cultural adjustments, but the experience was absolutely amazing!"

Each of the students learned to culturally adjust in different ways. For Dunham, it was socializing in a more reserved culture. Rowland had to learn public transportation schedules, while Galkin, who studied English, and Bohannon, who studied liberal arts, adjusted to the smaller things, including the lower door handles, recognizing dry humor, and distinguishing bathroom symbols, that required adjusting.

After the culture shock wore off, the four found many things they loved about British culture. Everything from cheap Tesco muffins and local vinyl shops (Rowland) to the Pret a Manger student discount coffee (Bohannon), to the local soccer, or "football," leagues (Galkin), to the local architecture (Dunham), made Oxford feel like a temporary home.

All four said the academic experience was one of the best they had experienced.

"As an English major, the hub of history and art and intellectual development around Oxford was so exciting to be a part of, even for a short time," said Galkin. "It was intimidating going in, but the preparation I had from Cedarville held up. I found it affirming to receive feedback on my ability to think and write well, something that has been fostered by Cedarville faculty."

“Oxford courses are one-on-one with a professor, tutorial style,” said Rowland. “They expect you to come prepared and not only explain your opinions but defend them logically. The English department at Cedarville, and Dr. Deardorff in particular, had trained me to be a critical thinker, to research and write well so that my papers are not only plausible but defensible.”

The academic experience at Oxford was influential, not only in its expedited pace and challenging content but in opening doors to programs following graduation.

“I really believe it was some of the professor recommendations I received from Oxford that ultimately opened doors for me to return for my master’s,” said Bohannon. “I found that not only my academics, but my ability to converse with professors about my faith in a respectful but reasoned way fostered strong relationships.”

Rowland too was encouraged to pursue a degree at Glasgow by his Oxford professor Ruth Scobie.

“Glasgow has one of the best modern literature masters in the world, so it was sort of a shock to be accepted,” said Rowland. “If not for her encouragement and affirmation of the work I had already been doing at Cedarville, I would never have thought it was a possibility.”

For Dunham, the chance to study internationally goes hand in hand with her career goals.

“I am eager for the chance to be immersed in another culture again,” said Dunham. “I have always been interested in cultural psychology, and being able to learn about international security and politics while simultaneously experiencing Scottish culture will frame my understanding.”

Dunham and Galkin, who are currently roommates, will both be attending St Andrews, where they hope to live close.

“We both applied independently, although I heard about Anna Grace’s program and thought it sounded amazing,” said Dunham. “We both found out that we were accepted the same day! It feels comforting to know that even as we both go off into a new culture and environment, we will have the security of someone who knows us.”

While most graduating seniors have healthy nerves going into the unknown, these four seem to feel excited and secure about their path back to the UK.

“Over the past four years I have seen numerous examples of God’s personal faithfulness in my life,” said Galkin. “He is always with me, whether I am reading God’s word independently in Oxford or worshipping in Cedarville’s chapel with 4,000 other students. I am rooted in him wherever I go.”

“I want to hold the future loosely,” said Dunham. “I can make plans and think I have direction for my life, but I know the Lord is in control. I will happily go through whatever doors the Lord opens for me.”

As Bohannon eagerly awaits her return to Oxford, she feels the end of her time at Cedarville is bittersweet.

“Starting this year, I was praying a lot for guidance, for God’s will. I have seen confirmation from friends, from my church, from Scripture and from my own excitement to return to Oxford to feel that God is leading me back,” said Bohannon. “With that confidence I have been able to pour into campus the things I am passionate about. This year has been such a sweet conclusion to my time at Cedarville. I am thankful for the friendships I have made here, for my professors, and I feel ready and equipped to enter the next stage of my life. I think it is going to be good!”

All four expressed interest in someday teaching. Maybe these globetrotters will one day pack their bags and return to their college roots in Ohio.

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, 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

Cutlines:

1. Left to right, Brendan Rowland, Anna Grace Galkin, Hannah Dunham and Summer Bohannon walking in their regalia.
2. Left to right, Summer Bohannon, Hannah Dunham, Anna Grace and Brendan Rowland throwing their caps.

Photo Credits: Scott Huck