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Family Helping Cedarville University Reach Record Enrollment
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CEDARVILLE, OHIO – Cedarville University annually begins each year with a weekend it calls, "Getting Started."

This Getting Started Weekend is expected to mark the arrival of a record-setting freshmen class—and, possibly an enrollment approaching 4,000 students. But it also marks the arrival of a record-setting family. The Denens, of Xenia, Ohio, will send their sixth child to Cedarville, with four at the university in the 2017-18 academic year.

Luke Denen of Xenia, a freshman industrial and innovative design major, will begin the flight of the last yellow jacket for his family this fall. His brother, Jordan, a senior physics major; sister Tiffany, a junior majoring in theater and broadcasting and digital media; and sister Victoria, a junior nursing major, were there August 18 to help Luke move into Rickard Hall. Their parents are Mick and Barb Denen.

According to researched information through multiple departments, this is the first time four children from the same family are attending Cedarville University during the same academic year.

And there were two more before the four.

The first Denen was Alyssa, who graduated in 2011 with a Bachelor of Arts in theater. Next up was Sarah, who earned a Bachelor of Arts in psychology in 2014. And now four more are on their way to graduation day. From Alyssa's freshman year to the beginning of Luke’s journey at Cedarville, it’s been a decade of Denens.

What’s been so appealing about Cedarville?

“We were just very happy to have a good Christian university 20 minutes from our home,” noted mom Barb. “Cedarville has a good reputation for being rigorous and God-centered, and we wanted that for our kids. Plus, I liked that they would be close to home.”

The plan has worked well for the Denens, although several of the children admitted reservations about attending Cedarville. “All my siblings had come here,” said Tiffany. “I didn’t want to be just another Denen. But that hasn’t happened, because I’m a fairly unique individual.”

“It is kind of nice that we’re all in different departments,” added Jordan. “We are all good at our own things, so we didn’t have that sibling rivalry around getting better grades in the same classes. Our skill sets are very different.”

Different, but not so different, because as it turns out, even though each is majoring in a different program, all of them have a STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) connection. Fifty percent of Cedarville’s majors and special programs are STEM-related.

“Victoria and I are a little bit more technical – I’m engineering and she’s nursing,” Jordan added. “But Luke and Tiffany are technical, but also have the arts.”

Regardless the program, faculty have made a huge impact on the Denen siblings. “The professors are so caring and helpful,” said Tiffany. “They want to help you become the best you can be. I was hesitant at first, but
now I know there was no better decision I could have made. The teachers and programs at Cedarville are wonderful."

“The nursing professors have been great working with me,” said Victoria, who is diabetic and has a service dog with her round-the-clock. “They help you see the little details, like asking patients, ‘What else can I do for you?’ instead of ‘What else do you need?’ The Christ-centered focus is really important in the healthcare profession.”

Taking College Credit Plus classes at Cedarville while finishing their high school credits has been a big cost savings for this family of eight. Jordan and Victoria were able to enter their programs at Cedarville as sophomores. In addition, all four Denen children are receiving merit-based scholarships based on their ACT scores.

While they each have their own niche at Cedarville, and each is occupied with classes in unique programs, the family ties remain strong. The Denen kids catch lunch or dinner with each other as they’re able. And they depend on each other to get through the more difficult times.

“It’s good to know you have family here to vent to when you’re feeling stressed out,” said Victoria, “and they’re still going to love you no matter what.”

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,760 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 100 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 leading student satisfaction ratings. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.