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1,000 Days Remembered

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1,000 Days Remembered

Two years ago, our daughter, Brie Ahlgrim '13, walked across the graduation stage, shook the President's hand, and received her degree in nursing from Cedarville University. It seems like yesterday we dropped her off at Getting Started Weekend with a dream to become a nurse.

During her preceptorship prior to graduation, she cared for a baby in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Dayton Children's Hospital who was 2 pounds and could fit into the palm of her hand. This opportunity was a dream come true. As she told me of this little baby, my mind flashed back to Brie as a child playing on the sidewalk of our little country home. Today she is a compassionate, strong, and professional nurse. My heart is full of gratitude for Cedarville University — for its passionate and professional faculty and staff, for the transformational experiences, and for the encouraging and supportive friends.

When we built our first home, we had the task of seeding the surrounding three acres. Brie, 4 years old at the time, had to stay on the cement patio as the grass slowly grew. Soon, green, lush grass surrounded our home. One day as she played on the patio, we realized she was not venturing out to play in the yard. She would carefully put her little toes out to touch the soft blades of grass, but she would quickly pull her foot back with a giggle. On one hot July day, I was sitting on our blue front porch swing watching Brie play. I called out to her, "Step onto the grass." Because she had spent weeks avoiding the unknown territory, she looked at me with surprise in her face. I said again, "Step onto the grass. It is OK. Go explore."

At that moment I didn't realize that "step onto the grass" would be a key phrase in our relationship. As I think of her years at Cedarville, she not only stepped onto the grass, she jumped. Cedarville University gave her opportunities to explore, share the Gospel, and serve Christ on the other side of the world — as she cared for rescued prostitutes and their children on the brothel-lined streets of Chiang Mai, for the sick in a remote jungle village of Cambodia, and for families in the slums of poverty-stricken areas of Asia. She became the hands and feet of Jesus while sharing the good news of salvation.

Passionate and professional faculty and staff stepped into her life and made a difference. After watching our daughter journey through university life, I observed the impact of the great men and women of faith who inspired her. They took the time to encourage, direct, and guide her. Brie graduated with an incredible education from outstanding faculty.

Brie experienced transformational opportunities in her time at Cedarville. She worked as a Resident Assistant; she served as the Communication Director for the Student Government Association; she traveled on the Civil Rights Bus Tour; she studied in Spain for a summer with Cedarville's International Programs; she was involved in community projects, professional development opportunities, and much more. Opportunities abounded all along the way.

The encouraging, fun, supportive friends she made will last a lifetime. Cedarville is more than just what occurs inside the classroom; it is outside the walls of academia, too. I could not recount all the stories she told me about her four years at Cedarville. I heard stories full of adventure, silliness, and fun; conversations about life, God, and relationships; and grand memories of concerts, Elliv, sporting events, and more.

Because of her time at Cedarville University, I saw Brie become more of the woman God designed her to become.

Because of my faculty status, I sat on the platform during graduation in my own regalia and got to meet Brie on stage to congratulate her. Brie and I cherish this moment and have talked about it often since she graduated. It was just a few seconds in time, but it took my breath away. I looked into her eyes and said, "Step onto the grass."



At Cedarville University since 1989, Kim Ahlgrim serves as Associate Dean for Academic Enrichment and Director of The Cove.

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