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The Ripple Effect

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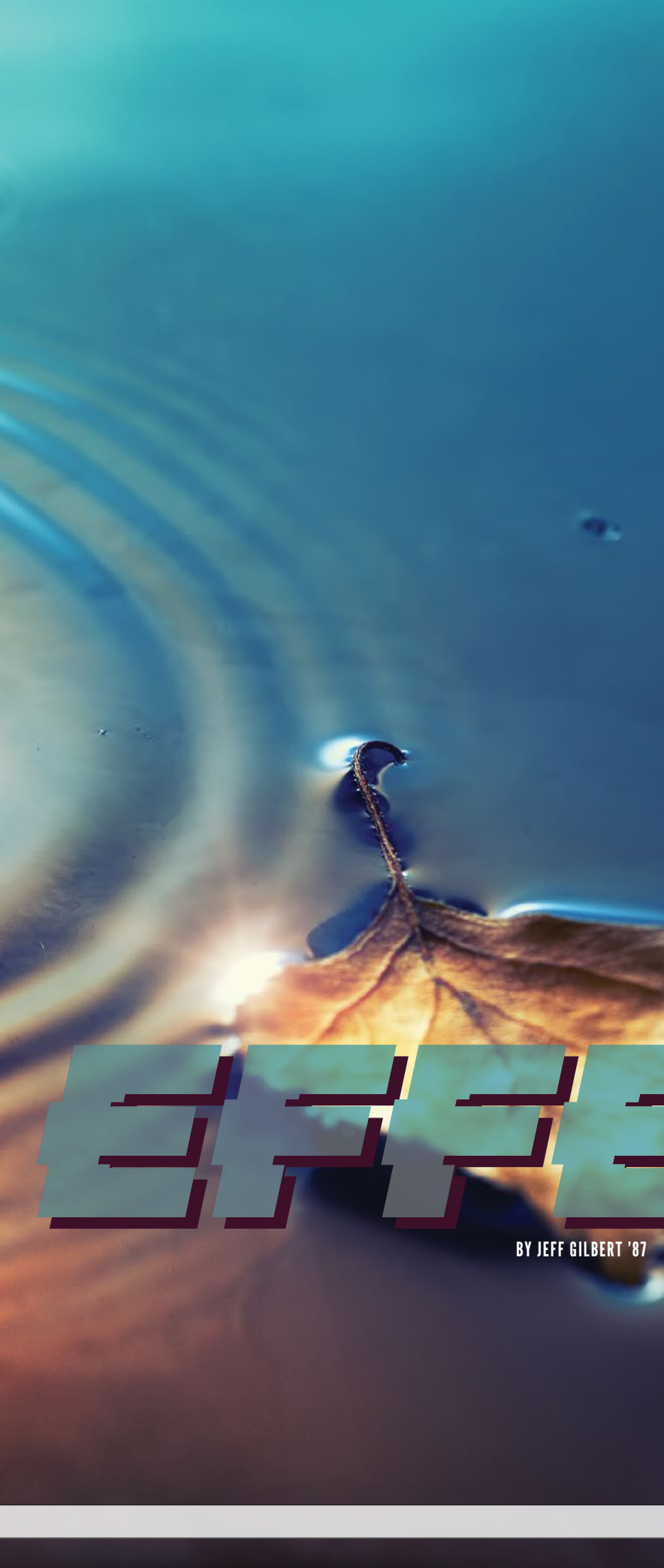


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The
RIPPLE



Cedarville University without a nursing program?

Without it, the past 40 years might have been a science desert. But an oasis of growth began in 1982 when the first class of nursing students arrived at Cedarville College.

Since that time, Cedarville has grown in its number of professional and healthcare programs, become a university, and seen its enrollment climb from 1,800 to over 5,000.

"If you ask, what would Cedarville be today without nursing," said Paul Dixon, who was in the fourth year of his presidency in 1982, "you pretty much take out most of our major science programs and what makes Cedarville have its identity as a conservative Christian liberal arts institution."

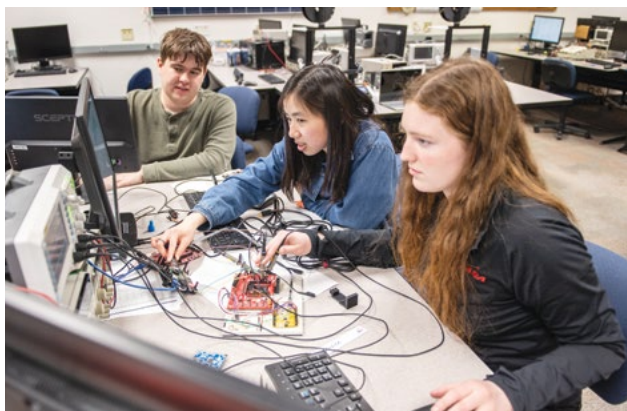
Engineering came next with programs in electrical, mechanical, computer, and, most recently, civil, plus computer science and cyber operations. Now the proliferation of healthcare programs continues to put Cedarville on a plane uncommon among Christian universities.

"As we started with nursing, and then all the sciences that followed, it gave Cedarville a special niche," Dixon said. "And I argue all success in business or higher education or churches, you have to have your niche. And we did."

EFFECT

BY JEFF GILBERT '87

Cedarville continues to carve a broader healthcare niche. A natural supplement to the bachelor's degree was the addition of a master's degree in 2011, with four concentrations. Nursing is the largest



major on campus with nearly 500 students, but that's just the beginning.

Cedarville educated pre-pharmacy students for many years before beginning a pharmacy program in 2009. The first seven-year class of Doctor of Pharmacy students graduated in 2016.

"Pharmacy was built on the premise that Christian healthcare providers — both nurses and pharmacists — should meet patients' medical needs as well as spiritual needs," said Jeffrey Bates, Dean of the School of Pharmacy. "We have worked to collaborate in the classroom and in practice so that nurses and pharmacists learn to work well together to help patients."

Bates said this collaboration among the healthcare professions is amplified even more with the start of the Master of Athletic Training this past summer and a master's degree to become a physician assistant (PA) scheduled to begin in the summer of 2023.

Evan Hellwig, Dean of the School of Allied Health, started at Cedarville as its first athletic trainer in 1986 and has witnessed the maturation and birth of all the healthcare programs.



"It was specifically a change of course as an institution to say we're going to do this thing called professional programs, and nursing is the one that we're going to do because everybody was looking for a Christian college that did nursing," Hellwig said.

Hellwig is an example of a student interested in healthcare who couldn't find what he wanted at Cedarville in the 1980s. He attended his freshman year before leaving for Mankato State in Minnesota to pursue a bachelor's in athletic training. He believed in everything else about Cedarville, so he came back.

Now Hellwig oversees a school that has developed the master's degrees in athletic training and PA studies as well as three bachelor's degrees (allied health, exercise science, and sport medicine) that feed naturally into the master's programs.

When athletic training education was mandated to move to the master's level, Hellwig and program director Mike Weller knew what had to be done if Cedarville was going to



continue an athletic training program. Fortunately, nursing and pharmacy had already proven that Cedarville could create graduate programs in healthcare.

"When it came time for both the Master of Athletic Training and the physician assistant program, it was so easy to just look across the lake at the Health Sciences Center and the pharmacy program, and to look over at what nursing was already doing in graduate education, and say, 'This is not new, this is not different,'" Hellwig said. "This is exactly who Cedarville is."

Jeff Gilbert '87 is Assistant Professor of Journalism at Cedarville University.