Contact: Kimberly Martin

 Vice President for Development and Marketing

 martink@bethelu.edu

 731-352-6443

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Bethel University Sophomore Selected for Red Cross Collegiate Leadership Program**

Bethel University sophomore Gracelyn Eaves is one of 15 students from NAIA and NCCAA colleges across the country selected to participate in the Red Cross Leadership Program for 2023.

The program includes an all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C., from June 4 through 17 where students will be exposed to top executives and policymakers while gaining hands-on experience in developing, implementing, and evaluating leadership ideas and concepts.

“I’ve never been to Washington, D.C., before, so I’m excited to explore a new place,” said Eaves. “I’m also looking forward to learning about how the Red Cross is working in D.C., and what we can bring from there to Tennessee, and to West Tennessee in particular.”

Participants also receive a $2,000 scholarship from the Red Cross.

According to the Red Cross, this program offers a unique scholarship opportunity for sophomores who are current student leaders on their campuses.

“I can attest that this is an elite program in developing servant leaders from small colleges and universities,” said Hanna Malak, Regional CEO of the American Red Cross. “Those selected will create lifelong friendships with speakers and peers from this program.”

As a biology major emphasizing pre-professional health, Eaves intends to attend medical school after graduation. She thinks this experience, which also includes coordinating blood drives on campus during the school year, will be beneficial to her.

“This was more than just a good scholarship opportunity to me,” said Eaves. “I hope to gain knowledge from the Red Cross and experience hosting blood drives. Blood drives are very important to me because my grandmother has had cancer. I know first-hand that the need for blood is always there, and you never know when you or a loved one might need it, so it’s important to encourage everyone to give.”

Eaves was selected through a rigorous process that included an application and four rounds of interviews. She will participate in the program for two years, and she will assist in identifying another Bethel University student next year who will be her successor when she graduates.

“I hope any current Bethel students who are interested in the opportunity will contact me for more information,” said Eaves. “This is an awesome opportunity to make an impact and give back.”

Eaves, who is originally from Erin, TN., also serves as Secretary of Communications for Bethel’s Student Government Association and as a student ambassador, and she is a member of the volleyball team, Lambda Sigma Sorority, and the Student Members of the American Chemical Society. She will be announced as the President of the Student Government Association for the 2023-2024 school year. She was named on the NAIA All-Academic Team this past volleyball season at Bethel University.

###