

# President's Report to the **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**



**SOUTHERN STATE**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

JANUARY 2026 | DR. NICOLE ROADES, PRESIDENT

## **Spring Enrollment**

The Spring term began on January 12, and enrollment was trending upward compared to Spring 2025. Overall enrollment was reported to be 7.2% above last year at the same time, comprised of an 11% increase in CCP, coupled with a 1% increase in traditional (non-CCP) students. As with any new term, enrollments shift during the first few weeks; however, the College community is pleased to start the term on a solid footing. A special thanks to the staff and faculty who work hard, work irregular schedules, and stay late to help students tie up loose ends in the final days leading to the start of the term.

## **Support for Wilmington College's Agriscience Complex**

On December 17, President Corey Cockerill from Wilmington College (WC) invited me to join her at the new Wilmington College Agriscience Complex, where she unveiled the facility to political leaders, WC Board Members, and other guests. Once the Bright Farms facility, WC intends to transform the previously shuttered greenhouse into a learning-living laboratory that integrates crop science, animal science, agribusiness, and food systems under one roof. Renovations will include a new livestock show arena, classrooms, and upgraded greenhouse infrastructure.

Building from a longstanding relationship, particularly in agriculture, WC has invited Southern State to join them in advocating for this project. While substantial investments have already been made by WC, including the \$2.5 million acquisition of the property and \$1.4 million in donor contributions, WC is seeking \$2.5 million from Ohio and the One-Time Strategic Community Investment Fund to complete the public-private partnership to bring the complex fully online.

In addition to our shared desire to support agriculture in this region, Dr. Cockerill and I also hold a deep-rooted passion for our region and the importance of young people choosing to build their lives in the region. We recognize the value of an agricultural pathway that can start as early as high school through CCP programming, then to associate-level degree attainment

(Business Management with Agriculture Concentration), and on to bachelor's and graduate-level education. I am eager to continue these conversations with Dr. Cockerill and political leaders to explore how best to leverage Southern State's support for this regional investment.

### **Adult Opportunity Center in Top Quartile of Performance Measures**

The ASPIRE Program, operated by Southern State's Adult Opportunity Center, under the leadership of **Ms. Susan Armstrong** and her team of capable and committed Assessment Coaches and Instructors, recently celebrated a positive desk review from the Department of Higher Education. In persistence, retention, and measurable skill gain, the program outperformed State performance and exceeded its performance from previous years. In a recent report (July – Present), the Southern State ASPIRE program is in the top 25% of all programs in Ohio in student persistence, progress test rate, and measurable skill gain. Congratulations to Susan and her team!

### **President's Activities and Involvement**

Since my last report, I have been involved in the following meetings, calls, and events:

- OhioSE ED Now: Building the Future of Southeast Ohio
- Weekly Meetings with the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs
- SSCC Project Leads Weekly Meetings with Bellwether Representatives
- President's Council Meetings
- Meeting with Clinton County Foundation Representative
- SSCC and Adena Partnership Call
- Highland County Chamber of Commerce Board Meetings
- STEEL Committee Post Event Lunch & Wrap-up Meeting
- SOCHE Board of Trustees Meeting
- Improving Efficiencies | Chancellor Duffey and Southern State
- Breakfast with Wilmington College Representative
- Working Session #2 with Bellwether Strategic Planning Steering Committee
- SSCC Faculty Senate Meeting
- Deep Data Dive | Student Body Profile
- Southwest Tech Prep Agreement Update
- CCP Sustainability Meeting
- Professional Development & Strategic Involvement | Summative Meetings
- Nectir AI Introductory Meeting

- SSCC LPN Pinning Ceremony
- Clinton County Reading Initiative Meeting
- Understanding the Regulatory Environment: Admissions & Campus Climate
- Meeting with Representatives re: GRIT
- Annual Evaluation with Board and Board Chair
- Agriscience Complex Tour
- Brown County Chamber of Commerce | December Meeting
- SSCC Opening Week Lunch and All-College Meeting
- Preparing for HLC | Mock Open Forums
- Meeting with Times Gazette Reporter
- Hillsboro Rotary Club Presentation
- Highland County Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting
- Call with Prospective Board Member
- Fayette County Economic Development Meeting
- OACC Presidents Meeting
- Student Discussion About Engagement Space/Facility Use

## ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

### Higher Learning Commission Accreditation Visit

**April 13 & 14, 2026**

SSCC will have a visit from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) for their 10-year Reaffirmation Comprehensive visit on April 13 and 14, 2026. A five-member team from the Peer Corps of the HLC will have a day-and-a-half visit with constituencies from all across campus, including a meeting with available board members. They will have read our institutional assurance argument, which will be submitted in March, and a federal compliance report will have been reviewed as well by another independent reviewer. SSCC is on the HLC Open Pathway. There are four (revised 9-25) criteria for Accreditation: 1.) Mission 2.) Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct 3.) Teaching and Learning for Student Success 4) Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources, and Planning. The HLC Writing Team held mock open forums for each of the criterion during Opening Week meetings to ensure the campus understood what the visit would entail and to practice mock questions for the visit.

## Health Sciences/ Nursing Updates

### New Director and Faculty



**Abby Storrs MSN, APRN, FNP-C**

**Abby Storrs** has been named the new Director of Nursing. She brings over 10 years of experience in nursing education and clinical practice. A nursing faculty member with SSCC since 2022, Storrs is a Family Nurse Practitioner currently practicing at West Main Urgent Care and Campbell Family Practice. She is completing her Doctor of Nursing Practice at Northern Kentucky University. Storrs has served as a faculty member at a nursing institution in the Cincinnati region and as a Charge Nurse in the Medical Intensive Care Unit at The Christ Hospital. She has received the DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses and holds a Master of Science in Nursing from Ohio University and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Cincinnati.

**Missy Holmes** has been a registered nurse for nearly 37 years and a family nurse practitioner for 11 years. She started her nursing career with an associate degree from Southern State. Holmes went on to further her education with a BSN from Wright State University, an MSN with a concentration in nursing education from Walden University, a post-master's FNP from St. Joseph's College of Maine, and is currently pursuing her DNP from Northern Kentucky University. As a nurse, she has experience in the emergency department, urgent care, mother-baby care, and family practice. She also has experience teaching in nursing programs at the undergrad and graduate levels.



**Missy Holmes MSN, APRN, FNP-C**

### New PN Cohort on Central Campus

This Spring semester saw a new Practical Nursing (PN) cohort added to the Central campus in Hillsboro. Previously, our PN program was only held on our Brown County campus. The Central campus cohort is full with a waitlist!

Registered Nursing students completed the HESI pharmacology exam in early January, scoring nearly 100 points above the national average as a cohort. Director, Abby Storrs, reported that “Even more impressively, five students earned a ‘perfect’ 99.99%—a remarkable achievement worth celebrating.” In additional news, the PN cohort that graduated in December is at a 100% pass rate for their licensure exam for those who have completed the exam.

## **Brown County Campus**

### **Celebrations and Events**

- Campus Collections for Non-profit Christmas Giving (Toys 4 Tots / Local Animal Shelters – Nov/Dec).
- Brown County Chamber - “Leading Across Generations” Part II Workshop (Dec. 3)
- Brown County Chamber December Meeting / Holiday Celebration (Dec. 18)
- Incoming 2026 Practical Nursing Class Orientation (Dec. 17)

## **ACT Testing Site**

### **SSCC Area Site for ACT Testing**

The College has been a regional proctoring location for the College Board – A.C.T college entrance exam for several decades. While area high schools provide testing once a year to meet required Ohio Graduation requirements, students pursuing bachelor's degree pathways need testing sites for entrance. Hosting this resource brings students to the campus, where information is abundant on alternative college pathways for achieving their academic goals without financial debt.

## **Study Abroad**

### **Alternative Options**

Plans for travel to Central America (Panama) for *STUDY ABROAD 2026* have been cancelled. Low enrollment and the current political climate in the region precipitated the decision. Future trips will focus on European countries in 2027. Domestic / North American excursions are being investigated for alternatives.

## Campus Security Report

Security and Emergency Response Coordinator, **Gary Heaton**, reports the following activity since the last report:

- attended Zoom conference from the Ohio Dept of Higher Ed on Working with the Community for Improved Safety
- attended B.I.T. Meeting
- attended a series of Zoom conferences on Stalking with subjects ranging from relationships to stalking with AI
- attended a Zoom conference from the Ohio Center for Mental Health with presentations on a wide range of subjects
- monitored a meeting between the administration and a staff member

## STUDENT AFFAIRS

### Lunch & Learn: Speaker Series

#### November: Domestic Violence and Abuse Awareness

Twenty (20) staff and administrators attended the November 12 Lunch & Learn session on domestic violence and abuse awareness. **Tom Payton**, Psychology faculty, and **Elizabeth Crabtree**, Counselor, presented on domestic violence and abusive behavior. Abuse vs bad behavior | gaslighting | manipulation | isolation | physical intimidation | threats | physical harm. They also talked about why those abused hesitate or do not leave and why. Resources of our counties were provided.

#### February 2026: Domestic Abuse Awareness

The next Lunch & Learn will be held on Wednesday, February 11, in Room 107 of Central Campus. **Jody Bishop**, sociology faculty, will present on Human Trafficking. All are welcome to attend.

## Academic Advisors

The chart below gives an overview of academic advising appointments at Central and Brown Campuses during November and December 2025. Also included are the November and December 2024 numbers for comparison.

MONTH	NEW: TRAD/NON- TRADITIONAL	NEW: CCP	TOTAL NEW	RETURNING: TRAD/NON- TRADITIONAL	RETURNING: CCP	TOTAL RETURNING	TOTAL ADVISING*
DEC '25	30	22	52	261	118	379	421
DEC '24	35	7	42	272	212	484	526
NOV '25	22	11	33	200	109	309	342
NOV '24	41	1	42	192	212	404	446

## Financial Aid

The Financial Aid Department's activities in December 2025 included:

- FA conducted FAFSA workshops at Fairfield Local High School and Eastern High School
- FA participated in Negotiated Rule-making sessions for Work Force Pell Grant
- FA participated in PN Orientation at Central and Brown Campuses, and
- Assisted with college visits

## Testing Center

The following chart shows the November and December 2025 testing activity of the testing centers at both the Central and Brown County Campuses. Testing is provided for those testing with Pearson Vue, taking the Accuplacer, the HESI exam for the nursing program application, ACT WorkKeys, Certiport, and proctored exams.

Offsite Accuplacer tests were conducted as follows: November – 39 tests at Grant Tech Ctr and Williamsburg HS | December – 13 tests were administered at Georgetown HS.

NOVEMBER 2025 TESTING ACTIVITY LOG			
TEST	HILLSBORO TESTING CTR	MT. ORAB TESTING CTR	TOTALS
Pearson Vue	31	13	44
ACCUPLACER	55	39	94
HESI	7	2	9
ACT WorkKeys	3	0	3
Certiport	0	0	0
Proctored Exams	1	0	1
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>151</b>

DECEMBER 2025 TESTING ACTIVITY LOG			
TEST	HILLSBORO TESTING CTR	MT. ORAB TESTING CTR	TOTALS
Pearson Vue	39	17	56
ACCUPLACER	65	42	107
HESI	0	0	0
ACT WorkKeys	0	0	0
Certiport	0	0	0
Proctored Exams	1	0	1
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>164</b>

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### Computer Science Renovation Project

The bidding period for the project ran from December 8, 2024, through January 15, 2026. An in-person pre-bid meeting and walkthrough was held on December 15, 2025, and was well attended. A general contractor has been selected. Construction is scheduled to begin on March 24 and is expected to be completed by October 16.

### Building Renovation

Renovation of half the building is complete. Once the Adult Opportunity staff finish moving into this area, work will continue on the remaining portion of the building.

This project is designed to transform the former daycare space into a modern environment that supports expanded classroom and office use for the Adult Opportunity Center, Workforce Development training, and other community meetings and events.

Special thanks to **Loren O’Cull** (Facilities Manager), **Jeff Knauff** (Facilities Technician), and **Steve Bikowsky** (Maintenance) for their outstanding contributions to this project.





## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNICATIONS

### Grants

#### ASPIRE

Performance data for November and December, according to the state data pull:

Performance Target	SSCC November, 2025	SSCC December, 2025	December State Average
Measurable Skill Gains	26.23%	37.50%	34.28%
Persistence	40.59 hours	46.44 hours	40.71 hours
Progress Test Rate	26.23%	37.50%	32.32%

Additional notable data for the mid-way point of the academic year

- Total student attendance at this point in the school year: 3,287 hours
- 27.5% of the students are enrolled in the distance education program and have accumulated a total of 1,179 hours.
- 73.3% of our ASPIRE students who have attained at least 40 attendance hours and taken a progress test have earned Educational Functioning Level gains. *This occurs when a student moves from one instructional level to the next within the six levels of instruction in the ASPIRE program.*

### CDL Funding

Southern State Truck Driving Academy was awarded another round of Commercial Truck Driver Student Aid Program funding. This makes the fourth round of funding that the program has received. The amount exceeded the prior two years, with an award of \$72,250. This program helps students fund their CDL training in a grant/loan setup through the state. Thank you to **Angie Devilbliss** for all her help in assuring the program stays compliant and for working to inform interested students of the program.

### RAPIDS Equipment

The Engineering Department received training equipment for the program through the Super RAPIDS program. The funds were used to purchase hydraulic and pneumatic trainers for the program.

## Ohio Code Scholar

### Program Highlights and Information

**Participation Growth:** Last year, the program served 800 students and deployed 763 robots across 20 schools and 24 teachers. This year, we are tracking **1,703 students, 1,446 robots, 42 schools, and 50 teachers**, demonstrating substantial expansion across the state.

**New Participating Schools or Classrooms:** Schools joining the program this year include Hillsboro High School, Zane Trace Elementary, Hillsboro Christian Academy, Unioto Middle School, Greenfield Schools, Lynchburg-Clay, Williamsburg,

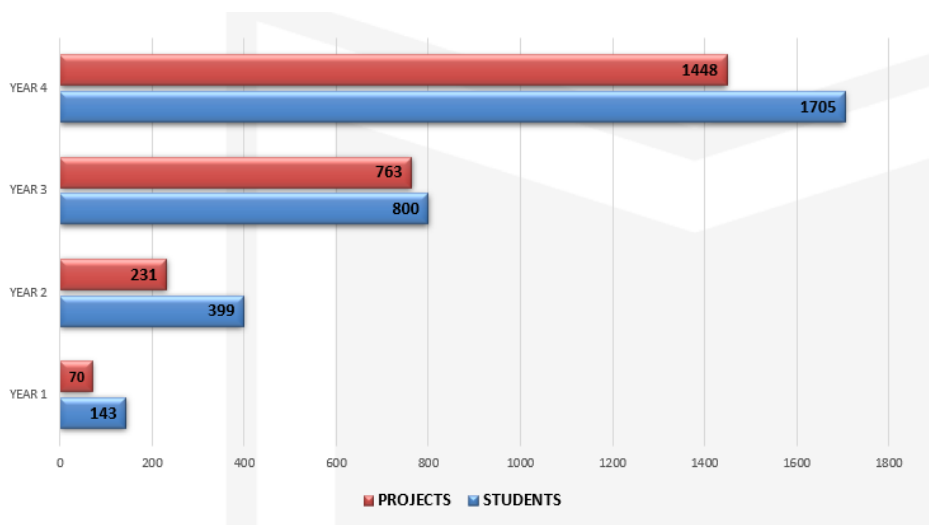
Wilmington Christian, Peebles High School, St. Benedict, East Elementary, Spaulding Elementary, Summit Road STEM Academy, Cincinnati Country Day, Southview Elementary, Westfall Elementary, Westfall High School, Talawanda High School, Waggoner Road Junior High, North Avondale, Montessori, St. Brigid Elementary, St. Clairsville High School, and Eastern High School.

The OCS will be holding two different celebrations this year due to the expansion of the program. The Southern State celebration will be on Monday, May 11, for those wishing to attend, with another celebration for other schools on Wednesday, May 13, at COSI in Columbus.

The Innovative Waiver was approved by the Ohio Department of Higher Education (thank you to the Registrar's office and **Dr. Erika Goodwin**) to offer the OCS program as a CCP option beginning in the Spring. At this time, six schools are participating in the CCP option.

The OCS will be prominently featured at the Ohio Educational Technology Conference, February 10 – 12, at the Columbus Convention Center. This is OCS's largest recruitment event and will see more than 1,800 educators pass through the exhibit halls and sessions.

#### PROGRAM GROWTH CHART:



## Workforce Development

### Truck Driving Academy (Class A and Class B) | Enrollment Information

	2024-2025	2025-2026
July	8	5
August	17	5
September	9	15
October	17	10
November	14	16
December	15	11
January	10	15
February	12	
March	10	
April	15	
May	10	
June	19	
Y-T-D	156	77 (-13 YTD)

## Communications and Marketing

### 50th Anniversary Wrap-Up

In December, the College officially concluded its year-long celebration commemorating 50 years of excellence, community impact, and student success.

Throughout the past year, the College hosted a series of events and initiatives designed to engage students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community partners. Activities included campus celebrations, large-scale community gatherings with alumni and local dignitaries, and a variety of service projects that reflected the institution's mission and legacy. A full-scale print and digital media campaign was also launched featuring alumni, planned events, proclamations and congressional records, a tribute video, and an institutional history, to name a few.

To look back on this monumental year, the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration has been archived on the College's website and can be viewed anytime at <https://www.sccc.edu/50/index.shtml>.

## Presence Report

### Southern State Community College

Marketing Area	October	November	December
Press Release	8	8	6
Advertising / Print	10+	5+	7+
Email Campaigns	1	1	1
Emails Deployed	25,000	25,000	25,000
Number Opened	5,164	5,472	3,604
Percentage Opened	20.66%	21.89%	14.42%
Clicks within content	741	646	534
Percentage of total clicks	2.96%	2.58%	2.14%
Social Retargeting			
Reach	8,133	7,970	4,848
Impressions	21,499	21,048	32,713
Clicks	113	97	108
CTR (click through rate)	0.53%	0.46%	1.77%
Frequency	2.64	2.64	6.75
Geofencing			
Impressions/ads Deployed	57,032	57,799	52,872
Clicks	249	190	251
CTR (click through rate)	0.44%	0.33%	0.47%
Top 2 locations of activity	Georgetown and Chillicothe	Georgetown	Georgetown
Audience Management			
Impressions/ads Deployed	46,837	77,751	72,603
Clicks	122	198	127
CTR (click through rate)	0.26%	0.25%	0.17%

### Truck Driving Academy

Marketing Area	October	November	December
Email Campaigns			
Emails Deployed	25,000	25,000	25,000
Number opened	4,269	4,011	3,701
Percentage Opened	17.08%	16.04%	14.80%
Clicks within content	762	701	579
Percentage of open and clicked	3.05%	2.80%	2.32%
Audience Management			
Impressions/ads Deployed	62,274	66,806	67,059
Clicks	138	116	113
CTR (click through rate)	0.22%	0.17%	0.17%
Social Retargeting			
Reach	12,005	9,175	4,039
Impressions	21,074	21,111	26,365
Clicks	138	136	83
CTR (click through rate)	0.65%	0.64%	0.31%
Frequency	1.76	2.3	6.53

## Recent Southern State Appearances

Since the last report, Southern State has appeared in the following media outlets:

- **Press Releases**
  - Southern State Expresses Gratitude for 50 Years of Impact and Growth
  - Southern State Announces 5-Week Fiber Optic Course to Begin in
  - SSCC Priority Deadline is Nov. 30 for Spring Scholarships – Apply Now
  - SSCC Board of Trustees to meet November 20
  - Southern State’s Next Semester begins January 12, 2026

- Auditions for SSCC Theatre's "Noises Off" will be January 16 & 17
- SSCC Foundation Awards Inaugural Scholarship from the Highland County Democratic Club Fund
- Study Abroad with Southern State Community College in 2026
- Santa to Make Special Stop at Southern State on December 12
- Southern State Student Expresses Gratitude for Inspiring Teachers
- Southern State students inducted into PTK Honor Society
- SSCC's PN Program Celebrates Graduation
- Southern State's Next Semester begins January 12, 2026
- Southern State Announces Retirement of Dean and Appointment of New Director of Nursing
- **Advertising/Print/Direct Mail:**
  - November e-blast promoting Online programming to Eastern Ohio counties
  - November e-blast promoting Winter start dates for the TDA program
  - December e-blast promoting Online programming to Eastern Ohio counties
  - December e-blast promoting Winter start dates for the TDA program
  - Jan./Feb. SALT Magazine ad
  - Adams, Brown, and Clermont Co. High School Winter Sports ads
  - Highland Co. High School Basketball Preview Ads
  - Peebles HS yearbook ad
  - Holiday/Season's Greetings ads
- **Social Media:**
  - **November Facebook Posts**
    - SSCC Theatre – Find the Hidden Chest Piece
    - Highland County Chamber – Marvin the Moose
    - 2026 Scholarship Opportunities
    - SSCC Animal Shelter Donation Drive
    - Spring Semester Registration
    - Sock/gloves Donation Drive
    - Fiber Optic Technician Training
    - OSHA Completion
    - Lunch & Learns
    - Thanksgiving Break
  - **November Facebook Insights**
    - **Views:** 87,974
    - **Reactions:** 642
    - **Interactions:** 831

- **December Facebook Posts**
  - Study Abroad
  - Decorating the Christmas Tree
  - Santa is Coming to Campus
  - Spring Registration Extended
  - PTK Induction Ceremony
  - Engineering Final Project Presentation
  - PCM Caroling
  - PTK Induction Ceremony Press Release
  - Spring Registration Extended Grinch Video
  - PN Pinning Ceremony Photos
  - HSSR Student Press Release
  - Study Abroad
- **December Facebook Insights:**
  - **Views:** 78,728
  - **Reactions:** 596
  - **Interactions:** 805
- **November LinkedIn Posts**
  - Choose Ohio First Press Release
  - Fiber Optic Technician Training Press Release
  - Spring Scholarship Opportunity Press Release
  - Spring Semester Registration Press Release
- **December LinkedIn Posts**
  - Highland County Democratic Party Scholarship Press Release
  - 2026 Study Abroad Press Release
  - Santa is Coming to Campus Press Release
  - SSCC Theatre Auditions Press Release
  - HSSR Student Testimonial Press Release
  - PTK Induction Ceremony Press Release
- **Tiktok**
  - Decorate the Christmas Tree
  - Spring Registration Extended with The Grinch
- **Graphic Design:**
  - Counselors Luncheon
    - Invite
    - Schedule

- Clue Cards
    - Labels
  - PN Handbook
  - November Stall Talk
  - December Stall Talk
  - Spring Opening Week Meeting Header
  - Nursing Pathway Flyer
  - 2026 Web Banner
- **Events/Publications**
    - HS Guidance Counselor Luncheon
    - PTK Program
    - LPN Program
    - Cookie Boxes delivered to local media outlets
    - Christmas Tree Decorating – organized to honor the 50th
    - 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary activities – ongoing through Dec. 2025

## Recruitment

The College has posted the job announcement for the new recruiter to fill a vacancy left in November 2025.

## Program Information Requested

	25-Nov	25-Dec
<b>Associates of Arts</b>	1	
<b>Associates of Science</b>	3	1
<b>Accounting</b>		2
<b>Business Management</b>	3	3
<b>Business Management - AG</b>		
<b>Business Management - Real Estate Broker</b>		
<b>Computer Technology</b>	5	1
<b>Early Childhood</b>	2	4
<b>Electro-Mechanical Technology</b>	4	2
<b>Engineering Aviation Maintenance</b>	3	4
<b>Human and Social Service</b>	4	3
<b>Human and Social Service - Chemical Depend.</b>	1	2
<b>Mechanical Design</b>	1	2
<b>Nursing</b>	5	9



Accounting Certificate		
Airframe Certificate	1	1
Powerplant Certificate		1
Practical Nursing	9	10
Microsoft Office Specialist		
Real Estate Salesperson	4	3
Real Estate Broker		
Truck Driving	1	1
Other Programs not at the College		2
General College Information	8	11
Total Individuals Reaching Out	52	52

## HUMAN RESOURCES

### Business Office

**Dawn Bell** has returned and replaced **Kathy Pierson** as Assistant Treasurer. Kathy retired on December 31, 2025, with over 23 years of service. **Sydney Abney** has replaced **Mary Clinton** as Payroll Specialist. Mary also retired on December 31 with over 41 years of service. **Sheila O’Cull** joined the team in the Business Office as Accounts Payable Specialist, following her many years of dedicated service in Human Resources at Home Depot.

### Adult Opportunity Center

**Jeanne Gifford** has joined the team as an AOC Assistant.