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## SOUTHERN STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESS RELEASE



### **Southern State Celebrates 47<sup>th</sup> Commencement Ceremony**

Southern State Community College recognized the graduating class of 2023 during its 47<sup>th</sup> annual commencement ceremony held Friday, May 5 in the College's Patriot Center.

The evening's festivities began with an invocation, provided by graduate Racquel Browder, followed by the singing of the national anthem.

Southern State's Board of Trustees Chair, Doug Boedeker of Fayette County, along with Faculty Senate President Mrs. Annie Rankin and College President Dr. Nicole Roades welcomed the graduates, their families, friends, and supporters.

"The graduates we are celebrating this evening have persisted in their commitment to earning a college degree or certificate," said SSCC President Dr. Nicole Roades. "On behalf of the Southern State team, we could not be more proud of you and your accomplishment," she added.

The Class of 2023, ranging in age from 16 to 76 from 8 different counties, joins the nearly 13,000 graduate and certificate holders before them. Also, 58 students received their associate degree due to their participation in College Credit Plus, graduating high school at the same time.

Commencement speaker, Emily Bloom Jackson, delivered an inspiring commencement address on perseverance to the graduates.

“I encourage you to keep moving forward,” Jackson said. “There are going to be tough times... prepare for the ride. You will have times when you think you are stuck in your career.... press on, and work harder. You will have internal struggles that jumble your moral compass... choose what is right and live without regret. You will have financial stressors.... keep swimming. Others will take advantage of your abilities.... rise above them. You will get tired... find your endurance. You will hit breaking points... when this happens, dig deep in your faith. You will succeed.... So, persevere, enjoy the journey,” Jackson added.

Concluding the ceremony was the benediction provided by graduate Vanessa Rice.

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