



Southern State Community College Receives Three-Year Renewal of Collegiate Purple Star Designation

Southern State has received notice from the Ohio Department of Higher Education that its designation as a Collegiate Purple Star campus has been renewed for another three years. The designation recognizes the college's ongoing commitment to supporting students with military backgrounds, including veterans, and active-duty service members.

To earn the Collegiate Purple Star designation, institutions must demonstrate a strong commitment to serving military-connected students.

Designations are awarded by the Collegiate Purple Star Advisory Committee, appointed by the Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education. The committee includes representatives from organizations such as the Ohio Department of Higher Education, the Ohio Veterans Education Council, the Ohio Department of Veterans Services, the Ohio Adjutant General's Department, and the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission K-12 Purple Star Committee.

At Southern State, Academic Advisor Michelle Callender serves as the college's Service Member/Veteran Liaison, providing guidance and support for military-connected students.

The College's Learning Services Center also serves as a designated Purple Star Lounge, offering a welcoming space.

As part of its ongoing efforts to connect veterans with available resources, the Learning Services Center hosted a Veterans Coffee and Connect event in the spring for students, college employees, and local veterans. Representatives from Highland County Veterans Services attended the event to share information, answer questions, and provide guidance on available benefits and resources.

"We want to support our veterans as much as possible on campus," said Learning Services Coordinator Dana Swackhamer. "The Coffee and Connect event brought these resources

directly to campus. We appreciate Highland County Veterans Services for partnering with us and helping connect our veterans with the support they deserve."

Southern State also recognizes graduating veterans during its commencement ceremony by presenting them with red, white, and blue honor cords to wear in recognition of their military service.

Questions regarding the Collegiate Purple Star designation can be directed to Southern State's Service Member/Veteran Liaison, Michelle Callender at wcallender@sscc.edu or by phone at 937.393.3431, Ext. 2840.

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Southern State does not discriminate, in its programs or activities, against applicants, employees, or students on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, national origin (ancestry), military status (past, present or future), disability, age (40 years or older), status as a parent during pregnancy and immediately after the birth of a child, status as a parent of a young child, status as a nursing mother, status as a foster parent, genetic information, or sexual orientation. Questions about this should be directed to the Lead Title IX Coordinator, 100 Hobart Drive, Hillsboro, OH 45133; (937) 393-3431.