



COMMUNITY COLLEGE *Connections*

Southern State Recognized as Industry Leader in Experiential Learning

Southern State Community College (Hillsboro, OH) has been recognized nationally leader for its work in experiential learning, thanks to innovative programs that blend hands-on education with community outreach.



Through the Ohio Code Scholar (OCS) initiative, students in Dr. Joshua Montgomery's Computer Science program mentor K-12 learners across southern Ohio, using custom-built 3D-printed robots to teach coding, electronics, and problem-solving.

Signature projects like wearable droids, Battle Robots, and STEM MiniDomes - miniature geodesic domes - offer students immersive STEM experiences while strengthening local interest in tech careers.

Surveys show that high schoolers are significantly more likely to pursue STEM fields after they've participated in OCS. We're building a strong pipeline of future innovators. Southern State's commitment to real-world learning is equipping both college and K-12 students with the skills to thrive in a rapidly evolving workforce.

Thanks to support from the Ohio General Assembly, the Ohio Code-Scholar Pilot Program—originally launched in 2021—has been made permanent and will expand under Southern State's leadership. The state's most recent operating budget includes \$2.5 million from the Department OF Development over the next two years to support the program's growth.