

## Developments

*The Newsletter of  
The Simpson County  
Development Foundation*

176 West Court Street  
P. O. Box 127  
Mendenhall, MS 39114

601.847.2375  
Office

[scdf@bellsouth.net](mailto:scdf@bellsouth.net)  
Email

[www.simpsoncounty.biz](http://www.simpsoncounty.biz)  
Website

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### From the Executive Director



In the spring of this year the Simpson County Development Foundation was chosen as one of nine counties to participate in the ASPIRE Mississippi program, a community project sponsored by the Mississippi Development Authority, Entergy, and Stennis Institute of Government and Community Development at Mississippi State University.



**Simpson County Students  
at Job and Work Skills Training,  
Co-Lin Simpson Center**

As part of MDA's ASPIRE program, each of the participating community teams were responsible for identifying and implementing a community project that helps improve the social and economic conditions within the community. Projects should be something that addresses a need in the community, with all projects having measurable gains that relate to the community or economy.

Team members who volunteered from Simpson County are: Malory Yelverton, Evelyn Copeland, Cemper Scott, Dr. Dewayne Middleton, Lacye Evans, Scott Barnes, Mayor Dale Berry, Mayor Todd Booth, and Donnie Caughman.

Since education is a key driver for better and more jobs, the group determined that improved job and work skills training for our high school seniors was essential and would increase their business training and entrepreneurship with shadowing and internship placement. Meetings have been held with Principals and counselors of all three high schools in the county to discuss the ASPIRE Program in general and the Simpson County project specifically.

Counselors facilitated an assembly of current seniors at Mendenhall High, Magee High, and Simpson Academy in early September. Lacye Evans, Malory Yelverton, and Cemper Scott conducted an initial explanation to the groups regarding the scope, objectives, and purpose of the training. Applications were given to students who were interested in the project and returned to their counselors.



## ASPIRE [CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

A panel of local business professionals from throughout the county volunteered to speak before the students to explain basic job and work skills and what was required by them to be successful. A second session with speakers was held and a final reduction of students was made with forty-seven students moving forward.

The Simpson County Development Foundation sent letters to each of the final group of students inviting them to a combined meeting on Tuesday, November 13<sup>th</sup> at Copiah Lincoln Community College, Simpson Center, where the Job and Work Skills Training continued with Ms. Kimberly Funchess with Families First for Mississippi was the guest lecturer and concentrated on workforce training from the perspective of resume preparation, time management, interview skills, social manners, etc.

From these forty-seven students, the top ten from each high school will be selected to move forward with the shadowing and apprenticeship phase associated with volunteer businesses and companies.

The ASPIRE Program has been a challenge for the group of volunteers, but the reward has been tremendous to assist these youngsters with new job performance and work skills. Through our efforts, we expect to make a difference in the lives of these high school seniors as they go out in a new world after high school graduation.



## Co-Lin breaks ground on new career-technical building

Groundbreaking ceremonies were recently held at Copiah-Lincoln Community College's Simpson County Center. The College is expanding with the addition of a new \$6 million Career-Technical Building.

The 23,412 square foot building will house seven general classrooms, a computer lab, science lab, five faculty offices, a faculty work/break room, health lab, adult education classroom, and welding lab. The new facility will house the automation and control, welding, and early childhood programs.

“With the addition of this new facility, our goal is to train a qualified workforce that will bring in new business and industry to the area,” said Co-Lin’s Vice President of the Simpson County Center Dr. Dewayne Middleton. “The College has received enormous support from the Simpson County Board of Supervisors.”

“We are proud of the work that has been done by so many individuals to make this new building a reality,” said Co-Lin President Dr. Jane G. Hulon. “This is an exciting day. This project shows a true commitment to this campus and to this part of the Co-Lin District. We are so proud to see this project get underway.”

Burris/Wagnon Architects, P.A. of Jackson is the architect for the project. Richard Womack Construction of Mendenhall is serving as the general contractor. Completion date is scheduled for October 2019.



On hand for the groundbreaking were from left, Board of Trustees members Eugene Bates and Dr. Troy Stewart Sr., Board Chairman Tommy Sasser, President Dr. Jane G. Hulon, SCC Vice President Dr. Dewayne Middleton, Board members Melton King, Steven Ammann, and Greg Paes. Photo by Scarlett Hart and used courtesy of Co-Lin.



## Dr. Jane Hulon is Copiah-Lincoln Community College's eighth President.

We in Simpson County have been most happy to welcome Dr. Jane Hulon to our community on several recent visits. Beginning July 1, 2018, she assumed the role of president from Dr. Ronnie Nettles, who announced his retirement in November 2017. At the time of her selection as President, Dr. Hulon was serving in her 10<sup>th</sup> year at the Vice President's level at the College.