

EDUCATION

Cincinnati State's first female president Monica Posey is retiring



Grace Tucker
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After making history in 2016 when she was named Cincinnati State Technical and Community College's first female president, Monica Posey is retiring.

The longtime educator and University of Cincinnati alum will step down Aug. 31 after a 34-year tenure at the school, tackling a range of duties as academic vice president, provost and several other titles before assuming the head role. Her hiring also made her the first African American woman to lead a higher education institution in the region, [Enquirer media partner Fox 19 reported](#).

As of Jan. 22, a committee that will lead a nationwide search for the next president has been formed, Cincinnati State's media coordinator Richard Curtis said.

Posey's departure follows years of marked success for the community college under her leadership. Last September, [Cincinnati State reported its highest first-day enrollment](#) in 12 years while universities and community colleges statewide [reported declining enrollment](#). The college's impact in K-12 schools has also grown considerably, with its [College Credit Plus program](#) now serving more than 4,000 high school students in over 100 districts annually.

And new [data from the Ohio Department of Higher Education](#) showed that its graduates rank No. 1 in average annual earnings among all 22 community colleges statewide.

"These outcomes reflect a leadership approach grounded in collaboration, student success, and strategic growth," Jane Garvey, chair of the Cincinnati State Board of Trustees, said in a release.

The glowing facts and figures were made possible in part by Posey's efforts her first years as president in developing a Career Center and Transfer Center, where students are connected to schools like University of Cincinnati and Miami University that hold [articulation agreements](#) with Cincinnati State.

Championing affordability, job placement and access to four-year institutions came naturally to Posey, a first-generation college student who grew up in a working class family in Philadelphia.



Cincinnati State's president, Monica Posey, stands in the president's office at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College. Posey recently announced her upcoming retirement. *Sam Greene / The Enquirer*

"(I'm) definitely concerned about poverty and making a difference in Greater Cincinnati, moving people from poverty to middle class, earning great incomes where they can support their families," she said.



Soon-to-retire Cincinnati State President Monica Posey sits at her desk. *Sam Greene / The Enquirer*

The retiree said it wasn't until she began her bachelor's of science degree at Cornell University that she realized "how poor or close to poor" her family was.

"That discovery really impacted my life and my goal to, if I advance, I've got to help somebody else," Posey said.

The Philadelphia native went on to earn an MBA from the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, before landing in Cincinnati, the city she now calls home, to teach statistics and earn her Ph.D. in Quantitative Analysis at UC.

Her time mastering different subjects at various institutions has informed her diverse skill set in serving Cincinnati State students and faculty however they need her. Just earlier this week, Posey said, she assisted a student who personally emailed her, explaining they were having trouble completing coursework due to a family death.

And when the COVID-19 pandemic uprooted in-person learning in 2020, Posey once again adapted, starting a loaner laptop program so students could transition to remote learning. When students returned to campus in 2021, they were met with a host of new holistic services to ensure they could continue coming to class.

During that time, Posey said, "What we realized was we were just going to have to invest more in student supports," like counseling services, emergency relief funds, an early learning center for students with children and the [school's food pantry](#).

"We spent a lot of time ... figuring out how to move from pandemic, post-pandemic to true success. And that's where we are now," she said.

In retirement, Posey said, she will continue to serve the community in her roles on the board of trustees for United Way of Greater Cincinnati, GRAD Cincinnati, Cincinnati Works, and others.