

I’m a Pathfinder: Tabitha Skaggs

ACTC RELEASE

ASHLAND Tabitha Skaggs is the first to admit her childhood was far from easy. She says growing up that neither of her parents had earned a high school diploma and her family struggled financially.

“We had very little, and although others may not have known the extent of our struggles, I knew. For many years, I carried embarrassment about where I came from and learned to hide the hardships we faced,” Skaggs said.

When she was twelve years old, her parents divorced.

“When my parents divorced, life became even more difficult. What little sense of stability we had changed, and I found myself navigating challenges at an age when I was still trying to understand who I was,” she said. “Between the financial hardships, changes within my family, and my struggles in school, there were many times when the circumstances around me could have determined the direction of my future.

Looking back now, Skaggs said she doesn’t feel embarrassed by her childhood. She now sees her resilience, and that resilience would prove especially valuable as she navigated a difficult educational journey.

From kindergarten through her senior year, she says she struggled academically, was placed in special education and lived with a learning disability.

“Instead of finding alternative ways to teach me, I often felt like I was simply pushed through the system,” she said. “At times, I was made to feel as though I would never accomplish much.”

When Skaggs arrived at Ashland Community & Technical College (ACTC), however, that narrative began to change.

“ACTC completely changed that story,” she said. “Once I began college and learned how



Tabitha Skaggs

I needed to learn, everything changed.”

She added, “With support from people who took the time to see my potential, I went from struggling throughout K-12 to earning a 4.0 throughout my journey from my associate degree through my master’s degree. That experience taught me something I hope other first-generation students will remember, which is, struggling in one educational environment does not determine your intelligence, your potential, or how far you can go. Sometimes you simply need someone to believe in you, the right environment, and the opportunity to discover how you learn best.”

Skaggs initially enrolled in ACTC’s State Registered Nurse Aide (SRNA) program. She chose the college because it was familiar, accessible and felt like an achievable first step for a first-generation college student.

“At that point, I wasn’t dreaming about bachelor’s or master’s degrees. I was simply thinking, “If I can make it through ACTC, that will be a huge accomplishment.”

But ACTC faculty and staff saw potential in Skaggs that she had not yet recognized in herself.

After completing the SRNA program in 2018 and working as a CNA, Skaggs realized the career was not the right fit. She returned to her advisor, Megan, who helped her look at her strengths rather than focusing on what had not worked.

“She recognized that I was good at communicating with people, building

relationships, and that I genuinely wanted to help others,” Skaggs said.

Those conversations helped Skaggs discover a new direction: social work.

She changed course and pursued her Associate of Arts degree, graduating from ACTC in May 2020. Her degree provided a pathway to transfer to Morehead State University and pursue a bachelor’s degree in social work.

Her experience also taught her an important lesson.

“That experience taught me that changing your major or career direction isn’t failure,” she said. “Sometimes discovering what you don’t want to do is part of discovering exactly where you are meant to be.”

Skaggs continued her education at MSU’s Ashland campus, earning her Bachelor of Social Work degree in 2022.

During her MSU undergrad experience, she remained connected to ACTC through an AmeriCorps position, serving students in the college’s

Student Support Services program.

She says her own experiences as a first-generation student and someone who had struggled academically gave her a unique perspective as she helped other students navigate their own educational journeys.

By then, the student who once viewed simply completing community college as a major accomplishment had developed an entirely different vision for her future.

“Being first generation means you may enter college without a roadmap. You may not have someone in your family who can explain financial aid, scholarships, transferring, choosing classes, joining an honors program, or even what questions you should be asking. That can make college feel overwhelming,” she said. “ACTC gave me a supportive environment where I could learn how to navigate higher education while still getting the experience of being part of a college community.”

In 2024, Skaggs earned

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her master’s degree from the University of Kentucky, thanks in part to the strong foundation she had at ACTC.

“ACTC was the beginning of changing the trajectory of my life and, ultimately, the lives of my children. It opened doors to education and a career. ACTC’s impact went far beyond earning a degree,” she said.

Through her education, she built relationships

and networks, learned how to navigate systems her family had never had the opportunity to teach her about, and gained knowledge she could pass along to her own children.

Most importantly, she overcame the belief she had carried since childhood that certain accomplishments might simply be impossible for someone from her background.

PUBLIC NOTICES

BOYD CIRCUIT COURT
CIVIL ACTION NO. 25-CI-00772

MORTGAGE RESEARCH CENTER, LLC D/B/A VETERANS UNITED HOME LOANS, A MISSOURI LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY,
PLAINTIFF,
vs.
ADVERTISEMENT
JOSHUA K. CALLICOAT;
KARLI D. CALLICOAT;
COUNTY OF BOYD, KENTUCKY,
DEFENDANTS.

Pursuant to Order to Reschedule Sale entered on August 7, 2026, I shall sell the property described herein below at public auction in the lobby inside the front door of the old Boyd County Courthouse, Catlettsburg, Kentucky, on **Friday, September 18, 2026, at 11:05 a.m.**, to highest bidder on the following terms:
Full purchase price will be due at time of sale, payable by personal, business or official check. We do not accept cash. **IF the Master Commissioner has pre-approved the surety and collateral for a bidder's bond**, a down payment of ten-percent (10%) of the purchase price will be due at time of sale, and the unpaid balance with interest at the rate of **5.875% per annum** will be due within thirty (30) days from the date of sale.
Address of Property: 1652 Lawrence Avenue, Ashland
(For Legal Description, see LSOT: Deed Book 855, Page 565, Boyd County Clerk's Office)
Map/Parcel ID Number: 031-18-03-008.00

NOTE - Only delinquent ad valorem taxes shall be paid from the sale proceeds. The Purchaser shall be responsible for payment of the taxes for the current year and thereafter.

/s/ Kenneth Williams, Jr.
KENNETH WILLIAMS, JR.
BOYD CIRCUIT COURT
MASTER COMMISSIONER

Please visit our website:
www.boydcountykymastercommissioner.com
Published: August 29 and September 10, 2026

BOYD CIRCUIT COURT
CIVIL ACTION NO. 25-CI-00239

NEWREZ LLC, D/B/A SHELLPOINT MORTGAGE SERVICING,
PLAINTIFF,
vs.
ADVERTISEMENT
KELLY L. PENCE, f/k/a KELLY PENCE McLEOD, a/k/a KELLY LEWIS PENCE;
THE COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY,
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE, DIVISION OF COLLECTIONS,
DEFENDANTS.

Pursuant to Judgment and Order of Sale entered on August 14, 2026, I shall sell the property described herein below at public auction in the lobby inside the front door of the old Boyd County Courthouse, Catlettsburg, Kentucky, on **Friday, September 18, 2026, at 11:15 a.m.**, to highest bidder on the following terms:
Full purchase price will be due at time of sale, payable by personal, business or official check. We do not accept cash. **IF the Master Commissioner has pre-approved the surety and collateral for a bidder's bond**, a down payment of ten-percent (10%) of the purchase price will be due at time of sale, and the unpaid balance with interest at the rate of **4.5% per annum** will be due within thirty (30) days from the date of sale.
Address of Property: 2625 Newman Street, Ashland,
(For Legal Description, see LSOT: Deed Book 605, Page 268, Boyd County Clerk's Office)
Map/Parcel ID Number: 031-05-06-005.00

NOTE - Only delinquent ad valorem taxes shall be paid from the sale proceeds. The Purchaser shall be responsible for payment of the taxes for the current year and thereafter.

/s/ Kenneth Williams, Jr.
KENNETH WILLIAMS, JR.
BOYD CIRCUIT COURT
MASTER COMMISSIONER

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