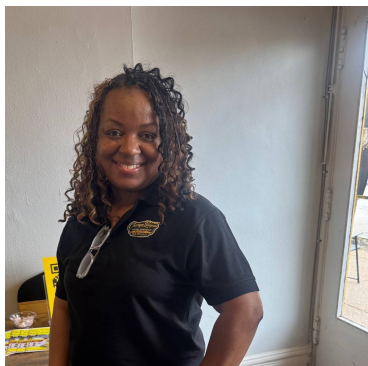




Cherique Simpson,
SOCO Cares Community Champion

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South County Chamber Names Cherique Simpson Community Champion for SOCO Cares



SOUTH ST. LOUIS COUNTY, Mo. — September 29, 2026 — The South County Chamber has named Cherique Simpson as Community Champion for SOCO Cares, the Chamber's community-impact initiative focused on identifying what South County residents need and connecting them to the people and organizations who can help.

SOCO Cares works to identify needs across the community, connect residents to existing programs, and build new solutions where gaps remain, from school partnerships to health resources to housing stability.

“Many of the resources South County families need already exist. People just don’t know where they are. And if they don’t exist, someone has to build them.”

— Jim Shelvy, Founder, South County Chamber

Simpson, a real estate professional who spent years in education before entering the housing industry, brings both backgrounds to the role.

"I'm a trailblazer, and I like the message that you all are bringing," Simpson said. "I feel that it's impactful, and I want to impact people. What you shared with me the first time we met: I belong."

Simpson is not a South County resident, but she has been a consumer in the area for years and still is. "I believe in the Phoenix rising," she said.

Her early priorities for SOCO Cares reflect needs she has seen firsthand. Drawing on her time in the classroom, she has pointed to period poverty in local schools, where students as young as elementary age can miss school without access to supplies.

She has also raised the idea of transitional housing for residents facing sudden circumstances, such as a job loss or a housing crisis, where families need somewhere safe to land while they get their footing. It is a need she understands personally. When budget cuts eliminated her teaching position in Normandy, she was caught off guard.

"You have all this stuff going around in your head," Simpson said. "I just need to focus on making sure my kids are okay, making sure I'm okay, but in a safe space."

Simpson's real estate work also shapes what she wants SOCO Cares to offer. She works with homeownership and down-payment assistance programs and wants to help residents understand their options before making major financial decisions under pressure, including programs based outside South County that still serve South County residents.

That sense of service is reflected in her professional identity as "The Key Guardian." In education, she was often the person called when a classroom needed help, not because she already had the answer, she said, but because she knew how to ask the questions that drew it out. She carries that approach into real estate: "I protect you from contract to close and beyond."

Jim Shelvy, Founder of the South County Chamber, said that kind of thinking is exactly what the Community Champion role is meant to bring.

"I think of all kinds of stuff all the time, and then just when I think I have everything thought of, someone else thinks of something I didn't think of. I love it, and I appreciate it so much," Shelvy said.

The next phase of SOCO Cares is building a volunteer team around Simpson. She has proposed organizing volunteers into stations, including a school station, a transition house station, a county department station, and a health department station, with volunteers rotating among them to find where they fit best.

Community members, businesses, and nonprofits interested in volunteering with SOCO Cares or suggesting a community need are encouraged to connect with the South County Chamber at thesocochamber.org.

About the South County Chamber

The South County Chamber (SOCO Chamber) is a social enterprise built to strengthen South County by helping businesses grow, developing community leaders, strengthening communities, and creating opportunities that leave lasting impact. Local Business. Lasting Impact.

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