



Raising The Roof On Innovation: Ascend704 Takes Shape At South Piedmont

A crane hoisting a beam into position marked a major milestone December 15 as South Piedmont Community College celebrated a topping-out ceremony and officially unveiled the name of its new coworking space on the Old Charlotte Highway campus.

The event commemorated the placement of the final steel beam, signaling the completion of the building's structural framework. Attendees gathered as crews from Vannoy Construction raised and secured the beam, marking a significant step forward in the project.

During the ceremony, college leaders announced the facility's name: the L. Carlton Tyson Ascend704 Coworking Space.

L. Carlton Tyson was a prominent local businessman and founder of Ty-Par Realty, LC Tyson Construction Company, and RMMC. Through these ventures, he played a major role in shaping Union County, developing residential subdivisions, medical and industrial parks, a golf course, hotels, offices, and retail centers.

Tyson, who passed away in 2019, was also a devoted supporter of SPCC. The South Piedmont Tyson Family Center for Technology bears his name, and a generous donation from the Tyson family helped make the new coworking space possible.

"We are grateful for the Tyson family's continued support and honored that L. Carlton Tyson's legacy will live on through a facility that will strengthen our local economy," said South Piedmont President Dr. Stacy Waters-Bailey. "We are confident Mr. Tyson would be very proud."

The name Ascend704 was chosen to reflect the growth, innovation, and upward momentum expected to take place within the space as entrepreneurs, business owners, and professionals come together to learn, collaborate, and thrive.

The 49,000-square-foot building will feature private offices, office suites, short-term "hot desks," a podcasting and videography studio, a large conference center, and an outdoor patio. The space will also house the South Piedmont Small Business Center and host classes, workshops, networking events, guest speakers, seminars, and business pitch competitions.

Ascend704 will be led by Executive Director Renee Hode, who brings 20 years of experience in small business development.

In addition to Waters-Bailey, speakers at Monday's ceremony included Board of Trustees Chair Pat Kahle, Vice President of Business & Workforce Solutions Chris Rivera, Union County Manager Brian Matthews, Workplace Architecture + Design Partner and Principal Project Manager Peter Marsh, Vannoy Construction Division Manager Jason Smith, and Vice President of Institutional Excellence Cyndie Truax.

Each speaker emphasized the lasting impact the new coworking space is expected to have on the local economy.

"This is a place where ideas will take root, grow, and flourish," Matthews said. Smith added, "We look forward to what will be built within these walls long after construction is completed."

Waters-Bailey also expressed appreciation to the many partners who helped bring Ascend704 to life, including the Tyson family; the voters of Union County, who approved a nearly \$33 million general obligation bond in 2022; the Union County Board of Commissioners; Union County Manager Brian Matthews; the South Piedmont Community College Board of Trustees; the North Carolina Community College System; Vannoy Construction; Workplace Architecture & Design; LB Smith & Associate; and South Piedmont staff members.

The Ascend704 building is scheduled for completion in 2026.

Gaston County Man Snags \$1 Million Top Prize Win

A Gaston County man is celebrating a big lottery win after turning a \$10 scratch-off ticket into a \$1 million prize.

Ronnie Denton of Gastonia purchased his winning \$1,000,000 Bonus Match ticket from Will's Food Store on South New Hope Road in Gastonia.

When Denton arrived at lottery headquarters on Monday, he faced an important choice. He could receive the prize as an annuity of \$50,000 a year for 20 years or take a lump sum of \$600,000. Denton chose the lump-sum option and, after required state and federal tax withholdings, took home \$430,503.

The \$1,000,000 Bonus Match scratch-off game debuted in August and features five \$1 million top prizes. As of now, two of those \$1 million prizes remain unclaimed.

Lottery funds continue to support education across the state. Last year alone, education programs in Gaston County received \$14.2 million from lottery proceeds. For more information on how lottery funds benefit all 100 counties in North Carolina, visit www.ncлотtery.com and click on the "Impact" section of the website.

Church

DECEMBER 31

New Year's Eve

Service At Divine Unity House of Restoration Ministries, 6090 Hwy 109 S, Wadesboro, at 10:30pm with Elder Gary Gaddy of Johnson Chapel Church in Wadesboro.

ONGOING

Weekly Praise & Worship Schedule

At Shiloh Christian Community Church, 1752 Shiloh Church Rd. Preaching 1st and 3rd Sundays, Sunday School weekly, services start at 10am.

HOPE Grief

Support Group at Harmony Community Church, meets Tuesdays at 5:30pm offering help for anyone suffering from grief, like death, sickness, divorce, separation from family, job, etc.. Free & confidential, everyone welcome.

Come join others experiencing grief. We will pray with you. Info 704-272-7127. Located at 1984 Pulpwood Yard Rd in Peachland

Community Singing

Last Sunday of each month at New Life Ministries, Hwy 109 S (Trexler Dr). Sunday School 10am, Singing 11am. Community is invited to come & sing! Info Pastor Randy Brooks 910-544-9232.

THE CHURCH CALENDAR IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY THESE SPONSORS	
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Saturday Services

Lighthouse Ministries holds services every Saturday at 11am. Located at 311 Birchwood Dr in Wadesboro. The Pastor is Terry Taylor & Assistant Pastor is Lawanda Rodgers. For info call 704-465-1757.

Events

JANUARY 6

Board of Commissioners Meet 6pm in the Board Room, Suite 209, in Government Center, 101 S Greene St in uptown Wadesboro. There are two

regular monthly meetings, with the second January meeting on January 20 at 6pm. Meetings are available online at [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com), search for Anson Commissioners. To appear, sign up prior to meeting. Info 704-994-3201.

JANUARY 20

Board of Commissioners Meet 6pm in the Board Room, Suite 209, in Government Center, 101 S Greene St in uptown Wadesboro. Meetings are available online at [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com), search for Anson Commissioners. To appear, sign up prior to meeting. Info 704-994-3201.

You Decide: Which Kevin Will Win?

There's a new battle going on between two individuals named Kevin. No, they are not boxers, nor are they involved in any sport. Instead, they are competing for one of the most important positions in Washington: chair of the Federal Reserve.

Why should you be interested in this battle? The answer is simple. The Federal Reserve (the Fed) is one of the most important agencies in Washington, and the chair is the head of that agency. Some have called the Fed chair the second most powerful person in Washington, behind only the president.

While the Fed has numerous duties, the one that impacts all of us is called monetary policy. Monetary policy involves the Fed using its powers to influence interest rates and the supply of money to impact economic growth, inflation and unemployment.

How? The Fed meets every six weeks to vote on monetary policy. If the Fed wants to stimulate economic growth and lower unemployment, it will reduce the interest rate it directly controls and expect other interest rates to follow. It will also push more money into the economy. Usually, both of these actions will result in more borrowing, more spending and more jobs.

In contrast, if the Fed is worried about inflation, it will move in the opposite direction by increasing its interest rate and reducing the money supply. Ultimately, these actions will cause borrowing, spending and job creation to slow. But with spending slowing, there will be less upward pressure on prices, meaning the inflation rate — which measures how fast prices are rising — will subside. The key risk is if the economy slows too much, a recession could occur.

These decisions are made by a 12-member group at the Fed called the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC). Just like each member of the FOMC, the Fed chair has one vote in the FOMC's deliberations. However, the influence of the chair goes beyond these votes. The chair sets the agenda for discussions, effectively serves as the spokesperson for the Fed, testifies before Congress and works to build consensus among FOMC members.

The bottom line is the Fed chair is a big deal. The chair must be a member of the Fed's board of governors who vote on Fed policy. The president appoints the chair with confirmation by the Senate. The chair can be reappointed as long as the individual remains a Fed governor, which has a 14-year term.

The current Fed chair, Jerome Powell, is in his second term. But President Trump has said he will not reappoint Powell to a third term because he has disagreed with Powell's views about monetary policy. While the Fed has been pushing interest rates lower, the president thinks the interest rate cuts have been too small.

This means a new Fed chair will take over in May 2026. Recently, President Trump announced he had settled on two individuals to be finalists: Kevin Hassett and Kevin Warsh, hence the battle of the Kevins.

Both Kevins are accomplished, but in different ways. Kevin Hassett is a Ph.D. economist who has taught at the college level, has worked for think tanks, and has been a member of both Trump administrations, serving as chair of the President's Council of Economic Advisors in the first term and currently as director of the National Economic Council in the second term. This means he has been a key economic adviser to the president.

Kevin Warsh is a lawyer, has worked on Wall Street, has served in the federal government, has been affiliated with Stanford University, and has been on boards of directors for corporations. Perhaps his most significant job was serving on the board of governors of the Fed during the "Great Recession" of 2007-09 when the financial and housing markets were crashing.

The Fed was established as an independent agency. Other than nominating members, the president is not given a formal role with the Fed. President Trump is not the first to complain about Fed policies. In most cases, like President Trump, presidents have complained the Fed has kept interest rates too high. Presidents tend to have short-run views because their term is only four years. With Fed governors having 14-year terms, their viewpoints tend to be much longer.

Again, like most of his predecessors, President Trump would like a Fed chair who shares his economic views, like lower interest rates. My guess is both Kevins will indicate to President Trump that they, too, would like to see interest rates lower. But timing is also a key factor. How fast would the Kevins like to see rates drop? And even if they want a quick reduction in interest rates, the chair has only one vote among 12.

Ultimately, the Federal Reserve tries to keep the economy growing with low unemployment and low inflation. This is a tall task, but we have had periods with this kind of success. Alan Greenspan, who will turn 100 years old in late January, was Fed chair during the 1990s, a decade of low inflation, low unemployment, strong growth and a federal budget that went from deficit to surplus. While the Fed was not solely responsible for this success, Greenspan has been called the "maestro" of the economy.

Do we have a new "maestro of the economy" waiting with one of the two Kevins? You decide.

Anson County Tax Collector PROPERTY TAX REMINDER



ANSON COUNTY TAXES ARE DUE NOW!

Please see that all of your Anson County Property Taxes are paid in full prior to January 1, 2026.

FEES AND INTEREST BEGIN JANUARY 6, 2026.

**ALL DELINQUENT TAXES ARE SUBJECT TO
FORCED COLLECTIONS WITH ADDITIONAL FEES ADDED.**

Please pay your taxes immediately. Mail your payment to:

**Anson County Tax Collector
101 South Greene Street
Wadesboro, NC 28170**

Telephone 704-994-3220

• **Or visit the office Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

• **We accept cash, check or credit / debit card.**

• **An after hours drop box is available too. Thank you.**

You may call 704-994-3220 for total taxes owed.