



Purpose-Driven LEADERSHIP

Taylor Cline '16 Makes Her Mark in the Field of Engineering





14%.

That is the percentage of women who made up all engineering employment in 2021, according to 2022 data from the Society of Women Engineers. While small, that number continues to grow thanks to the conscientious and visible leadership of engineers like Taylor Cline '16.

As far back as she could recall, Cline, a Madison, Ohio native, wanted to be an engineer without even knowing what they did.

“I remember looking at my dad, who was an iron worker, and asking him, ‘What’s a job you can do to just solve problems and puzzles all the time?’ and he told me that was an engineer,” Cline said.

As she continued to excel throughout school, Cline narrowed her focus to two institutions to continue her academic journey: an engineering stalwart in The University of Akron and a then-engineering upstart in Mount Union. As her family encountered some financial struggles, her mom was working two jobs and thought the private university option might be out of reach.

“My mom didn’t even want to visit Mount,” Cline said, grinning. “Once I visited and appreciated the one-on-one interactions with faculty in the program, we sat down with financial aid and learned how affordable Mount could be, and the rest is history.”

Impactful Experiences

When asked about her favorite Mount Union memory, Cline, who was very involved throughout her undergraduate career in athletics and as a sister of Alpha Chi Omega, had the pensiveness of someone answering the “Final Jeopardy” question. In the end, she shared an experience that is actually a requirement of engineering majors.

“The global engineering trip to Belize was incredible,” she said, reflecting. “Getting to make those memories with my peers



Top: Cline (second from right) poses with a group of robotics students she mentored in 2022.

Bottom: One of Cline’s rendered designs for a project in Copley Township, Ohio.

and having the chance to serve an underdeveloped community are things I've brought with me into my career today."

The idea of service-learning made a profound impact on Cline, and as Commencement neared upon returning stateside, her future began to take shape before her eyes in a uniquely serendipitous way.

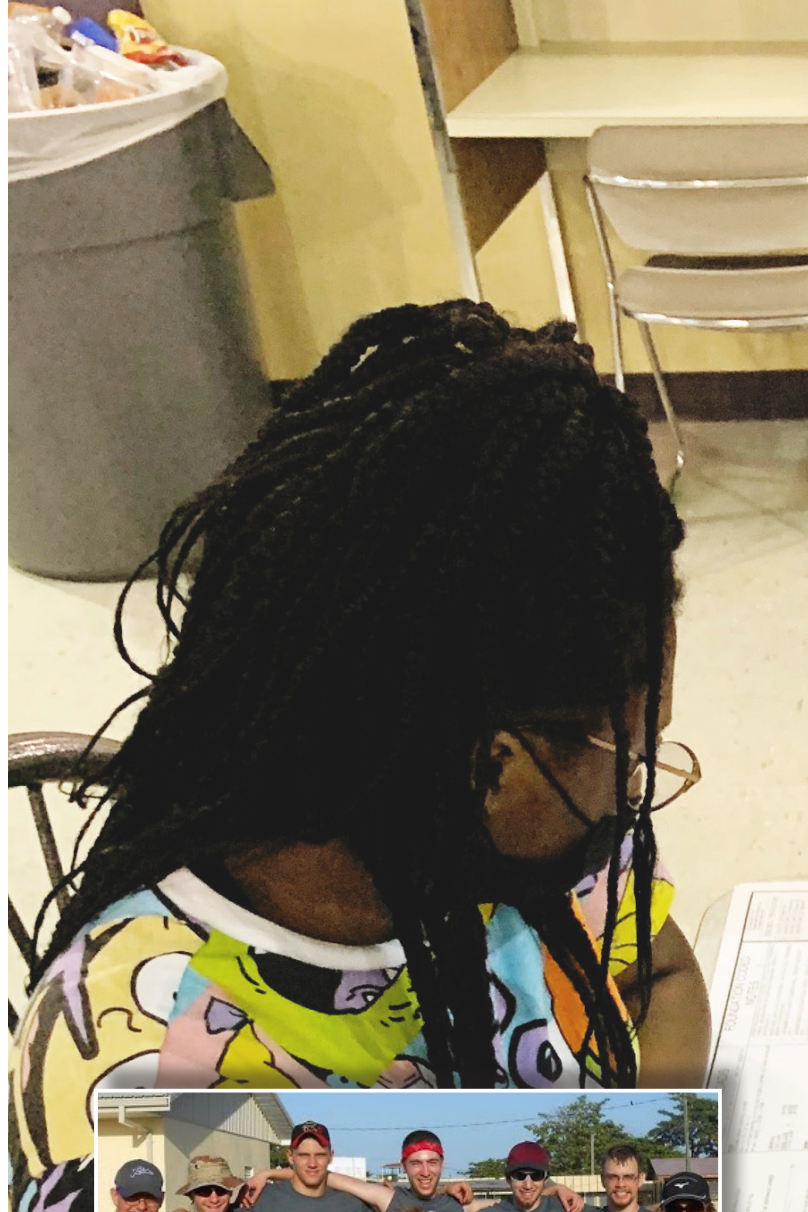
"My junior year at Mount, I was awarded an Ohio Foundation of Independent Colleges scholarship provided by CESO, Inc." she said. "When I went in to meet with the company to thank them, Dr. [Hans] Tritico pushed me to ask if they had any internship openings. They did, which then led to me being hired full-time at CESO before I even graduated."

Making Her Mark

Cline is in her seventh year at CESO, and her impressive ascent has led her to be a lead project engineer after earning two promotions in that time. In this role, she leads a team of traffic engineers and works on designs and traffic patterns for major clients like Love's Travel Stops, FedEx, and Sheetz.

In continuing to climb the CESO ranks, one of Cline's core beliefs is finding purpose through serving others, clearly illustrated through her fond memories of the Belize trip and other Mount Union service-learning experiences. It is also one of the reasons she enjoys her career at CESO, which has annual "Impact Days" when offices close and employees volunteer at local nonprofits.

In having found a professional home at CESO, Cline became more comfortable in being the authentic leader she knew she



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Cline currently serves as a mentor with the Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (ACE) Mentor Program of Greater Akron-Canton, where she shares her expertise with high school students interested in engineering.



had the potential to be. Along with being a female leader in her industry, Cline, who identifies as a lesbian, still had slight apprehension about fully opening up and coming out at work. Those worries were eased after being welcomed by her peers when she came out to them, continuing the success of a positive environment where she could thrive and lead.

“I was definitely nervous to share with my bosses that yeah, I’m gay, hoping it would not change anything,” Cline said. “But the amount of love and support I received after coming out to them has been incredible and one of the reasons I continue to love my job. The reputation I had built for myself and my work helped too, and it’s only gotten better as my career has advanced.”

Helping the Next Generation

Alongside the service done through CESO and her personal endeavors, Cline also volunteers her time as a mentor through a variety of outlets. Currently, she serves as a member of Mount Union’s Engineering Advisory Board, advises her high school alma mater’s all-female robotics team, and has been a mentor with the Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (ACE)

Mentor Program of Greater Akron-Canton for the past five years. During her time with ACE, Cline has mentored dozens of high school students at three different schools. She has also created a pipeline between ACE and Mount Union’s Experience Engineering Summer Program so that interested high school students can get hands-on engineering opportunities before college. Regardless of project or interest, Cline is proud to be a resource for students.

“My advice to future engineering students is always to keep going. Even though it can be tough, if you are willing to do the work, the experience pays off,” Cline said. “I mean, I used to think the liberal arts classes we took were not useful, but now much of my job is writing reports and presenting them, which is both important and kind of funny looking back.”

Cline is simply one example of a woman leading with impact in a male-led industry, especially as the percentage of women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields continues to climb. She and a growing group of innovators are ensuring the next generation is prepared to advance in their pursuit of inspiring change.

Meaningful MENTORSHIP

Dr. Nicole JOHNSON,

Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies

Martina STARKEY '24

Martina Starkey '24, a psychology major and peacebuilding minor, explains that Dr. Nicole Johnson, professor of religious studies and chair of the Department of Justice, Diversity, and Interdisciplinary Humanities, is a professor with whom she confides.

“I met Dr. Johnson when I signed up to take her Religion Through Film humanities course in the spring of 2021, I then attended the spring break trip to Washington, DC with her too,” said Starkey. “There, she encouraged me to pursue a minor in peacebuilding and social justice.”

Starkey adds that, occasionally, she and Johnson grab lunch and dinner or just a cup of coffee to discuss matters like advice for graduate school applications, potential career paths, or just a casual conversation.

“Dr. Johnson is always willing to help her students and she is passionate about what she does,” said Starkey. “In DC, on Capitol Hill, she treated her students as colleagues and encouraged us to step outside of our comfort zone to gain real-world experience.”

Johnson explained that Starkey is a good conversationalist which makes their talks comfortable and easy. Johnson added that she enjoys having in-person encounters with Starkey.

“Martina gets things done like few other students! She is always willing to go the extra mile and roll up her sleeves to accomplish a task,” said Johnson. “She’s also unafraid of new challenges.”

Johnson explained that Starkey is also tenacious and has a warm and friendly personality. Starkey never quits a task she sets herself to do, and she speaks her mind in a truthful and very mature manner.

Four Mount Union students discuss how members of the faculty and administrative staff have become trusted advisors and friends throughout their college careers.

{BY FATIMA MAGAÑA '22}





Dr. Ivory LYONS, Professor of Africana Studies and Religion
Anthony YOUNG '23

Anthony Young '23, civil engineering major and mathematics and Africana studies double minor, explains that without Dr. Ivory Lyons' presence and support in his academic career and personal life, he would not be where he is today.

"I met Dr. Lyons when I signed up for his First-Year Seminar class titled Malcolm X. As we share the same race and culture, he understood the many unforeseen challenges I would face as well as the issues I was enduring" said Young. "Dr. Lyons reassured me that the effort I put into my work is enough to obtain the grades I wanted and to achieve the goals I set for myself."

Outside of the classroom and the Mount Union community, Young states that he has a very close relationship with Lyons, as they often meet each other for lunch and dinner.

"During the summer, I was able to meet his wonderful wife over dinner" Young said. "I consider Dr. Lyons and his family my own family because 'family' does not always have to be determined by bloodline.

"Dr. Lyons is someone who likes leading by example to help people step outside their comfort zone and gain real world experience. This illustrates how he is an extrovert and a humorous person, yet he knows how to turn the 'work mode' button off," Young added.

Young stated that Lyons is a dependable and open-minded person because he comes from a similar background to his students. They look up to him as an example of where hard work and dedication can get a person in life.

"Dr. Lyons is very experienced, which allows him to be accepting of others and their reactions to difficult subjects covered in classes; he has the ability to connect with his students on a personal level," said Young. "Throughout my time at Mount, I've had great professors, and have been especially impacted by Dr. Lyons."

Lyons explained that he and Young are not just a professor and a student, but friends. He connected with Young because upon meeting him, he saw much of himself in Young.

"Anthony is a serious student who has his feet on the ground, can adapt to situations, and can be approached easily," said Lyons. "He even accompanied me to Mississippi to drop my wife off, so I would not have to drive alone.

"Anthony is also committed to his education and to helping his family, specifically his mother," said Lyons. "I am very proud of him because he has stuck with his studies, and he is intrigued to learn about Africana studies and the culture. I truly admire him."

Ron HOLDEN, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Diversity and Inclusion
Aaliyah KINNARD '24

Aaliyah Kinnard '24, psychology major and theatre minor, explains that Ron Holden has become her go-to person throughout her years at Mount Union because of his trustworthiness.

"I met Ron my freshman year when I stopped in at student affairs to ask for something. He saw me waiting, approached me, and made conversation with me," said Kinnard. "From there on out, he's become someone important to me."

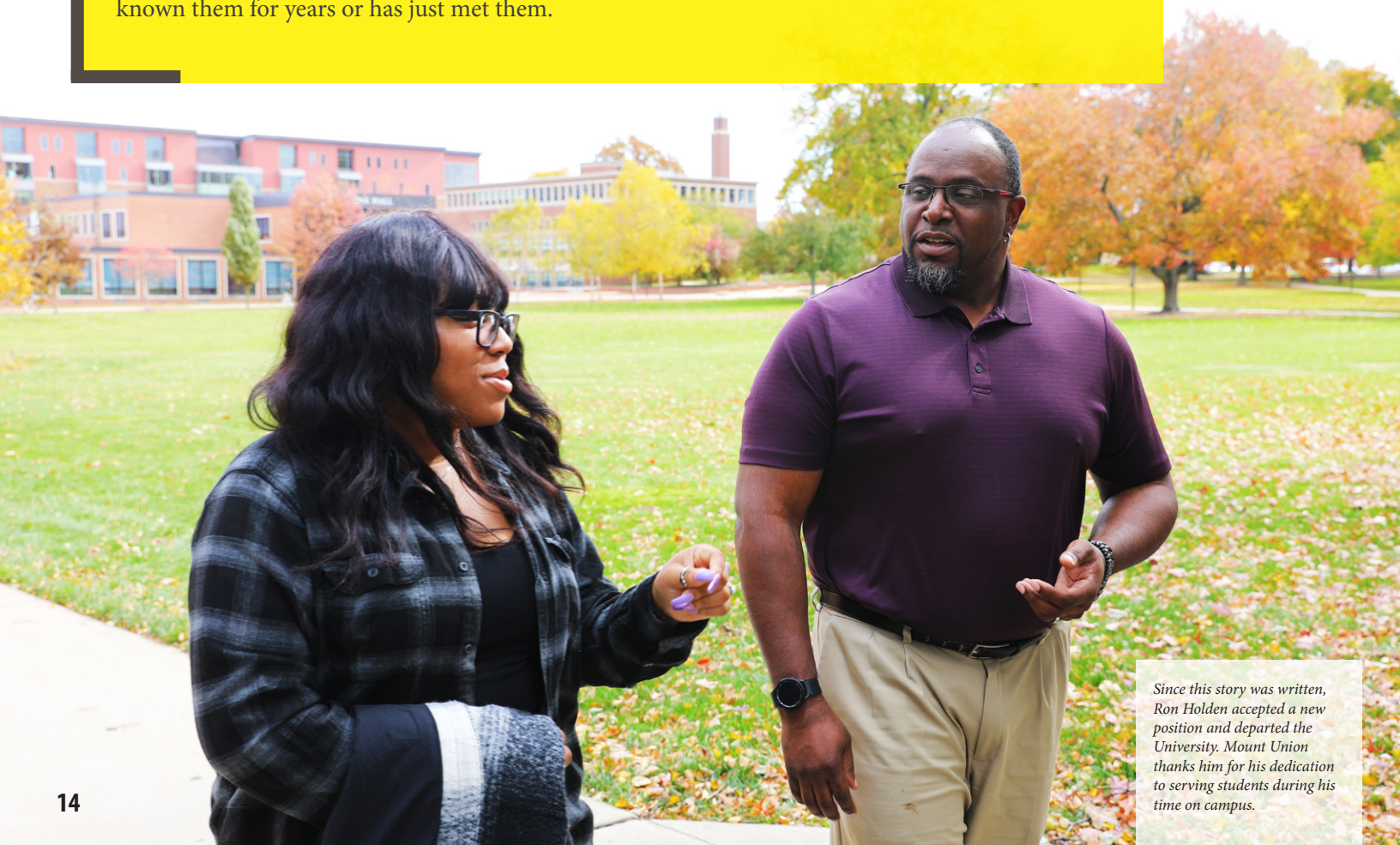
In their first interaction, Holden directed Kinnard to Raiderfest to explore the different organizations. Although she did not know him well yet, Kinnard trusted him and went to Raiderfest where she learned about the Black Student Union (BSU). Thanks to Holden's suggestion, being a part of BSU and the organization itself has become a big part of her life.

When asked to describe Holden's personality, Kinnard described him as dependable. Holden, according to Kinnard, treats everyone he meets with respect regardless of whether he has known them for years or has just met them.

"When I had no idea of what I wanted to do in college, Ron helped me figure out the career I wanted to pursue," Kinnard said. "He is a compassionate person who opens his door to everyone and anything even when it does not pertain to his job title. I know that when I need to talk about things not related to school, I can go to him because he truly wants people to feel good and look into the future."

When discussing Kinnard's personality, Holden explained that she has many of the qualities he does because people can approach her with anything they need. Although Holden further explained that when Kinnard sees someone in need of help, she takes the initiative to go up to them and offer them assistance.

"Aaliyah is also a driven-oriented and selfless person who sets high standards and goals for herself, works hard in anything she does, and strives to achieve perfection while putting others' needs before her own to help them. These are admirable traits in a person."



Since this story was written, Ron Holden accepted a new position and departed the University. Mount Union thanks him for his dedication to serving students during his time on campus.



Dawn ADAMS '97, Director of International Student Services

Sofia RUMALDO CONDORI '23 and **Alma LOZANO-MONTENEGRO '23**

Alma Lozano-Montenegro '23, an integrated media major and gender studies and communication studies double minor, and Sofia Rumaldo Condori '23, accounting major and business administration minor, explain that their first interaction with Dawn Adams was virtually due to the coronavirus restrictions during the 2021 spring semester.

Upon meeting each other in person, Lozano-Montenegro and Rumaldo explained that Adams was extremely friendly and welcoming. The international students met Adams at the 2021 fall orientation, during which Rumaldo states that Adams helped them get acquainted and accommodated in their dorms.

“Dawn was the first person I met in Ohio, and she was always open to answer all my questions. She was also helpful because she supported me in every way she could to ensure I was ready for my arrival on campus,” said Lozano-Montenegro.

Lozano-Montenegro added that she and the rest of the international students see Adams as their “mother from Ohio” because she is always willing to step outside of her job role to help them in anything they need.

Rumaldo explained that Adams is the person she relies on most. If she has any questions or doubts, Adams can answer them or guide her in the direction in which she needs to go.

“Many of us do not have our own transportation, and Ms. Dawn takes us out on our days off to shop for groceries, or she takes us to explore cities near Alliance,” Rumaldo said. “She always has funny stories that make me laugh; I enjoy talking about anything with her.”

Both Lozano-Montenegro and Rumaldo describe Adams as a generous and responsible person. Adams goes out of her way to help the international students, so they have access to everything an American student has.

“Dawn is a friendly person because she is always in a good mood and makes us feel loved and happy to be around her,” said Lozano-Montenegro. “She is a jovial person because you always see her with a smile, and she sees the positive side of all situations,” added Rumaldo.

Adams described Lozano-Montenegro and Rumaldo as driven because they take advantage of all the opportunities offered to them, so they get the full impact of the American experience.

“Alma and Sofia are focused students – they make sure they are on track to graduate while also enjoying their time on campus with friends,” said Adams.

Adams too, described her students as friendly and genuinely happy. “They are always smiling and exude such happiness that makes people want to get to know them and be around them.”