



# THE CLARION

PRODUCED BY STUDENTS, FOR STUDENTS



**INSIDE:** YOUR VOICE:  
THE STATE OF THE UNION  
PAGE 12

**DR. ANGELA CURRIER'S  
JOURNEY AT SINCLAIR**  
PAGE 18



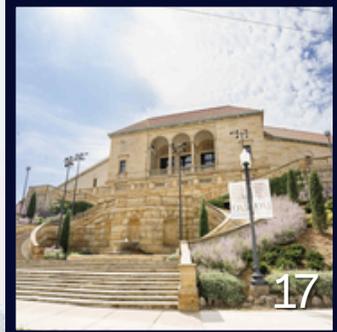
14



05



08



17



18



9

# CONTENTS

## TABLE OF

- 4 Letter from the Editor
- 5 Sinclair AI Excellence Institute
- 7 Editorial
- 8 MakerSpace Club Feature
- 9 Winter Photo Recap
- 12 Your Voice: The State of the Union
- 14 Clarion Cuisine
- 16 5 January Events
- 18 Tartan Spotlight

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-Mary-Immaculate Winemaliya Ayambire (Maliya)

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# Letter From the Editor

**H**ello Tartans. As we return from our much-needed break, we welcome in a new year and a new semester. In 2025, the question of America's direction feels more pressing than ever. The answer, unsurprisingly, is complicated.

America is a nation marked by tension and transition, but also by a growing determination among young people to shape what comes next.

I have found that one of humans strongest abilities is the ability to adapt. We have an innate ability to change, no matter how unwelcomed the change may be. Our comfort zones can often dictate our lives and leave us hidden from new experiences because we fear the unknown and change is naturally unknowable.

However, stepping out of our own comfort zones can often lead to the exciting, new experiences that are waiting to be realized.

As I look back on my last year, I am filled with hopeful content. There were trials and tribulations just like anybody, but I take pleasure in the accomplishments I made and feel that I left the year better than how I started it.

As I was thinking about the past year I had the epiphany that all of the blessings and opportunities that had come my way were not because of luck or necessarily even because of merit.

It was the sole fact that I made myself available; I put myself into uncomfortable situations because I knew that the temporary discomfort of putting myself out there was more than worth the possibilities that waited for me on the other side of a handshake.

Now that I have the last year firmly behind me, I set my sights ahead of me and wonder what another year might bring. I will be finishing my time at Sinclair at the end of this semester and transferring to Wright State University to finish my degree.



**Noah Schlarman.** LILLIAN KLOPF

When I think about the future it quickly feels overwhelming and insurmountable, it becomes discouraging to think about everything one has to do and it can begin to feel like there is no possible way that one person can do so much.

Which is why my New Year's resolution is to worry less and hope more. I made a resolution to stop holding onto things outside of my control, to put some more faith into myself, to realize that not everything can be done at once and that a little bit of progress is still progress.

The start of a new year is the perfect time to appreciate ourselves for our accomplishments, to realign our actions with our beliefs and to change, adapt and hold true to our commitments. 2026 leads us into new opportunities, new people to meet, places to go and things to learn. Let us follow with curiosity and hope.

# Sinclair's AI Initiative

## Understanding the importance of ethical AI usage and how Sinclair is leading the way

Danny Bayasgalan, reporter

**A**s artificial intelligence continues to grow rapidly and reshape the modern world and the global economy, the demand for AI-literate workers is growing exponentially. Recognizing this shift, Sinclair College launched the Sinclair AI Excellence Institute to prepare students for the future workforce.

To discuss the scope, ethics and goals of this endeavor, Luis A. Sanchez Alcazar, Sinclair's LCS AI Fellow and a faculty member leading the change to integrate these technologies into the curriculum, shared his thoughts.

According to the Pew Research Center, Americans are more concerned about the rate of AI development and the increased daily use of it than they are excited.

Opinions are mixed, with larger shares reporting that such frequent use will decrease a person's ability to think, while others are more open to using it for assistance for day-to-day tasks.

However, some industries such as welding have benefited not from replacing jobs, but by filling in gaps in the workforce, allowing higher demand to be met. To Alcazar, this is when AI helps companies keep up with demand.

"Companies that work with metal are having a difficult time finding welders to meet demands. So, what ends up happening is AI is now being implemented into these industries to keep up with the demand. It's not necessarily taking jobs but filling in the gap where we need it," Alcazar said.

Before the jobs, people will now probably interact with AI at school. Students today are having to learn how to use AI ethically and responsibly in the classroom, rather than simply falling into the temptation of using AI to complete each and every assignment.

Alcazar also believes that AI plays an important role as to how education is traditionally viewed.

"In education, the way we learn has become so traditional, starting with repetition and then moving to application. I don't care if you memorize or tell me word-for-word what I taught you," Alcazar said. "I want you to be able to implement this information and use it important fields in your life, and now I think that AI has created an opportunity with an education where we no longer have to focus so heavily on that implementation. It gives us an opportunity to really reassess what it is that we should be assessing students."

However, many students have already fallen victim to the temptation of AI. There is research showing reduced cognitive load due to the increasing use of AI. Alcazar believes it is because people don't know how to use it ethically.



Luis A. Sanchez Alcazar. CONTRIBUTED

### The C.A.R.S. model

- C** - care about the work that they submit
- A** - acknowledge (cite) their use of AI
- R** - review the accuracy of AI content
- S** - support with course content

**"AI" continued on page 6**

## “AI” continued from page 5

“It’s because we rely on AI models to think for us, and that’s problematic, because there needs to be critical thinking occurring before the prompting happens itself. In other words, ‘garbage in, garbage out,’” he said.

The institute’s immediate challenge is establishing ethical use within the classroom, particularly concerning academic integrity.

As Alcazar emphasized, this means moving beyond simple accusations of cheating toward clear, communicable standards. To guide students and faculty using the CARS (Care, Acknowledge, Review, Support) model.

“I have a personal framework called the CARS model. I ask my students that they care about the work that they submit, I ask them to cite their use of AI, I ask them to assess the accuracy of that response from AI, and I ask them to rely on their course content,” Alcazar said.

This framework aligns with the institute’s immediate focus for the academic year: to build confidence and set clear expectations.

By the year's end, the program aims to strengthen both faculty and student confidence in using AI as an effective learning partner through training, resources and piloting AI-focused assignments.

The ultimate goal is to hold students accountable not for the model’s error, but for their own judgment, transitioning faculty from policing AI use to using it as a “learning checkpoint” to gauge a student’s true understanding.

The long-term vision extends far beyond current academic integrity concerns. The institute’s overarching goal is to embed responsible, ethical and human-centered AI literacy throughout the entire college.

This commitment ensures that regardless of a student's major, they understand the role AI plays in their field and are prepared for an increasingly AI-driven professional world. Beyond technical expertise, employers are explicitly looking for soft skills—the ability to socialize, engage and work collaboratively.

By embracing the technology, rather than banning it, the college ensures students gain essential social, teamwork and presentation skills to work with AI, amplifying their abilities but not replacing them.

This holistic approach is why students can expect significant changes at Sinclair: A campus culture where AI is not feared, but understood, ethically utilized and leveraged as a powerful tool for intellectual growth.

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**CAN MANAGE A TEAM**

**CAN WORK ON SHORT DEADLINES**

**ARE INTERESTED IN WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY**

**ENJOY GIVING ASSIGNMENTS AND FEEDBACK**

**HAVE AN EYE FOR DETAIL AND VISUAL ART**

**ENJOY TALKING TO PEOPLE AND GETTING THE SCOOP**

**LIKE WRITING, EDITING AND POSTING CONTENT**

**ARE FAMILIAR WITH CANVA OR WILLING TO LEARN**

**REPORTER / STAFF WRITER**

**EDITOR**

**GRAPHIC DESIGNER**

# Editorial

## Media literacy needed now more than ever

Clarion Staff



In an age where information is readily available to consume and produce, an understanding of media literacy is a must. People now find themselves in a unique situation where they must not only navigate an overabundance of information but also discern truth from false and unreliable misinformation.

In the past decade, with advancements in technology and the erosion of trust in legacy media establishments, people often rely on the internet and social media to get most of their news. According to an article published in September by the Pew Research Center, 86% of U.S. adults get their news from the internet.

The internet is not the issue; when used ethically and responsibly it can be a great tool. The issue is the amount of unreliable and unaccredited news sources and other sites that people visit for their news that exist on the internet.

With such a large majority of the population getting their information online, people often go to different sources and see small, biased and sometimes false pieces of information. This leads to events and issues being represented out of context and does not allow for a full understanding of the subject.

While it may feel dystopian to think about information being misrepresented solely to push a certain narrative, there are ways to combat the copious amounts of misinformation.

Media literacy can often be misunderstood and oversimplified. Although it is important to read past the headline because there is always more to it.

It requires an individual to analyze and evaluate the news they see rather than passively consume the information. They must think beyond the article and research into who made the content; what their biases may be; and what the purpose of the message may be.

Topics will often have more than one side to a story, as most issues are complex and multifaceted. People should prioritize getting their information from credible sources that cite where they obtain their information from.

There are tools like the AllSides Media Bias Chart and organizations like Ground News that aggregate different news stories for comparison and point out the bias of news organizations.

While consumers do have an individual responsibility to be mindful of the content they consume, it is not solely up to them to fix the growing misinformation crisis. News writers and reporters must have a good sense of journalistic objectivity, which goes beyond simple neutrality.

In an interview with Harvard Kennedy School, CNN international anchor and reporter Christiane Amanpour spoke about the necessity of journalists to find the truth rather than voicing all sides of a story.

“People don't understand that objectivity actually means pursuing the truth,” she says. “But you get there by giving all sides a hearing.”

The amount of readily available information is increasing exponentially. With more than 95 million photos and videos posted on Instagram, more than 500 million posts on X, and 4000 terabytes of data on Facebook uploaded every day, the current infobesity crisis will only get worse.

Thankfully there is awareness around the growing issue. In a survey done by Media Literacy Now, 84% of adults believe that media literacy should be taught in schools. To learn more about becoming media literate, visit the Media Literacy Now website at [medialiteracynow.org](http://medialiteracynow.org).

# Makerspace Club Feature

The Makerspace Club transforms creative potential into tangible works with 3D printing

Lillian Klopf, reporter

**O**f the different clubs that Sinclair College offers, the Makerspace Club stands out for its innovation and accessibility to students. The club aims to help each member discover their creative potential and transform ideas from concepts into tangible creations.

This is achieved mainly through the use of 3D printing, which teaches students how to use basic computer-aided design (CAD) programs, as well as other soft skills like problem solving and collaboration.

Forming only three years ago, the club has grown immensely since then. The Makerspace Club is a space for students to use different tools and technologies to create. Any interested student is encouraged to join, not just engineering or design students. The Makerspace Club focuses more on fostering creativity and teamwork, skills that would be valuable for any student at Sinclair.

Michael Neal, assistant professor in mechanical engineering technology at Sinclair, works as co-advisor for the Makerspace Club. Neal explained that the club is an interdisciplinary workspace where students can make what they want with free creative expression.

“I like that [the Makerspace Club] is a place where people can really make something physical and be creative,” Neal said. “People come in with ideas, and they may or may not even be related to the things they are studying. Oftentimes they just have ideas of things that they want in their regular lives.... It’s just fun to see something go from idea to reality.”

James Davidson, the Makerspace Club president, had been the first to come up with the idea, according to Neal, when he was a student in Neal’s class.

Davidson wanted to create a space for students to explore their creative side and learn the different equipment accessible to them.

Neal teaches courses on 3D modelling and 3D printing at Sinclair, which became one of the many different technologies that students can learn and use in the Makerspace Club.

Available to students is an array of equipment and activities such as 3D printing, imprinting on t-shirts or coffee mugs, sewing machines, button makers and other electronic supplies that students can build themselves. Neal encourages students, regardless of their major, to stop in.

Another draw of the club is the support and community that it offers. The advisors and student leaders prioritize helping new club members become familiar with the equipment and fostering an environment that encourages them to create.

Neal thinks that this positive environment will only continue to grow and inspire students.

“As we continue to have more involvement and we continue to see students produce creative things, we’ll have more examples that I think will serve as inspiration for future projects,” Neal said.

For those interested in joining the Makerspace Club, Neal is available through email at [mike.neal1@sinclair.edu](mailto:mike.neal1@sinclair.edu) or visit room 11-436 during open lab time for the Makerspace Club.



A 3D printer at Sinclair. ANDREW BARNES



Michael Neal. CONTRIBUTED



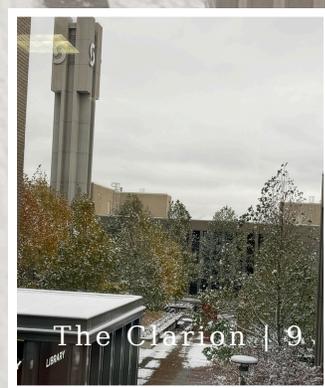
A 3D printed skull. ANDREW BARNES



# WINTER

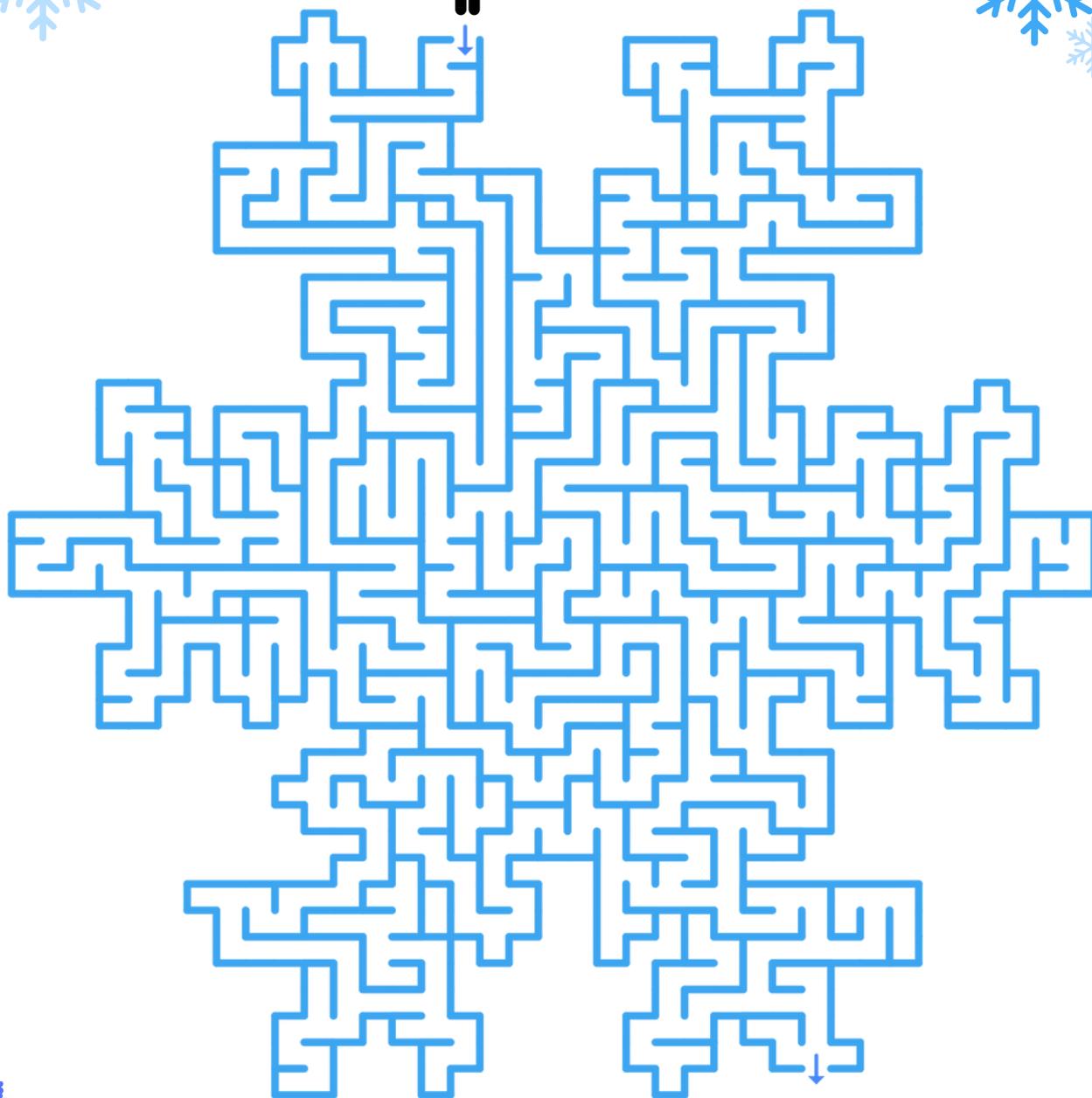
*Recaps*

JD Ataji, photographer  
Amisha Dahal, graphic designer  
Maliya Ayambire, reporter



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 FROZEN❄️GLOVES❄️HAT❄️HOT COCOA❄️ICE❄️ICICLE❄️JANUARY❄️NEW YEAR  
 RESOLUTIONS❄️SCARF❄️SKIING❄️SLEDDING❄️SLIPPERY❄️SNOWBALL  
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# YourVoice: State of the Union

## Students share thoughts on the direction of America

Nukuh Semor Akwete, reporter

In 2025, the question of America's direction feels more pressing than ever. The answer, unsurprisingly, is complicated. America is a nation marked by tension and transition, but also by a growing determination among young people to shape what comes next.

Opinions vary widely on the current state of the country and its most pressing issues. Sinclair College students shared their thoughts on how they view America and its future.

### Jamal Alkhateeb

Jamal Alkhateeb, a political science major, notes several issues that he believes to be a growing concern in America.

"The current government and ICE, people have grown more antagonistic to it. There is also anti-intellectualism that is apparent. If you look at people's ability to reason on platforms like Twitter and others, it is not very high," Alkhateeb said.

Despite the widespread grim outlooks, Alkhateeb remains optimistic on America's future.

"Perhaps in the next two to three years, some policies, and the way that they are implemented might gain popularity. Since the U.S. somewhat operates off of models, local government will do something, and it will gain popularity. Maybe the Democrats will borrow from Mamdani and his messaging," Alkhateeb said.

### Joshua Aziamanyo

Joshua Aziamanyo, a computer science major at Sinclair, says that market volatility is America's most pressing issue.

"Prices are highly unstable right now, I think that is what directly affects Americans right now," Aziamanyo said.

Aziamanyo is of the opinion that America needs time and patience to rebuild the future they want.

"America is in a transition phase. Regardless of how drastic and rushed some of the recent policies may seem, the new administration needs to be afforded time and patience to bring their visions to fruition. Then only can we correctly judge," Aziamanyo said.



Jamal Alkhateeb. NUKUH SEMOR AKWETEY



Caleb Bretz. NUKUH SEMOR AKWETEY

**"Voice" continued on page 13**

**“Voice” continued from page 12****Nae LeRoy.** CONTRIBUTED**Nae LeRoy**

Nae LeRoy, a psychology major at Sinclair, cites the recent ICE raids and immigration enforcement activities as America’s most pressing issue.

“Everything that’s happening with ICE; it’s disgusting and I feel like it’s not talked about enough,” LeRoy said.

LeRoy also revealed her admiration for people being targeted by the immigration enforcement activities.

“They need more grace because they are here doing more than the average American would do. The type of jobs they do, the average American would not want to do that. I thought this was the land of the free, why does it take like twenty years for somebody to come here? It makes no sense at all,” LeRoy said.

LeRoy remained somewhat unsure about America’s future in the coming years.

“In three years, everything is going to be fresh. We are going to start moving different, but in twenty years, there is always somebody coming,” LeRoy said.

**Caleb Bretz**

Caleb Bretz is a social sciences major at Sinclair. He feels that the U.S. is in a stage where its position has to be reevaluated.

“With all that is happening right now, I think maybe it is about time we rethink our status as a world superpower,” Bretz said.

Bretz cited the direct harassment of academics as a problem America needs to stop.

“My sociology professor received some sort of pressing and pressure from conservative student organizations for discussing racial and gender issues her sociology classes,” Bretz said.

Bretz also notes an increasing and worrying agenda of dividing people across ethnic lines as opposed to a push for unity and togetherness.

“We are seeing an increase in a lot of rhetoric that the central idea is that people do not want to live together,” Bretz said, “People see individual ethnic boundaries as more important than civic or national boundaries. So, I think the most pressing issue for America’s immediate future is deciding for itself which boundaries it believes are more important.”

**Joshia Aziamanyo.** NUKUH SEMOR AKWETEY

# Clarion Cuisine

## Hickory Bar-B-Q: A beloved Dayton legacy with less-than-lively flavors

Hannah Kichline, multimedia editor

**H**ickory Bar-B-Q has been family-owned since its doors opened on Brown Street in 1989. The owners were immigrants from Romania who worked in and eventually owned several bars and restaurants throughout Dayton.

In fact, this culinary landscape is what brought them together: Irene Kiss’s aunt and uncle owned the bar that became Tank’s Bar and Grill, where she met her husband Joe. More than forty years into their marriage, they opened The Old Hickory Bar-B-Q, where they took an active role in waiting tables and preparing food using Hungarian family recipes. Their three daughters and sons-in-law worked at the restaurant too, as well as their seven grandchildren.

The rich backstory makes the restaurant endearing and inviting, and the excitement continues when you walk in the door and see the cozy, classic bar area.

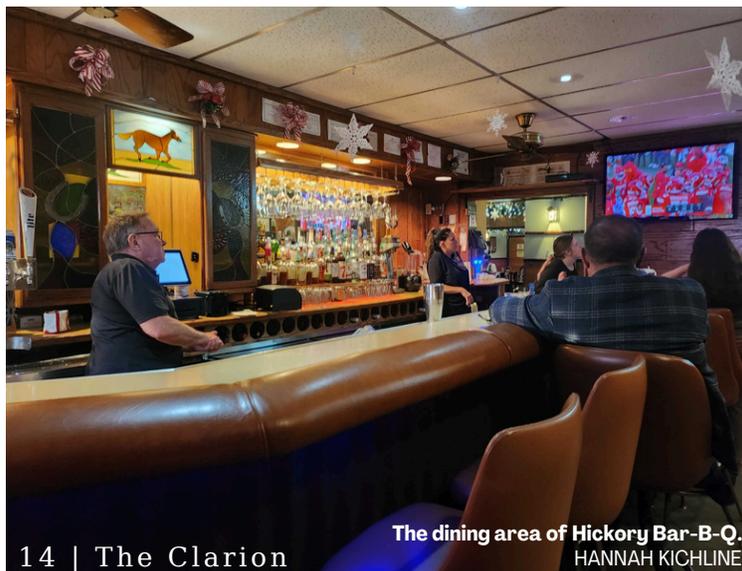
The dining area was much more upscale than we expected; from the name “Hickory Bar-B-Q” we had pictured a more rustic joint. But with comfortable booths, low lighting and holiday decorations up, the atmosphere was warm and relaxed.

Unfortunately, the weakest link was what should have been the star of the show: the food itself. This is the first “Clarion Cuisine” article that I will not be urging readers to go and try the restaurant, and instead recommending that they save their money.

**“Cuisine” continued on page 15**



Outside of Hickory Bar-B-Q.  
NOAH SCHLARMAN



The dining area of Hickory Bar-B-Q.  
HANNAH KICHLINE



The dining area of Hickory Bar-B-Q.  
NOAH SCHLARMAN

**“Cuisine” continued from page 14**

We ordered the shrimp cocktail and rib sampler as appetizers. Our server, who was very knowledgeable and kind, told us that the ribs were on the chewier side and that the sauce was a vinegar-based recipe. The vinegar sauce was delicious, but what little meat was on the bones was unpleasantly dry. In contrast, the flavor of the cocktail sauce let it down: there seemed to be hardly any seasoning.

We also tried the cabbage roll, which follows the original recipe from the owner’s Hungarian mother. It is a very nice dish to look at, and the texture of the cabbage leaves and tender pork were perfect-but again, the flavor wasn’t very exciting. The main seasoning was paprika, and it could have used a lot more.

There are sides available with each entree, including hash browns, sauteed mushrooms and tossed salad with choice of dressing. The house dressing was a homemade sweet-and-sour with a deliciously pronounced garlic flavor, but sadly, that was the best thing we tried. The most we could say for our main dishes was that they were cooked nicely, and could be enjoyed with a healthy amount of steak sauce.

The sides, which often shine in barbecue settings, were completely underwhelming. The sauteed mushrooms were devoid of any seasoning, butter or anything that would make them exciting to eat. The hashbrowns were undercooked and came with a melted slice of American cheese on top-something that would be fine at a casual diner, but was annoying against a backdrop of proud traditions and finer dining.

I have to conclude that the restaurant’s continued business relies mainly on its status as a local staple. Its clientele seems to be maintained by older customers who have been patronizing it for a long time and appreciate the blander options.

This makes me wonder if the menu used to be more flavorful and has changed to cater to diners who have been coming since its early days. If this is the case, then hopefully the restaurant will continue to change with the times and retain some popularity with a younger crowd.

For the high cost of the meal, I was disappointed and left Hickory Bar-B-Q full, but not at all satisfied.



**Hickory Bar-B-Q's cabbage roll served with sour cream.**  
HANNAH KICHLINE



**Pork tenderloin with hashbrowns and a side salad.**  
HANNAH KICHLINE



**T-bone steak, steak fries and sauteed mushrooms.**  
NOAH SCHLARMAN

**Where should Clarion Cuisine go next? Tell us in a letter to the editor.**

# 5 Events in January

## Dayton has various opportunities to start the new year off right

Erik Larson, reporter

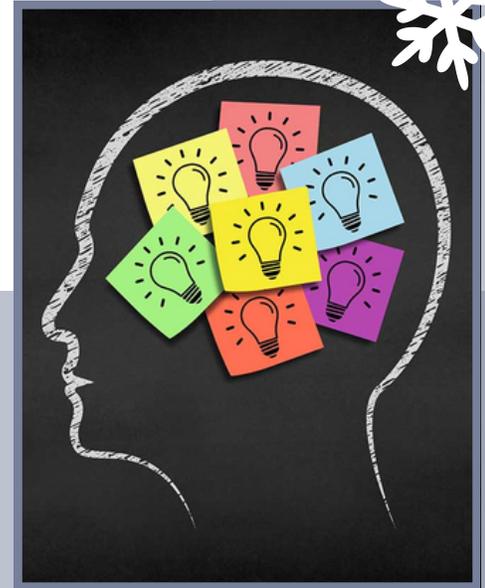
**T**he New Year is approaching, and with it a season when people start making resolutions, whether it be a commitment to trying new things, being more active or working on self-improvement.

It can be hard to stick with a resolution, but every journey begins with the first step. This coming year will have plenty of community events and activities, offering many opportunities for new experiences.

### Learning Over Lunch Workshops

Those looking for events that offer straightforward support and advice on self improvement and managing life's challenges will want to look into the Learning Over Lunch Workshops hosted by the Ombuds office.

These meetings occur once a month, with the first one of 2026 happening on Jan. 20, entitled Communicating Non-Defensively. A range of different topics will be covered, including matters of dignity, leadership and apologies. The meetings happen on Zoom, so location is not an issue when it comes to attending.



Outline of a person with sticky note lightbulbs. GETTY IMAGES

### Sinclair Community Blood Drives

For those focusing less on self improvement and more on how they can help out their community, Sinclair is hosting several blood drives, with one happening on Jan. 21 at the Centerville Campus.

The blood drive is sponsored by Versiti, a local community blood center, and if a donor is unable to attend on Jan. 21, they have plenty of other opportunities scheduled for 2026. For those interested in donating, check out Versiti's website at <https://donate.versitidayton.org/>.



Versiti Blood Center of Ohio's logo. DONATE.VERSITIDAYTON.ORG



A hand holding a rosary. TEMPLEOFTHEREBELGODDESS.COM

### Rosary Prayer Circle

The Dayton area has many churches and houses of worship, but it can be hard to find a community of faith that feels like a right fit.

Those who do not feel like they fit in with mainstream traditions but still want to practice spirituality may want to consider joining non-traditional religious gatherings such as the Temple of the Rebel Goddess. A multi-faith spiritual community center, the TRG accepts diversity of all kinds and is open to both interfaith and secular people.

They have meetings every Wednesday and Thursday evening, as well as a Rosary Prayer Circle every other Saturday. For students whose resolution is to try more new things in 2026, then attending the TRG to see what they are all about could be a good idea.

**“Listicle” continued on page 17**

**“Listicle” continued from page 16**



Ice skaters enjoying a day at Riverscape. METROPARKS.ORG



The Riverscape metro park offers ice skating, curling and more. METROPARK.ORG

**Riverscape Ice Skating**

Located at MetroParks Ice Rink, Riverscape Ice Skating will appeal to those looking to be more active and enjoy winter activities.

Ice skating can be a fun activity that brings people together, and is another way people can try something new while also reaching out and connecting with others in the community.

Admission is only \$7, and they are open every day. Make sure to pay attention to their hours as they do vary throughout the week and may be affected by holidays or weather.

**Dayton Art Institute**

For those more interested in the arts, or activities that stay out of the cold, the Dayton Art Institute has a lot planned for 2026.

These include exhibits such as the “Dayton/Kyoto Invitational” and “Engaged: Rings From Around The World.” Admission for adults is \$15, but admission for Sinclair College students is free.

All of this is just scratching the surface of what’s going on in Dayton in 2026, and getting out and trying something new at least once is a very worthwhile goal for the New Year.



The Dayton Art Institute offers a variety of different galleries and installations to explore. DAYTONARTINSTITUTE.ORG

# Tartan Spotlight



Dr. Angela Currier. CONTRIBUTED

**“People sometimes ask, ‘Don’t you get tired of teaching the same thing every semester?’ And I always say no. The information might be the same, but my students are different. They bring new experiences, new stories and I learn from them just as much as they learn from me.”**

**- Angela Currier**

## Professor Angela Currier reflects on her time at Sinclair College

Maliya Ayambire, staff writer

**W**hen Professor Angela Currier first joined Sinclair College more than two decades ago, her start was anything but ordinary. She did not walk into a fancy office or a well-stocked lab. Instead, just a box of textbooks were handed to her out of the trunk of a car in the Dayton Mall parking lot.

“I got hired at the beginning of August,” Currier said. “The woman who hired me met me at the mall, pulled books out of her trunk and said, ‘Here, this is your material. Classes start in a couple of weeks.’”

That trunk full of textbooks marked the beginning of what would become a 23-year journey of teaching, mentoring and inspiring students.

“I was hired in 2002. My firstborn was just a baby then and I had my second child after I started here. So, yeah, Sinclair and my family kind of grew up together,” Currier said.

Since then, Currier has taught microbiology every single semester, guiding hundreds of students through microscopes, Petri dishes and the fascinating world of microbes.

“People sometimes ask, ‘Don’t you get tired of teaching the same thing every semester?’” Currier said. “And I always say no. The information might be the same, but my students are different. They bring new experiences, new stories and I learn from them just as much as they learn from me.”

While most people take a lifetime to find their passion, Currier’s love for biology started long before she set foot in a college lab.

“When I went to Baldwin-Wallace [University], I just knew I liked biology. My parents weren’t science people at all, but I loved learning about it in high school,” Currier said.

Even as a child, Currier gravitated toward teaching. She would often set up dolls and stuffed animals to play “school” with a small chalkboard she was gifted by her parents. However, when she began college, teaching was not her immediate goal.

“I thought I’d be a clinical lab technician and work in a hospital,” she said, “Then one of my professors took me under his wing. I worked as his lab assistant, setting up cultures and prepping for the classes. I loved it.”

Her professor recognized a talent she had not yet seen in herself and encouraged her to attend graduate school.

Following his advice, Currier applied to Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, thanks in part to her college roommate who was already planning to go there for chemistry.

Her academic journey eventually brought her to Sinclair, where she has found a professional home.

**“Spotlight” continued on page 16**

## “Spotlight” continued from page 15

“It’s been 23 years now. I’ve always been in the same department, always teaching microbiology. I’ve seen Sinclair grow and change. When I first started, we were on the quarter system, and there were no online classes. Now I even teach microbiology online in the summer,” Currier said.

Even after teaching the same course for more than two decades, her enthusiasm has not waned.

“Every class is different,” she said. “My students bring energy, humor and experiences that make each semester unique. That’s what keeps me passionate.”

Her classroom is known for blending structures with warmth. She encourages students to share their experiences especially those working in healthcare settings.

“Some of my students work in nursing homes or clinical labs and I love when they share those stories. I learn so much from them,” she said. “That’s another reason I don’t get bored. Science is always changing and my students help me keep learning.”

Currier admitted that teaching was not always easy for her.

“I was incredibly shy,” she said. “All through middle school, high school and even college. I remember doing a presentation in undergrad on polioviruses, and I hated it. I had to pretend my audience were my dolls sitting in my room just so I could get through it.”

Her students today might find that hard to believe. She is known for her engaging style and her ability to make even the tiniest microorganisms seem fascinating. And it is not just the science that motivates her, it is the students themselves.

“I love seeing them succeed. My favorite thing to do on graduation day is look through the program and find the names of students I’ve had in class. It’s such a wonderful feeling to see them walking across that stage,” Currier said.

Of course, teaching comes with its challenges.

“The hardest part is figuring out how to best help students,” she said. “Students today face different challenges than they did twenty years ago. The pandemic especially changed a lot. Many students experienced learning loss during that time and it affects how they learn now. We’re always trying to find ways to support them.”

She is also mindful of the personal struggles many students face outside the classroom.

“A lot of them are balancing jobs, raising kids, caring for family or dealing with housing or food insecurity. There’s only so much time in a day, so we have to be flexible and supportive,” Currier said.

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Currier gives simple yet heartfelt advice to Sinclair students.

“You’ll get through it,” she said. “You’re going to face challenges but you’re not alone. Sinclair has an amazing support system. Tutoring, instructors who care, and even a food pantry for those who need it. Don’t be afraid to ask for help.”

Looking ahead, Currier is reflective but still driven.

“I’m toward the end of my career, so my long-term goal is retirement,” she said. “But in the short term, I want to keep improving how we teach. I’d love to see more students successfully completing our courses and we’re working on figuring out how to make that happen.”

After more than 20 years, her love for teaching and for her students hasn’t dimmed at all.

“I still love it every single time,” Currier said. “I learn from my students, and I hope they learn from me. That’s what makes teaching so special, it’s never one-sided.”

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