

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

Heart of America Chapter

NEWSLETTER | Edition 88, Volume 3

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Officer List



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ASSP
HEART OF AMERICA CHAPTER

PEOPLE.
PREVENTION.
A SAFER TOMORROW.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 2026

CONNECT. EDUCATE. SUPPORT. SERVE. GROW.

> It was also great to see students from both Pittsburg State University and the University of Central Missouri in attendance. The future of our profession is bright, and we are proud to support and connect with the next generation of safety professionals.

Ashley Parker
MS, CSP, CRIS

PRESIDENT
ASSP HEART OF AMERICA CHAPTER

Dear Chapter Members,

As we move into October, I want to take a moment to thank everyone who attended our September chapter meeting featuring Steve Bell. Steve's passion for safety is truly unmatched, and his energy is infectious, in the best possible way. It was a fantastic session, and we appreciate him sharing his knowledge and experience with our chapter.

Looking ahead, I hope you'll join us for our October meeting at Black & Veatch, where Shelly Pizzi, CIH, CSP, CHST will be presenting on Industrial Hygiene. Shelly brings a wealth of knowledge and practical experience, and I know attendees will leave with valuable insights they can apply in their organizations. We will also be providing 0.1 CEUs for those who attend.

I would also like to remind everyone about the Winter Clothing Drive being organized by our Emerging Professionals group. Please consider bringing new or gently used winter clothing items to either of our next two chapter meetings. Donations will be collected through December 1. This is a great opportunity for us to support members of our community while demonstrating the servant leadership that makes our chapter so special.

As chapter leaders, we often hear members ask, "What are the benefits of my ASSP Heart of America Chapter membership?" The answer is simple: tremendous value, both professionally and personally.

Your local chapter membership provides:

- Hands-on professional development through local educational sessions and technical workshops.
- Local networking opportunities that connect you with safety professionals in your community for problem-solving, mentoring, and career advancement.
- Community involvement through volunteer initiatives such as our Winter Clothing Drive and other service opportunities.
- Leadership experience through chapter volunteer and board positions that help develop leadership skills and prepare members for broader ASSP leadership roles.
- Affordable access to professional growth through convenient local events and chapter programming that complement the resources available through the national organization.

In short, your local ASSP chapter membership combines the strength of ASSP's national network with meaningful, face-to-face opportunities right here in our community. It is one of the best ways to grow your skills, expand your professional network, and make a positive impact both within the profession and beyond.

Thank you for your continued support of the Heart of America Chapter. If you have questions about volunteer opportunities, committee involvement, or leadership roles within the chapter, please do not hesitate to reach out. We are always looking for passionate members who want to help shape the future of our chapter and student sections.

I look forward to seeing you at Black & Veatch on October 30th.

Stronger Together
FOR A SAFER TOMORROW.

Welcome NEW MEMBERS

GREAT PEOPLE.
STRONGER TOGETHER.



We're excited to welcome our newest members to the Heart of America Chapter! Your involvement strengthens our chapter and helps advance our shared mission of safer workplaces, stronger communities, and a brighter tomorrow.

Will Matthews | **Stephen Bell**

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

REAL PEOPLE. BRIGHTER IMPACT.



"Safer people. Stronger workplaces. Brighter tomorrows."

ASHLIE WALKER-DEFFENBAUGH

Ashlie Walker-Deffenbaugh

EHS MANAGER | TVH PARTS CO.

Where did you go to school?

I earned my Master's in Occupational Health and Safety from Columbia Southern University. Prior to that, I completed my Bachelor's degree in Chemistry with a minor in Mathematics at Southwestern Oklahoma State University.

How long have you been in the safety industry?

8 years.

How long have you been in your current position?

2 years.

What is your current position, and from a safety standpoint, what are your primary responsibilities?

I serve as the EHS Manager for TVH Parts Co., where I oversee EHS operations across the Americas region. My core responsibilities focus on driving regulatory compliance, managing Workers' Compensation, and building a proactive safety culture through strategic communications and leadership training. I also collaborate closely with operational teams to provide EHS consultation for change management and continuous process improvements.

What made you decide to go into safety?

Safety actually found me! I began my career as an R&D chemist until my former CEO asked if I would be interested in expanding my role to oversee Quality & Safety. I decided to take the leap, and I quickly fell in love with the field. Realizing the profound impact safety has on people's daily lives inspired me to pivot my career and pursue advanced education in occupational health and safety.

What are some of your memorable experiences or accoram establishments related to your time in the safety field?

I've been fortunate to build EHS programs from the ground up at each step of my career. A few highlights include:

Navigating Complex Environments: Developing a hybrid Construction/General Industries safety program for a company building buildings inside a building! This unique environment challenged me to integrate the requirements of both regulatory frameworks and find practical solutions that respected the nuances of each.

Building Program Resilience: Co-leading the ISO 45001 certification journey with my amazing boss and mentor. This gave me my first meaningful opportunity to bridge leadership and frontline workers through open, two-way communication and authentic employee consultation.

What are some of your hobbies or favorite activities?

As a new mama of two, my favorite pastime is to play with my kids in the moments with my family. My boys keep me on my toes—whether we're playing with the requirements, reading, or exploring new things together. When we get a moment to unwind, I love camping and spending time on the water, getting outdoors is the perfect way to recharge.

What does your ASSP Membership do for you?

My ASSP membership has been an invaluable asset for networking with peers, continuing my education, and honing my leadership skills. Serving on the executive committee has been especially fulfilling, allowing me to give back and support fellow professionals as they navigate their own paths in the safety field.

CHAPTER NEWS



The Chapter website provides information regarding upcoming events and training held by our Chapter, other ASSP Chapters, ASSP, and from other organizations with safety, health, environmental and risk management topics that may interest you. Please visit the website regularly to view upcoming events that may not be specifically listed in the newsletter.

CHAPTER NEWS

ROC Fall 2026



Thank you, Shelly, for attending the Region V ROC event and representing our Heart of America Chapter! We appreciate your time and commitment to supporting our chapter and its members.

The Heart of America Chapter is part of ASSP Region V (Region 5). The Regional Operating Committee (ROC) brings together chapter and regional leaders to support chapter operations, share best practices, and strengthen professional development opportunities for members.



CHAPTER NEWS

ROC Team Building









CHAPTER NEWS

ROC Team Building











HEART OF AMERICA
EMERGING PROFESSIONALS COMMITTEE 2ND ANNUAL

WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE

This season, let's make a difference by participating in our Winter Clothing Drive. Donate your gently used clothing and help someone stay warm during the cold winter months!

WE ARE ACCEPTING ANY SIZE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- WINTER COATS
- HATS
- GLOVES
- SWEATSHIRTS
- SWEATERS
- SCARVES
- BLANKETS
- BOOTS

DONATIONS WILL BE COLLECTED AT CHAPTER HEART OF AMERICA MEETINGS IN SEPTMEMBER, OCTOBER, & NOVEMBER.

DEADLINE FOR DONATIONS IS DECEMBER 1, 2026

CHAPTER SPONSORS

THANK YOU!

Platinum Sponsors

PROGRESSIVE SAFETY
WORK SAFE — LIKE A PRO

Gold Sponsors

FALLTECH®

US COMPLIANCE

Silver Sponsors

HERZIG ENGINEERING®

JOB OPENINGS

If you or someone that you know in the safety profession are looking for employment, jobs openings are posted on our Chapter website. Please check out our website for recent job postings.

Safety and Occupational Health Specialist

Safety & Health Manager

On-Site Safety Professional

Looking for a Job?

If so, then send your resume to

president@kc.assp.org

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES
MEMBERS

Newsletter
| **Harold Rudd,** STS

Student Section & Scholarships
| **Phil Shoemaker,** CSP, CRIS, CHST

New Member Engagement
| **Mike Combs,** COSS | **Tommy Rebecchi,** PhD, CSP

Vendor Promotions
| **Shelly Higgins,** CSP | **Ashley Parker,** MS, CSP, CRIS

Website Update & Job Postings
| **Dave Hallerud,** ALCM

Social Media & Communications
| **Ashlie Walker-Deffenbaugh,** MS, CSP

Events Coordinator & Catering
| **Mindy Prichard,** MS, CSP

Professional Development Workshops
| **Tom Metzner,** CSP, ARM-P, CFPS | **Mindy Prichard,** MS, CSP

Emerging Professionals Group
| **Jessia Glenn,** MS, CSP | **Anthony Gallagher,** CSP | **Eric Hallerud,** CSP

Election Committee
| **Derek Farmer,** MBA, CSP, CRIS | **Tom Metzner,** CSP, ARM-P, CFPS
| **Mindy Prichard,** MS, CSP