

**Ann Hayes**  
**Retired, Director of University Communications**  
**Southeast Missouri State University**

Ann Hayes retired in July 2020 as the director of University Communications at Southeast Missouri State University after more than 29 years of service. Hayes joined Southeast in March 1991, when she was appointed News Bureau Director. In December 2017, she was promoted to Director of University Communications, joining the Office of the President and serving as a member of Southeast President Carlos Vargas' Executive Staff.

During her time at Southeast, Hayes served five University Presidents, and her work has been vital in assisting the University in showcasing student successes, faculty endeavors, staff and alumni achievements, and the University's history and accomplishments for nearly 30 years. She worked with both local and national media during an unprecedented period of growth in Southeast's history, organizing and managing news conferences and press briefings on many occasions.

In her role, she served as a spokesperson for the University; managed crisis and emergency communications; and was the University's liaison with radio, television, print and online media throughout the University's service region. Hayes served as a member of the University's Emergency Response Team (ERT) under the auspices of the institution's Emergency Operations Center, and she chaired the ERT's Communications Subcommittee since March 2020, directing the University's COVID-19 communications efforts.

In addition, Hayes has been responsible for internal communications, including managing the University's online news hub at [news.semo.edu](https://news.semo.edu), drafting presidential remarks and correspondence, editing and distributing the internal newsletter, the Southeast Newswire, and maintaining the University's Master Calendar. Throughout her career, she also mentored hundreds of students as student employees and graduate assistants.

She has been active in the community, serving as a member of the Cape Girardeau Area Chamber of Commerce, the SEMO Information Officers Association and the Southeast Missouri Press Association Board. She recently completed a term on the St. Vincent de Paul Parish Council and is a former member of the Notre Dame Regional High School Home and School Association.

Hayes holds a Bachelor of Arts with a double major in mass communication and political science and minor in professional writing from St. Mary's College in South Bend, Indiana. She holds a Master of Science in Journalism with an emphasis in newspaper management from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

She previously served as Assistant Account Executive with FleishmanHillard in St. Louis, Missouri; was a Congressional Intern in the Washington, D.C., office of U.S. Sen. Richard Durbin of Illinois; and a Washington, D.C., correspondent for the American Banker through the Medill News Service. As a college student, she served as Assistant News Editor of The Observer, the student newspaper of the University of Notre Dame and St. Mary's College.