

Influential Women Recognizes Angela Shannon Ponder: Turning A Corporate Career Into A Calling In Education And Media

LAVERGNE, TN, UNITED STATES, October 14, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Special Education Interventionist and Case Manager With Rutherford County Schools Draws on Faith, Decades of Business Experience, and a Passion for Advocacy to Empower Students and Communities

Lavergne, Tennessee – Angela Shannon Ponder is an educator, communications strategist, nonprofit leader, and community advocate who serves as a Special Education Interventionist and Case Manager with Rutherford County Schools. In this role, she delivers individualized instruction to students facing challenges in reading and math, while coordinating the services and resources that support their academic and personal growth. Her leadership rests on the belief that everyone deserves to be heard, valued, and empowered. Her specialties include special education, case management, community advocacy, and radio hosting.



Angela came to education after a 28-year corporate career in insurance, operations, information technology, and business transformation. She chose to move into education so that she could make a direct impact on students. That decision followed an unexpected turn in her life. After 28 years as a Business Analyst and Project Manager, her corporate position ended despite a recent exceptional performance review. She applied for more than 120 operations and IT roles without receiving a single callback. During that period, she sensed a repeated call to go teach, a prompting she heard three times before she fully listened.

When she finally stopped applying for corporate roles and applied to become a substitute

teacher, she received a call for an interview within 30 minutes. Less than two months later, she was standing in her first classroom, and by her second week she had decided to pursue teaching full time. She went on to enroll in the teacher certification program with Rutherford County, determined to become a certified educator. Angela has written about this experience in her article *From Career to Calling*, where she describes starting over after the age of 50 as intimidating, yet a step she took in faith. She now calls teaching the most rewarding work she has ever done and sees it as a ministry. Her message to others is that your experience and skills do matter, but when it comes to your purpose, there is no expiration date.

Her background in communications adds another dimension to her work. Angela has experience in public relations, strategic branding, media relations, and community engagement. She has served as a Public Relations Director and Lead Content Developer, and she co-hosts *Simplicity Sunday* on WGNS, where she creates original programming, leads media outreach, and hosts discussions on leadership, faith, education, and community issues. She also co-hosts monthly town hall discussions that connect residents with civic and organizational leaders to encourage collaboration and practical solutions. Her combination of corporate, education, media, and nonprofit experience helps her build strategic partnerships, connect people across industries, and create opportunities that benefit organizations and communities. The analytical skills she built as a Business Analyst and Project Manager also serve her well in the classroom. Case management requires careful planning, clear documentation, and coordination among teachers, specialists, and families, and her years of managing complex projects prepared her to handle that work with confidence. Her communication skills help her explain student needs and progress in ways that families can understand and act on.

Angela earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Middle Tennessee State University. She also holds certifications in Youth Mental Health First Aid and Adult Mental Health First Aid, which support her work with students and families.

She attributes her success to her faith in Jesus Christ and the gifts she believes God has given her, which she says continue to open doors. She also points to her compassion for people in their individual circumstances and her drive to make a meaningful difference. Her faith remains steady and gives her the courage to persevere and pursue her purpose with confidence. The best career advice she has received is to believe in herself. She sees self-doubt as a barrier and confidence as the momentum that makes action possible. She emphasizes trusting one's abilities, staying committed to goals, and working hard, and she reminds others that setbacks are inevitable but perseverance builds resilience.

For young women entering education, Angela encourages them to lead with passion and hold firmly to their purpose. She describes teaching as demanding yet deeply rewarding. She advises them to build strong relationships with students, colleagues, and families, and to see each day as a chance to inspire students and make a lasting difference in their academic success, confidence, and character. She knows that the work can be tiring and that progress with students is not always quick. Yet she has found that patience, consistency, and genuine care allow students to

grow in ways that may not be visible at first but that last well beyond a single school year.

Angela is open about the challenges she has faced. Moving from corporate IT into education while balancing family, career, and community service required determination. She also notes that education continues to change, with new technology, diverse student needs, and shifting expectations. She views that change as an opportunity for growth, innovation, and lifelong learning, and she credits resilience, a positive outlook, and a focus on purpose for helping her move forward.

Her core values are servant leadership, integrity, and a commitment to positive impact. She sees education as one of the most powerful ways to transform lives and strengthen communities. She aims to lead by example and to help others reach their potential through education, encouragement, and service.

Those values are visible in her community work. Angela serves as Secretary of the Board of Directors for the Murfreesboro Rescue Mission, where she provides governance, supports strategic initiatives, and helps advance the mission's work serving people experiencing homelessness and hardship. She was the only woman on that board for more than a year and a half. She also volunteered as a Character Coach with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, mentoring young people in integrity, accountability, character, and leadership. Whether she is mentoring a young athlete, supporting a student in the classroom, or helping guide a nonprofit board, she brings the same commitment to listening, encouraging, and serving with humility.

From the corporate world to the classroom, the studio, and the boardroom, Angela has found ways to serve wherever she is placed. Guided by faith, compassion, and service, Angela Shannon Ponder continues to show that a new calling can begin at any stage of life and that purpose, once found, can change the lives of students and communities alike.

Learn More about Angela Shannon Ponder:

Through her Influential Women profile: <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/angela-ponder>

Influential Women

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