

**For Immediate Release**

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## Media Release

### **St. John's High School Instructor Recognized as Computer Science Teacher of the Year**

*Darwin Shorters selected as national exemplary educator*

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Communications

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Superintendent of Schools

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**Charleston, SC** — A computer science instructor at St. John's High School was recently named the Computer Science Teacher of the Year by a national non-profit. Project Lead the Way (PLTW) selected Darwin Shorters out of more than 100 teachers from across the country to receive their highest honor given to computer science teachers. He was recognized in front of more than 1,800 attendees during the PLTW national summit on Monday.

Mr. Shorters is a PLTW Computer Science Master Teacher and is described as a champion of PLTW who has put his school's program on the map. He is known for his commitment to his students, his devotion to teaching, and his far-reaching leadership. His passion for and knowledge of computer science has had a sprawling impact – from engaging each student in his PLTW classroom, to empowering fellow teachers across his state through his role as a Master Teacher.

"United by the desire to help people learn, achieve, and get the best possible start in life, Mr. Shorters plays a crucial role at St. John's High School and not one day should go by without acknowledging his selfless work," said Andre Dukes, St. John's High School Principal. "We are extremely proud of Mr. Shorters and his commitment to PLTW and St. John's High."

PLTW President and Chief Executive Officer Dr. Vince Bertram and Senior Vice President and Chief Programs Officer Dr. Anne Jones presented the award to Mr. Shorters.

"We are grateful to our teachers for their commitment to inspiring students," said Anne Jones, Chief Program Officer and Senior Vice President for Programs for PLTW. "The PLTW Teachers of the Year are leaders in their classrooms and are inspiring the next generation of innovators."

“He never uses the phrase, “I can’t,” and instead embraces challenges and goes above and beyond for his students - making the impossible, possible, and he “curates energy for PLTW that is unparalleled,” added Andre Dukes.

PLTW recognized Mr. Shorters and four other instructors as PLTW program teachers of the year for their outstanding commitment to empowering students to thrive in our evolving world.

PLTW Computer Science engages students in real-life activities like creating an online art portal or using automation to process and analyze DNA-sequence data. These projects challenge students to think big and illustrate how intricately computer science is woven into our society. As students work together to brainstorm solutions, they test their limits, question what’s possible, and transform into builders of tech, rather than bystanders.

PLTW Summit 2016, held March 20-23 in Indianapolis, is the premier gathering of passionate and committed individuals who work together every day to empower students to develop the knowledge and skills they need to thrive in an evolving world. More than 1,800 attendees — from students to those in the education, government and business sectors — are convening to share strategies for making classroom learning relevant, engaging and hands-on.

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#### **About PLTW**

Project Lead The Way (PLTW) is a nonprofit organization that provides a transformative learning experience for K-12 students and teachers across the U.S. Through pathways in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science, K-12 students learn problem-solving strategies, critical and creative thinking, and how to communicate and collaborate. PLTW empowers students to develop in-demand knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in an evolving world. More than 8,000 elementary, middle, and high schools in all 50 states and the District of Columbia offer PLTW programs. For more information on Project Lead The Way, visit [pltw.org](http://pltw.org).

#### **About the Charleston County School District**

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools that span 1,000 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 86 schools and several specialized programs. With approximately 6,100 employees district-wide, CCSD is the fourth largest employer in the region.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, charter, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), and Montessori schools, and is divided into three Learning Communities led by associate superintendents. Options include specialized programs in science, engineering and mathematics; liberal arts; music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military and other public service enterprises.

#### **About Vision 2016**

Vision 2016 is the next phase of Charleston Achieving Excellence, CCSD’s flagship reform initiative. The five-year plan aims to dramatically improve the achievement of every student in Charleston County and includes three fundamental goals: 1) close the achievement gap, 2) elevate achievement overall and 3) raise the graduation rate. These goals were developed through a series of community engagement meetings in partnership with the CCSD Board of Trustees.

