

Focus ON CCSD

News for, by and about Charleston County School District,
the state of South Carolina's premier school district where *Students are the Heart of Our Work.*

Volume 5 | Edition 5 | May 2022



Nathalie Bennett of Northwoods Middle named 2022 CCSD Teacher of the Year

MEMMINGER'S KORY ROBERTS NAMED RUNNER-UP

Charleston County School District (CCSD) surprised Northwoods Middle School teacher Natalie Bennett with the announcement that she had been chosen as the 2022 CCSD Teacher of the Year.

"I am just truly blown away," said Bennett. "It is such an honor to be recognized by just my staff here and then the district as a whole. There are so many amazing educators that are giving their heart a soul every single day, and I am so honored to represent them and to be here doing what we do every day, giving our heart to our children."

Bennett is a sixth grade math teacher at Northwoods Middle School and has been an educator for 13 years, holding various positions in North and South Carolina. She holds a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and a minor in Biology from Wake Forest University.

What sets Bennett apart from her colleagues is her commitment to creating a welcoming environment where her students feel safe to learn and grow. Accomplishing this means participating in activities and organizations inside and outside of the classroom.

"I am so excited for Ms. Bennett," said Principal Keturah Gadson. "I am so fortunate to have her as a teacher at Northwoods Middle School. Each day, Ms. Bennett strives to transform students' lives by being the teacher who motivates scholars to unleash their highest potential."

Her professional memberships include Girl Scouts of the United States of America and Girls Scouts of Eastern South Carolina (volunteer).

Bennett's participation in school activities is extensive. She served as a School Improvement Council committee member while teaching at W.B. Goodwin Elementary and Pinehurst Elementary Schools; she was a member of either the PTO/PTA at all of the schools she taught in; was the Grade Chair of Goodwin, and is now in that role at Northwoods. Throughout her career, Bennett has served as a Professional Development leader on various topics.

Bennett's recognitions are numerous and include being named a "Tireless Teacher" at Northwoods, a Personalized Learning Leader Cohort, Teacher of the Year nominee at Pinehurst, SC Science P.L.U.S. Institute participant, and a Wake Forest University 2005 Hall Award Winner (presented for excellence in student teaching to one graduating elementary teacher each year).

"What I am most passionate about is twofold: retaining teachers and helping students reach their full potential," said Bennett.

Bennett hopes to use this platform to emphasize the importance of teacher retention, especially in Title 1 schools.

"Ms. Bennett is an inspiration to all who work with her and her devotion to the profession and Northwoods Middle School has few rivals," said Gadson. "We all know that teaching is a tough job, but Ms. Bennett's commitment to using her skills and relationship with scholars to be a difference in their lives is unwavering. Her gracefulness and genuine interest in doing what is best for her students, colleagues, and the community we serve are demonstrated in all that she does."

Gadson added that being named Charleston County School District's Teacher of the Year highlights Bennett and her amazing work, but said that Bennett freely acknowledges this opportunity and honor isn't just about her.

"She recognizes that there are many who serve with her to support our scholars and they all deserve a voice and praise," said Gadson. "That perspective is what lets us know she is the perfect representative for our district's teacher of the year."



"I am so excited for Ms. Bennett. I am so fortunate to have her as a teacher at Northwoods Middle School. Each day, Ms. Bennett strives to transform students' lives by being the teacher who motivates scholars to unleash their highest potential."

KETURAH GADSON, Northwoods Middle School principal



Kory Roberts

Roberts teaches fifth grade and is a third-year teacher. He graduated from College of Charleston in 2019 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education. Additionally, Roberts was part of the "Call Me Mister" program and is a Boys With a Purpose Advocate.



Teacher of the Year Banquet

On May 10, 2022, Charleston County School District staff honored the 2020 and 2021 school Teachers of the Year with a banquet at the Charleston Gaillard Center. The 2020 CCSD Teacher of the Year, Lakevia Mills of St. John's High School, and 2021 CCSD Teacher of the Year, Adam "A.J." Barnes of West Ashley High School, addressed the room and delivered heartfelt speeches.

The crowd also watched videos celebrating the Top Five Finalists from each of the past two school years and listened to remarks from district leaders like CCSD Board of Trustees Chair Rev. Dr. Eric Mack and Interim Superintendent of Schools Don Kennedy.

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First Men of CHS Teach candidates now in CCSD classrooms



JA'QUAN EVANS
EB Ellington Elementary



KEON STEPHENS-MILEY
North Charleston Elementary



LAMAR NELSON
North Charleston Elementary



MICHAEL FORD
W.B. Goodwin Elementary

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is committed to building a diverse teacher workforce as part of its mission to prepare all students to be global citizens. High-retention alternative teaching pathways have been created as a means of attracting diverse teacher candidates. Among them is the first-year program, Men of Charleston (CHS) Teach.

CCSD's Division of Human Resources launched Men of CHS Teach in January to recruit male teachers of color for teaching positions in early childhood and elementary education. Recently, CCSD partnered with the University of South Carolina to provide support via the Carolina Collaborative for Alternative Preparation program. That partnership has been the springboard for CCSD's Men of CHS Teach.

Ja'Quan Evans is among the first candidates recruited for this program. He graduated from Benedict College in December with a degree in Psychology. However, he learned about CCSD's Men of CHS Teach at a career fair at his school. Apprehensive about a future career with a degree in Psychology, Evans said he saw the program as an opportunity - both for a productive, rewarding career and as a way to give back. He noted he didn't have a Black male teacher until he went to college.

After graduating from college, Evans entered Men of CHS Teach in January and started teaching kindergarten at E.B. Ellington Elementary School. He finds the program expeditious and supportive. The Blythwood native is taking education courses online at the University of South Carolina while being mentored by experienced black male teachers in the Charleston area.

"I was a little hesitant at first," Evans said. "However, I love seeing the children's excitement. I'm blessed and thankful for this opportunity and recommend the program to anyone who has a passion for teaching."

The importance of Men of CHS Teach

The number of individuals entering the teaching profession continues to dwindle nationwide, said April Butler, CCSD's Human Resources Department's Director of Pathways to Teaching.

Nearly half of CCSD's approximately 49,000 students are people of color. However, only four percent of the district's 3,600 certified educators are men of color; most of them teach at the middle or high school level.

Eric Stallings, a Pathways to Teaching support staff member, knows the importance of minority males in classrooms.

"I didn't see people who looked like me teaching in classrooms," said Stallings. "That motivated me to pursue a degree in education and become a teacher."

Stallings graduated from the College of Charleston and eventually taught English at Baptist Hill Middle High School. In fact, he was a CCSD Teacher of the Year finalist in 2017. Now he works at the district level, trying to recruit and support teachers.

Men of CHS Teach offer incentives to augment that kind of motivation and success. Candidates start the program as co-teachers with the benefit of earning full teachers' salaries. Butler emphasized that graduates with a Bachelor's Degree in any major and expectant graduates are also eligible to participate in the program. The program is also looking for men of color who perhaps may want to change careers.

Butler wants to connect with as many candidates as possible. The program is reaching out to churches, barbershops, shopping malls, and fraternities and sororities in addition to traditional venues such as college campuses and through newspapers and media outlets to identify candidates. Five candidates have already been recruited. Butler hopes to recruit 15 more by August.

State recognition

CCSD's Pathways to Teaching team was invited by the University of South Carolina (UofSC) to a Residency Exploration meeting on March 24-25, 2022. The invitation gave the team an opportunity to meet with partners from UofSC and Voorhees, representatives from state agencies such as the Commission for Higher Education, as well as human resources personnel from districts across the state. The time was centered around the work of alternative certification programs and residencies.

CCSD was commended for the innovative and intentional development of certification pathways (ie. Men of CHS Teach, Classified to Certified, etc) that provide increased opportunities which address the teacher shortage and diversity of its certified teaching staff.

"Teacher residencies like Men of CHS Teach offer one of the best district human capital investments imaginable," said Karen DeMoss, Executive Director of Prepared to Teach. "The profound impact that Men of CHS Teach will have on the district by virtue of their status as teachers who look like the students they serve will be immeasurable, including long-term educational outcomes for the district's students succeeding in high school and attending college."

Financial benefits

Despite proclaimed low teacher salaries in South Carolina, starting pay for CCSD teachers with a Bachelor's Degree is about \$41,000 annually paid across 12 months - including unobligated summer breaks.

Teacher salaries increase with years of experience and advanced degrees obtained. Also, teachers are paid for doing other jobs in addition to teaching. The average CCSD teacher earns about \$60,000 annually. And as state employees, CCSD teachers receive significant benefits as well.

As the state's second-largest school district, opportunities abound for CCSD teachers, Butler said. For men of color looking for a great career, looking to change careers, or looking to change a child's life, CCSD's Men of CHS Teach represents vast opportunities.

Having two committed educators during the initial year in the classroom helps bridge learning opportunity gaps that COVID-19 exacerbated, improving student outcomes. Graduates of Men of CHS Teach will be prepared to accelerate student learning, which saves the district remediation costs and sets the youth of Charleston up for success. The training will also help the candidates avoid some of the first-year challenges many young teachers face, increasing retention and potentially saving the district roughly \$20,000 in turnover costs for each Men of CHS Teach graduate.

CCSD Nutrition Services celebrates School Lunch Hero Day

Nutrition Services team members are an essential component of Charleston County School District (CCSD). They demonstrate sincere dedication to ensuring that students receive high-quality, delicious meals every day, including Friday, May 6, 2022, which was the School Nutrition Association's School Lunch Hero Day.

CCSD Nutrition Services leaders point to the team of employees that work at Springfield Elementary and the Montessori Community School as an example of dedication and "school lunch heroes." Manager Carolyn Chisolm-Jones, along with Food Service Operators Rowena Isidro, Francine Engrew, Roberta Wells, Sharon McClenney, and Tiella Gates, work diligently to provide breakfast, lunch, snacks, and supper to approximately 630 students.

Like many of the district's Nutrition Services team members in other schools, the Springfield/Montessori Community team has continued to work through the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"From vendor shortages of food and supplies to challenges with staffing, this team has remained committed to being 'School Lunch Heroes' for the students they serve," said Walter Campbell, CCSD's Executive Director of Nutrition Services. "Ms. Jones and her team have dealt with illnesses among their co-workers and their families, but that hasn't stopped them from coming to work and providing service with a smile each day."

Jones also led her team through a successful routine audit of their program from the South Carolina Department of Education and scored 100 on their DHEC Inspections. The team at Springfield routinely decorates their serving line for various occasions and ensures that students are exposed to unique foods during holiday seasons throughout the school year. These activities result in students at Springfield Elementary and Montessori Community School receiving a quality dining experience.

"Thank you, Ms. Jones, Ms. Isidro, Ms. Engrew, Ms. Wells, Ms. McClenney, Ms. Gates, and all of our Nutrition Services team members in CCSD for all you do to serve our students," added Campbell. "You are our 'School Lunch Heroes' and an important part of our school families."



DEDICATION CEREMONY HELD TO UNVEIL ATTAWAY-HEINSOHN POCKET PARK



Park unveiling ceremony



Attaway-Heinsohn Park dedication

Charleston County School District (CCSD) held a dedication ceremony April 21, 2022 to commemorate the iconic stadium that once stood where Cooper River Center for Advanced Studies (CRCAS) is located. The stadium was named after Hubert Attaway and Alvin Heinsohn who were both public servants and active members of the North Charleston community.

Attaway was appointed the first Chairman of the Public Service Commission in North Charleston by the governor of South Carolina. The commission was the prime governing body for services in the community before the City of North Charleston.

Heinsohn was the Chairman of the Cooper River Parks and Recreation Commission which was also the predecessor of services now provided by the City of North Charleston.

The CRCAS is a state-of-the-art facility that offers students of North Charleston high schools an opportunity in career clusters including building construction, manufacturing, transportation, distribution and logistics, health science, media technology, information technology, and cybersecurity/pre engineering.

The facility has been designed to adapt to the changing

industry and business needs gives students college and career ready opportunities through this century. This project is part of the \$930 million school district infrastructure investment in North Charleston schools which represents more than 35 percent of CCSD's capital construction and maintenance investment across the district.

As part of that CCSD officials wanted to honor Attaway and Heinsohn with a street-facing pocket park that will remind students, staff, and community members of their legacy.

CCSD provides opportunities with expos



School & Community Expo

The Office of Family and Community Engagement, Sanders-Clyde Elementary, Simmons- Pinckney Middle, and Burke High School held a “School & Community Expo” on Saturday, April 23.

The purpose of the event was to provide parents and students an opportunity to learn about the schools, district departments, and community partners that can help support each family's needs.

Thank you to all the families who joined us; we can't wait to see you again soon!

Pepperhill Elementary Expo

Pepperhill Elementary School hosted a community expo for students, families, and the community.



The Air Show & STEM Expo

Over 700 CCSD students and educators participated in the Air Show & STEM Expo hosted by Joint Base Charleston.

While some students attended as spectators, other students were part of the show!

Students from Military Magnet Academy and West Ashley CAS provided interactive robotics demonstrations, horticulture students from East Cooper CAS asked STEM questions for plant prizes, and leaders from the Liberty Hill STEM Initiative offered hands-on science activities.

SCHOOLS THAT PARTICIPATED INCLUDE:

A.C. Corcoran Elementary School, Academic Magnet High School, C.E. Williams Middle School, Deer Park Middle School, East Cooper Center for Advanced Studies, James Island Charter High School, Laing Middle School, Military Magnet Academy, North Charleston High School, St. James-Santee Elementary-Middle School, Stiles Point Elementary School, West Ashley Center for Advanced Studies, and Jerry Zucker Middle School.

The event offered a rich experience packed with exciting demonstrations on the ground and in the air above! Special thanks to the leadership at Joint Base Charleston for the opportunity for students from throughout the region to attend!

Wando boys back on top of the state in lacrosse

Wando High School's boys' lacrosse team dominated Nation Ford in the South Carolina High School AAAAA state finals, 21-9, on April 30, 2022, in Irmo. The Warriors (14-3) scored eight unanswered goals in the second half to pull away and win their first state championship since 2018; it is their seventh state title in program history.

Sam Goss led the way with six goals for Wando, and Bryce Scharling added four goals.



2022 Varsity Roster

Connor Neal
Ian Peck
Bronson Fabrizio
Nico Boccabella
Luke Moore
Luke Tilden

Chris McTavish
Nickolas Cladakis
Max Truman
Caleb Spanos
Nathan Cooper
Garrett Mayer
Kieran Maurer
Dylan Boyce

John Buchman
Parker Kline
Caden Schier
Jameson Lowe
Sam Goss
Stephen Coker
Sean Carroll
Jack Parkin

Connor Caretta
Rashawn Joseph
Lucas Green
Bryce Scharling
Connor Maurer
Hudson McConnell
Sheridan Bittenger
Kai Correia

Rhett Hartnett
Peter Foulke
Carson Mallin
Connor Kraemer
Roy Knight
Dominick Polesovsky

Head coach: Lance Renes



WANDO GIRLS CAPTURE FIRST STATE TITLE IN LACROSSE IN OVER A DECADE

The Wando High School girls' lacrosse program finally broke through at the South Carolina High School League AAAAA level and won the state championship by edging Riverside, 10-9, in the title game on April 30, 2022, at Irmo. Kelsey Bennett scored the game-winning goal with 2:28 left in the game; it was her 70th goal of the season.

This is the Warriors' first state title since 2011 (first in AAAAA), and the second overall in program history.

Wando finished the season with a 17-1 record.

2022 Varsity Roster

Cassie Frye
Ryann Noonan
Bates Collar
Brooke Kaping

Maggie Parkin
Taylor Hamilton
Lauren Hamblin
Marin Fuller
Kayla Butler
Kelsey Bennett

Chloe Simmons
Delaney Harrison
Emerson Staples
Bridgette Prichard
Kate Maloney
Sophia Berg

Maddie Wood
Chrissy Mallon
Callie Powell
Katie Fasanaro
Ava deLyra

Head coach: Ed Reckdenwald

Assistant coaches: Bryan Wood, Hailey Morris, Sophie Moore, Chelsea Reckdenwald, and Jessie Bunting

Lucy Beckham boys' lacrosse makes history with state championship

Lucy Beckham (18-1) captured the South Carolina High School League AAAAA boys' lacrosse state title with a 10-8 victory over Christ Church in the finals on April 30, 2022, in Irmo. In just their second year of existence, the Bengals have a state championship.

Ryan McCarthy led the way for the Bengals with three goals.

This is the first boys' team title in any sport in school history.



2022 Varsity Roster

Cullen Turner
Grant Bushey
Garrett Coombs
Austin Constable

Grant Gallo
George McLaughlin
Bear Hankins
Ryan McCarthy
Ellis Keith
Connor Coombs
Bryce Rothwell

Niko Fokas
Web Perry
Evan Johnson
Chalmers Ballard
Davis Evans
Henry Brosey
Charlie Broucsault

Pete King
Cole Rountree
Chad Weis
Ryan Weis
Austin Walton
Wyatt Atkins
Flynn Wilson

Jonah Mack
Luke Barrett
Sam Lucas
Watson McCloud
Jake Leland
Will Hagberg

Head Coach: Parker Ferrigan

Assistant Coaches: Barney Ehrmann, J.J. Jefferies, Jamie Piluso, and Vince Fredericks



Camp Road Middle School Cougar Band wins award

The Camp Road Middle School Cougar Band won the Outstanding Performance Award this year. The Outstanding Performance Award is the highest achievement for band programs in South Carolina. To earn this award, you must have demonstrated a high level of proficiency in all areas of your program. Points are earned through success in Region and All-State Band, Concert Performance Assessment, and Solo and Ensemble.

Special Olympics at Carolina Park Elementary

A Unified Special Olympics was held at Carolina Park Elementary School Friday, April 22, 2022. Thirty students were paired with a buddy and cheered on by the entire school as they marched to the event field.

Olympians were joined by their peers from Mount Pleasant Academy in competed in various activities before being treated to a pizza lunch from Migliori's Pizzeria, followed by an awards ceremony.



Student photographers capture the excitement of learning at CPA



Student photographer
Kylie Sanders

CPA
photography team

Student photographer
Jerimiah Williams

Charleston Progressive Academy (CPA) is a Leader In Me School in which students are taught and encouraged to take ownership and leadership in all things. The ideology fosters responsibility and that starts at the top.

Valerie Muhammad is the technology teacher and tech liaison at CPA. She also handles the school's social media and publicity. As an elementary teacher, it is often hard to juggle classes and additional assignments. Muhammad realized that student photographers could be an essential component to fully capturing the essence of the school community and sharing that with the public.

So this year, Muhammad created and implemented the student photographer program at CPA. Four students were selected from dozens who applied through a real interview process. Students had to obtain recommendations, complete a sit-down interview, and describe why they would be a great fit for the job.

The students range in age from first to fifth grade and boast various degrees of experience in videography and photography. This four-person team captures moments around the school, such as special events, performances, and more. Those images and videos are then shared internally and externally as a way to showcase all the good things going on at CPA.

In return for their commitment to the photography program, students are treated to training sessions throughout the year that go beyond the basics of "point and shoot."

"Good news spreads when you're easily able to share it," said Muhammad. "These captured moments are shared in conversations throughout the school community. Students see themselves in the images and become excited. When the team is on assignment, students are eager to have their picture taken and others are interested in a chance to join the photography team."

This year's team consists of a young man who owns his own camera and is often called upon by his church and community to photograph various events. Jerimiah Williams is in fourth grade and his dream is

to go into law enforcement and become a crime scene photographer.

"I see this opportunity as a way to begin my training," said Williams. "I am learning to use various angles. I am also learning technical and professional skills I didn't know before. I have my own camera set at home and I love holding my camera and taking pictures. It's fun to get to do it at school, too."

Fourth grader London Burnette is on the team as well.

"I love taking pictures of my family," said Burnette. "I look for interesting angles and I like learning about lighting and textures."

Muhammad said the program provides a real-world experience for the team members. They all have a press badge that indicates they are CPA photographers on official business. They are allowed to go from assignment to assignment and must formally introduce themselves to teachers and staff and ask permission to shoot, before going about their work.

"In addition to photography, this has taught them formal manners and public speaking skills that are essential in most situations," added Muhammad. "They know to be respectful at all times. When choosing the team members I had to consider students who could move independently throughout the school. It's a lesson in leadership – leaders are leaders wherever they are, even if no one is watching."

Picture-perfect moments pop up when you least expect them, so Muhammad allows the photography team to have their iPads with them at all times. When the students have captured special moments, she downloads them and posts them to social media, and the school website, and shares them on their school's internal television system.

"It is important to me to capture the good things going on at school so we can show that the students are well and good here," said Williams.

For the photography team program to be successful, it must be a collaborative effort, Muhammad explained. She communicates with the homeroom teachers of each team member so that they know when a student may be out on an assignment.

"Students may miss lessons so they must be willing to work ahead or take home extra homework," said Muhammad. "Everyone on our team is willing to make that sacrifice."

"It is sometimes a sacrifice," said Burnette. "I love schoolwork, so I don't mind."

Both Burnette and Williams agree that the opportunity has also allowed them to get to know so many more people in the school building.

"The younger students look up to us and we set a good example for them to follow," said Williams.

"Also, I take great pride in seeing the kids smile when I show them their picture," said Burnette. "The parents smile too because they are proud of their kids."

Muhammad hopes to expand the program so that she can purchase new and advanced equipment and bring on more team members.

Just this week, Muhammad received a digital camera for students to use, thanks to a generous donation from a local resident on DonorsChoose.org

The DonorsChoose.org request was posted for Muhammad by a College of Charleston senior who's doing a grant internship with CCSD.

"We have the opportunity to grow this program into something bigger," said Muhammad. "It could serve as a feeder program for students wanting to join the yearbook or newspaper staff in middle school and high school. There is plenty of potential here for our scholars."

"As a Leader in Me Lighthouse School, we are giving our students lifelong skills by teaching them how to fish now," said Principal Wanda Sheats. "An African Proverb said, 'What you help a child to love can be more important than what you help him to learn.' We are exposing our students to real-world jobs that they enjoy and as a result, motivating them to learn."



Journalism Court House

friends and classmates.

Additionally, middle school journalism students toured the Charleston County Municipal Court House and were able to interview Judge Susan Herdina and other staff members of the court.

Seventh grader Layla Jeffcoat is writing a piece on the Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson and wanted to know more about what a local court system and structure looked like. All of the students were able to ask thought provoking questions and have the opportunity to learn more about a day in the life of a judge or court worker.

These real-world experiences are examples of the adolescent Montessori curriculum.

"Experiential learning has always been a cornerstone of our program", said Jennifer Savage, James Simons literacy coach.

"Students extending their learning outside of the classroom and making real-life connections to what they are learning is an invaluable experience and an integral part of their growth and development as future problem solvers," added media specialist and STEAM coach Rosie Herold. "We are all very proud of the work that our adolescents are doing and of the willingness of these outside organizations and individuals to support educating our future leaders."

Find your brave: A journey of middle school journalists

What does a South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) agent, SPOT - the Boston Dynamics Biomimicry Robot Dog, and a municipal court judge have in common? This is not the opening line of a joke. Instead, it is a way to highlight the interesting work that James Simons Montessori School students are doing in their weekly journalism mini course.

This semester, journalism students at James Simons have been exploring topics that interest them and reporting on local news.

Seventh grader Lamar Heyward, who is interested in a future career in law enforcement, invited senior SLED agent Richard Johnson to his school to conduct an interview. Heyward was able to model for his classmates the practice of asking open ended questions that he then turned into an article for their school's Lit Zine, their literary magazine. JSMS Lit Zine uses the hashtag #findyourbrave as journalists uncover their voices and find the courage to ask questions that interest them.

As the popularity of the middle school journalism class and Lit Zine grew, students were invited to a College of Charleston event, SPOT on the Bricks, where students had the opportunity to observe technological advances in biomimicry and ask pertinent questions. SPOT is the creation of Boston Dynamics and is an agile, mobile robot which was designed with biomimicry to mirror the actions of a typical domestic dog. Students had a front row seat to this phenomenon and were able to report their experience to their



SLED SRO Journalism

Parker's makes donation

Parker's – a nationally acclaimed convenience store company and food service leader that's currently featured on the Inc. 5000 list of the fastest-growing private companies in America – recently donated \$4,000 to the Charleston County School District as part of the company's Fueling the Community program. Charleston County School District Interim Superintendent Donald Kennedy accepted the unrestricted donation on behalf of area teachers and students at a check presentation at the Memminger School of Global Studies in Charleston, S.C. on April 19.

The Fueling the Community program at Parker's is a longstanding charitable initiative that donates a portion of every gallon of gas sold on the first Wednesday of each month to area schools in coastal Georgia and South Carolina. Parker's is donating approximately \$275,000 to public and private schools in Georgia and South Carolina this spring and has given more than \$1.8 million to area schools since the inception of the Fueling the Community program in 2011.



Parker's Founder and CEO Greg Parker, left, and Parker's Community Outreach Manager Olivia Parker, center, recently presented a \$4,000 Parker's Fueling the Community donation to the Charleston County School District. Charleston County School District Interim Superintendent of Schools Donald Kennedy, right, accepted the donation with support from Memminger Elementary School on April 19.

CCSD schools celebrate Week of the Young Child

JAMES ISLAND ELEMENTARY



LAUREL HILL PRIMARY





Laing visits Jennie Moore

Fifth Grade students at Jennie Moore Elementary School were treated to a performance by the Laing Middle School Jazz Band who played popular songs that they all enjoyed. Many of these fifth graders look forward to joining the Laing Band when they get into sixth grade.

MARY FORD HOSTING FATHERHOOD MEETINGS

Mary Ford Early Learning and Family Center hosted its third fatherhood initiative meeting of the school year on March 31, 2022. School staff members gathered a group of 13 fathers who are dynamic male role models in the community. They discussed academics and encouraged fathers in attendance to be present in the lives of their young children.

Mary Ford ELFC would like to thank Eduardo Curry for leading the Men of Mary Ford and accepting the challenge to build the school's Fatherhood Program.

Special Guest Speakers for the event included:

- Mr. Dennis Muhammad, *CCSD Director of Family and Community Engagement*
- Mr. Ronald Smith, *Positive Vibes Ronjanae Smith, Inc.*
- Mr. Sean Wilson & Mr. Daniel Laurie, *Father to Father, Inc.*
- Mr. Jabbar Perry, Sr., *Father to Father Success Story*
- Attorney Eduardo Curry, Esq., *Curry Law Firm*
- Mr. Jerome J. Wright, *Gothic 212 Lodge*



Mary Ford Fatherhood Meeting



Charles Pinckney Elementary wins 12th chess state championship

When extracurricular activities shut down across the state due to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, Charles Pinckney Elementary School's Chess Team got creative. They used a combination of Zoom and the website ChessKid to continue delivering weekly lessons to students remotely. The perseverance paid off on April 2, 2022, as 15 Pinckney students traveled to Greenville to play in the South Carolina State Scholastic Chess Championships.

"I was very nervous," said team organizer and Pinckney Gifted and Talented teacher, E.C. Setser. "Only four of our students had ever played an in-person chess tournament before Saturday."

Despite the lack of experience, Pinckney Elementary won the state championship in the K-5 Division, giving the Pirates 12 state titles overall in this competition. Additionally, the school's K-3 team brought home with the runner-up trophy. Pinckney now has eight titles in the K-5 Division to go along with four championships at the K-3 level, all since 2010.

"I am so proud of the performance by all of the students," said Coach Stuart Chagrin. "It was great for the kids to be able to play in person and enjoy the comradery of other chess kids across the state. They exceeded all of my expectations."

A total of 155 students in four divisions, K-3, K-5, K-8, and K-12, participated in the event sponsored by the Greenville Chess Club on April 2, 2022.

Fifth grader Aaron Wang led the way for Pinckney. He finished in sixth place overall in the K-5 division with three wins, one draw, and on loss. Wang started learning the game in December 2020 when he joined the school chess team. Fifth graders Ben Piazza and Beau Stamos finished in a tie for ninth place.

In the K-3 Division, third grader Finley Martin finished eighth with a 3-2 record on the day.

The rest of the team includes Anton Oltmann, Parker Leong, Silas Dewey, Graeme Kearny, Declan Flannery, Owen Patterson, Merrek Sandvig, Tyler Bobbit, Amelia Wallace, Nico Stamos, and Carter Piazza.

Coach Chagrin serves on the United States Chess Trust Board, and is the former President of the Marshall Chess Club. Setser has been the Pinckney Chess Team's sponsor since 2010.

"It was inspiring to watch kids fiercely compete at the boards, shake hands, and then become great friends," added Setser. "It was great to see high school kids create games of tag or variations of soccer and invite all the elementary kids to play between rounds. These kids have missed so much in the past two years, and it was great to see chess bring them together again."



Wando Chorus on stage in the performance hall



Wando Chorus students at outdoor awards ceremony. Senior Choir Officers Anna Scott Nuttall and Joseph Wiggins holding the awards.

Wando’s chorus wins the gold at national event

Wando High School’s chorus recently won the gold in a AAAA National Choral Competition in Orlando, FL. The Choir earned a Superior Rating for their performance and received the Best in Class Award for SATB (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Base) Choir. The Choir earned 299 points out of 300 possible points from the judges for their performance.

“I am incredibly proud of our Wando chorus students,” said Eric Wilkinson. “They worked hard to prepare for our Orlando festival performance and competition. This was a tremendous accomplishment considering all that we have been through in the past two years with the COVID-19 pandemic. This first place finish in a national competition is a testament to our dedicated students and their phenomenal music making skills.”

Festival Disney gives middle and high school concert choirs, orchestras, and concert bands the chance to compete with other schools from across the country.

Specially selected, nationally recognized adjudicators provide detailed, positive feedback to all ensembles through written and recorded comments as well as personalized feedback clinics following concert performances.

Wando’s chorus had 91 students travel to Orlando to compete in the Festival Performance. Students performed three selections for the judges: “Lift Your Voice and Rejoice” by Victor Johnson; “Imbakwa” by Jim Popoulis; and “Jambo” arranged by Jacob Narverud. Wando Senior Emma Ridenhour was a featured soloist on “Imbakwa.”

Additionally, Wando’s chorus has already held regular auditions for next school year, but will offer a make-up audition day on April 6, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. for any student that missed the March auditions. For more information please visit www.wandochorus.com.

Creativity on display at Stono Park Elementary



Mrs. Powell, Art Teacher



Stono Park Art Gallery

On May 3, 2022, Stono Park Elementary held a “Watch Our Creativity Grow” Art Show impressing fellow students, parents and community members. Mrs. Powell, the art teacher transformed the multipurpose room into a beautiful art gallery filled with student’s CD-5th grade art projects from the school year. 1st grade students were inspired by many different mosaic artists to create their own large paper mosaic mural. Students first learned about texture creating their painted paper tiles then worked collaboratively to put together this artwork. Stono Park scholars school wide created clay projects displaying what they learned about form, 3D shapes and textures. Scholars were excited to see how the glaze has a heat reaction when fired in the kiln and changes colors. The self portraits were remarkable depictions of their self image. The beautiful art work was framed for purchase to fundraise for the Stono Park arts program.

WATER MISSION WORKING WITH SANDERS-CLYDE

Thanks to Water Mission, students at Sanders-Clyde Elementary School have participated in events this spring to raise awareness about the global water crisis. For example, on March 26, 2022, Sanders-Clyde students, teachers, and staff members participated in Water Mission’s Walk for Water.

Earlier this month (April), Water Mission volunteers visited the school’s Engineering Club and presented the students with a challenge. Scholars had to design their water filters with materials (varying sizes of pebbles, sand, charcoal, etc.) to transform dirty water with debris into cleaner, clearer water. They worked in teams to design their water filters and had the opportunity for multiple trials if they were not happy with the first attempt.



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Focus ON CCSD

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