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Media Release



Mev McIntosh named Top 5 Finalist for CCSD Teacher of the Year

Charleston, SC – Mev McIntosh grew up in a traditional Indian culture where adults and children alike are dutiful in practicing their Muslim religion and adhering to customs. Children are expected to strive for careers in the field of medicine, law or engineering. McIntosh indeed wanted to serve others in a career such as those, but her true calling led her to become an educator.

“My high school English teacher inspired me to become a teacher,” said McIntosh. “I joined the Jr. Civitans Club as a shy freshman and eventually became the president in my senior year. This service club allowed me the opportunity to volunteer and implement projects to help our school and community. When we visited a nursing home to provide Halloween treats and play BINGO with the residents, the feeling I had when I walked away from that experience resonated with me.”

Her father had other plans. He often took her to the library to pour over medical books. It was his way of providing year-round learning, McIntosh explained.

McIntosh's English teacher continued to inspire her and encouraged her to become a teacher cadet. That experience sealed the deal.

"My English teacher brought learning to life," said McIntosh. "She had her students role play and become the characters. She sincerely engaged us as students and it was evident she truly enjoyed it. All of this took place during my formative years and her talent and dedication to her students showed me that this could be a viable profession."

McIntosh enrolled at the College of Charleston as an English major with a minor in secondary education.

During those years, McIntosh worked a part-time job at Blossom Café in downtown Charleston where she met Matt McIntosh who is now her husband.

"It was a tricky balance during my childhood and early adulthood to adhere to Indian customs but live the American lifestyle," said McIntosh. It was a tricky balance to fit in with my American friends and to be accepted by the Muslim community. My family was initially shocked that I fell in love with an American, much less a chef and not a doctor, engineer or lawyer."

Over time her family came to love Matt and they share a special bond.

Journey to teaching

What McIntosh enjoys the most about teaching is the collaboration – whether it be between her colleagues or her students. She has a great appreciation for the veteran teachers that mentored her along the way. McIntosh completed her student teaching at Goose Creek High School. She was hired for a brief stint at Berkeley High School but soon returned to Goose Creek where she taught for 12 years.

"A lot of veteran teachers there showed me the ropes and provided me support," said McIntosh. "I am still in touch with them for guidance."

After receiving a Masters in Secondary Administration, McIntosh became a teacher evaluator in Berkeley County.

"After six years I wanted to get back to the kids and back in the classroom," said McIntosh. "I knew the challenges I would face at North Charleston High School (NCHS), but it's where I knew I could make a difference."

Just as she predicted, the students sized her up. But she understood why.

"So many of our students have had adults turn their back on them," said McIntosh. "Now some of the most challenging kids come back and visit me and check on me. I don't blame them for some of their mistrust. Instead, I worked hard to earn mutual respect."

McIntosh said she knew she wanted to work at NCHS so she attended a recruitment fair to introduce herself to Principal Darby.

"We had a small connection in that my uncle taught him at Morris College," said McIntosh. "When I expressed my interest, he was very honest with me and prepared me some for what I would ultimately face."

"Mrs. McIntosh tirelessly collaborates with fellow-teachers and administrators to objectively analyze and creatively appraise data-driven educational programs which enhances student achievement; she is cross-content driven by collaborating and including ESOL students and teachers to instruct her English classes, and she works arduously and closely with the administration on a regular base to be proactive of educational problems which may prohibit the learning environment," said Principal Henry Darby. "Her greatest contributions to the profession, however, is her continued desire to learn by attending professional development training as well as volunteering and implementing professional development training."

What McIntosh enjoys the most about teaching is watching the success of the students.

"When a student sees a door open and takes those opportunities, that's what makes it all worth it," said McIntosh. "Watching them grow academically and see them become successful in accomplishing their goals and aspirations is just amazing."

McIntosh truly believes that teaching is not just a job, but a commitment.

"It is a conviction," said McIntosh. "If you love it, you can never really turn it off. The relationships you build with your colleagues, peers, and students is unlike any other I have experienced in my life."

McIntosh is a strong teacher advocate and has served on or organized various educational trainings. She is in leadership with S.C. For Ed. to strengthen and continue the relationships built with lawmakers.

"It is important to me as an educator to be able to continue to put the good kind of pressure on lawmakers," said McIntosh. "More people need to wake up to the fact that if they don't get involved in the legislative process, they can't complain. We all need to be part of the change."

"She contributes to students by having altruistic concerns, using various and varied instructional methodologies, for all students to learn with her deep and abiding

faith that education transforms learners into productive citizens," said Darby. "She contributes to the community by keeping stakeholders abreast of local educational decisions and trends by attending board meetings and civic sessions within the community."

At NCHS there is a lot of passion for teaching, McIntosh explained.

"I am always impressed with how much teachers here do and sacrifice for our kids," said McIntosh. "From donations from their own pockets to home visits, to staying after school...the teachers here are a never-ending resource for these students. The seasoned teachers here are not going anywhere because they love these kids so much, just as I do."

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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 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. 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.