

For Immediate Release
December 10, 2021

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Media Release

Pulse of CCSD – The first face you see at WA CAS is one of kindness and love

Charleston, SC – When a principal like Dale Metzger receives an unsolicited compliment about one of his staff members, he takes notice. He also beams with pride. Such was the case when Metzger, principal at West Ashley Center for Advanced Studies (WACAS), received an email from a student acknowledging the positive atmosphere that receptionist Brittany Godfrey has created in the school's front office.

According to that student, Brooklynn Daniel, Godfrey is always so happy to be there and always brings a positive attitude into work, whether she is having a good or bad day.

"I truly believe she is the perfect fit for this school and that she is a wonderful role model to all of the students attending WACAS," said Daniel. "Out of all the administrators, teachers, and other staff members that I have encountered throughout my 12 years of school, not once have I met someone so passionate and positive about their job. She always has positive messages to say and always makes sure to wish everyone a great day ahead of them. I love the positivity and can't wait to have the time to get to know her."

Principal Metzger agreed.

"She is a shining light that is always welcoming and supportive of our students," said Metzger. "She does a great job for us. She sets the tone for our entire building."

Godfrey comes from a line of educators and public servants that demonstrated the joys of humility, hard work, and service to others. Her grandmother, Peggy Ann Godfrey, taught at Haut Gap Middle School for 7 years and Minnie Hughes Elementary School for 21 years. Godfrey's parents both served in the military.

"Everyone knows my grandmother and she loved being an educator," said Godfrey. "She inspired my love of learning and children."

Godfrey started her career in 2010 at a daycare operated by her best friend who insisted she would be perfect for the job. She bravely accepted, not sure she was cut out for the position, and she has been working with children ever since.

Godfrey also held positions in various preschools in the Lowcountry and in Virginia. Along the way, she made a stop in the corporate world but missed working with children. It was back to the education field for Godfrey, this time as a teacher's assistant in the first grade at Sanders-Clyde Elementary School.

Godfrey doesn't shy away from new opportunities and when a position as a receptionist became open at the brand new WACAS, she jumped at the opportunity.

"When I met Mr. Metzger over the summer, he immediately made me feel like a part of the team," said Godfrey. "Here at WACAS we are a team, but we're also a family of sorts. I do my best to make our students feel that way as well."

Godfrey, a mother of two, lives by the philosophy that one must treat others as they would want to be treated.

"I ask our students about their grades, their weekend, and their lives," said Godfrey. "I try to relate to them and interact with them on a personal level. I hope to be that friendly face they see when they walk in the building so that they can start their day with a smile."

It is important for Godfrey to check on the students so they feel loved and know someone cares.

"They might not get that kind of love at home," said Godfrey. "Kids need to know that someone loves them and cares about their future and wants the best for them."

Godfrey praises the WACAS and what it offers students, explaining that the programs offered really give the students a leg up towards a brighter future.

"The students taking courses here are really engaged and enjoy their studies," said Godfrey. "So much so they stop by the front office to show us their work and practice their presentations. The kids are lucky to have this opportunity and they know that. They take advantage of it and are inspired to move forward."

The hub of the school

Godfrey describes the front office as the hub of the school where lots of activity takes place. There is an open door policy and everyone, including the principal and assistant principal, are readily available.

"They even treat my children like they belong here," said Godfrey. "My daughter will be attending next year so I am excited for her to see what we have to offer and how these programs will open so many doors for her."

Word is out about the success of WACAS and parents call daily looking for information on how to enroll their children. The auto and welding program is just as popular as robotics. According to Godfrey, there is a buzz about all the programs.

The front office is also a triage of sorts, with many things going on at once. Godfrey describes it as organized chaos.

Her day starts at 7:15 a.m. where she shuffles through doctor's excuses, writes passes for students, receives notes from parents, and basically gets everything and everyone situated.

As the day progresses, she accepts deliveries, checks on the over 40 students who take their lunch break at the WACAS, and answers endless telephone calls.

The front office also serves as the command center. She monitors television screens that reveal what the safety cameras are capturing. She stands ready on the front lines willing to do whatever needs to be done to make every day a great day.

As with anything, it takes a team to be successful and Godfrey adores her co-workers. They adore her as well.

"Brittany radiates positivity each and every day," said Kati Reed, the school's secretary. "Her cheerfulness spreads to everyone she comes in contact with. Brittany is always willing to lend a helping hand and volunteer when needed. She always has the student's best interests in mind, offering encouraging advice to them. She is a pleasure to work with each and every day."

Love of children

Godfrey is committed to the students of WACAS so much so that she has joined the Wellness Committee which encourages wellness for staff and students through various activities. Most recently a treadmill was purchased for use by the teachers and an appreciation station for teachers includes an area for meditation and yoga. Godfrey also serves on the School Improvement Council where she looks forward to doing even more great things at WACAS.

Outside of her "babies at WACAS" she is raising her nine-month-old and 13 year old. She adds fondly that her grandmother, the retired 30-year veteran educator, watches her youngest in her home nursery.

"I am confident she is learning from the best," said Godfrey.

Just like the students of the WACAS are when they interact with Godfrey.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally accredited school district committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all of its students. CCSD is the second-largest school system in South Carolina and represents a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves approximately 49,000 students in 88 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools. Options include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military.