

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

DHEC names two schools as 'Champions of the Environment'

**Office of Strategy and
Communications**

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Mount Pleasant, SC – The S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) announced that James B. Edwards Elementary School (JBE) and Mount Pleasant Academy (MPA) are the recipients of a grant that will support efforts to educate the next generation of environmental stewards.

Students from both schools will restore a salt marsh habitat and contribute relevant data to an international database for global analysis of climate change. In addition, students will be uploading real-time atmospheric measures to Channel 2 News meteorologists and to the NASA and NOAA databases.

"The Champions of the Environment program represents an excellent opportunity for schools to inspire environmental stewardship in the youth of our state," said Dr. Mike Marcus, Chief of DHEC's Bureau of Water.

Champions of the Environment grants are issued each school year to foster environmental education and action in South Carolina's classrooms, from kindergarten through 12th grade.

"The students and staff of Mount Pleasant Academy are extremely excited about the opportunity to support our local marsh habitat through this partnership," said MPA Principal Kim Jackson.

Students, teachers and environmental educators apply for grant funding by outlining their educational project that focuses on pollution or waste reduction, water or energy efficiency, or preservation of natural areas.

JBE teacher Nancy Platt applied for the grant.

"In being selected as a Champions of the Environment grant recipient, I am filled with immense pride for my James B. Edwards' Green Team's accomplishments," said Platt. "We are thrilled to be taking our model to a sister school, Mount Pleasant Academy, where this grant will be used to

foster upper elementary school students as citizen scientists, to contribute relevant data taken from our communities for global analysis of climate change, and to remain champions of our environment."

The grant program is sponsored by DHEC, Dominion Energy, and International Paper, with assistance from the Environmental Education Association of South Carolina.

"We are excited for JBE students to have the opportunity to become real citizen scientists through this award," said JBE principal Robin Fountain. "Being 'Champions of the Environment' directly aligns with our mission to develop global leaders with strong character, ready to serve their communities."

This is the second year JBE has received the grant funding.

"Thanks to additional partner funding this year, we're excited to increase the number of awards presented, as well as the award amount," said Amanda Ley, DHEC's coordinator for the Champions of the Environment program.

This year, each grant winner will receive \$2,500.

For more information, including a list of previous years' recipients, visit www.scdhec.gov/champions.

For more information contact the Office of Strategy and Communications at (843) 937-6303.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD), a nationally-accredited school district, is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 87 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.