

For Immediate Release

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Media Release

Wando Culinary students sweep leadership with multiple awards

Office of Communications

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Charleston, SC – Wando High School Culinary Arts students recently returned from Seattle, WA, where they attended the 2024 Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America National Leadership Conference. The conference was an opportunity to network with members and advisers nationwide, attend leadership workshops, participate in competitive events, explore career pathways, and learn from industry experts. The team’s advisor, Chef Molly Gordon, added that events like these allow students to creatively take the knowledge they are taught in the classroom and apply it to a real-world project.

Students Taking Action with Recognition (STAR) Events were at the heart of the conference. The team competed against 3,000 other students and brought home more combined awards than any other chapter in the country. The students and Gordon dominated the nation in awards and acknowledgments.

Some projects students completed included a pastry job shadow with Chef Swanky at Burwell’s downtown, the creation of a three-minute video demonstrating how to make a healthy version of Chick-fil-A’s famous sauce, a downtown Charleston café concept called “Hideaway House” for college students to study at while enjoying locally roasted coffee and freshly baked desserts, market research on Lowcountry restaurants determining factors for growth and ways to achieve competitive advantage for a new seafood restaurant, and a one-hour culinary creation of a salad with an emulsified dressing and a seared pork tenderloin over herbed quinoa and sautéed vegetables topped with a creamy mushroom sauce.

Students awards:

- Career Investigation: Kyle Wallace - Gold
- Culinary Arts: Carter Clark - Silver
- Entrepreneurship: Breanna Williams - Seventh Place - Gold
- Hospitality, Tourism, and Recreation: Cooper Stapleton, Ramell Bagtas, Sara Dzielinski - Seventh Place - Gold
- Instructional Video Design: Honesty Muccio, Molly Munroe - First Place - Gold

Advisor awards - Chef Molly Gordon

- National Alumni Achievement Award Winner of the Year
- Master Advisor
- Advisor Academy 1 Honors Graduate

Gordon is the only teacher from South Carolina to ever be awarded the Alumni Achievement Award. She was recognized for 12 years of dedication on the local, state, and national levels of FCCLA.

"FCCLA has been the ultimate leadership experience for me, and it truly is a blessing to mold the future of our organization not only in our chapter at Wando but also nationwide," said Gordon.

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

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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 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 50,000 students in 88 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse portfolio of educational options and specialized programs delivered to the students of CCSD through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools and programs. Rich educational opportunities for students include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; military; dual credit; and many more.