

For Immediate Release

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Contact:

Andy Pruitt, 843-937-6583

Media Release

CCSD special education leader honored by The Citadel

Office of Communications

Anita W. Huggins, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools

Michelle Mills
Associate of Communications

Charleston, SC - Lakia Johnson-Drayton is only in her sixth year with Charleston County School District (CCSD). Still, the Interim Director of Special Education Support Services made history for the district this year. She was recently selected to The Citadel's Psychology Department's Hall of Fame. Johnson-Drayton is the first CCSD employee and graduate student from the program to receive this honor.

"Lakia was selected because she has continued to exemplify the qualities of a school psychologist that our program seeks to instill, including advocacy for students and families, community engagement, and high-quality services to the schools she has served," said Dr. Lori Fernald, Associate Professor of Psychology at The Citadel. "We pride ourselves in our mission of developing principled leaders, and Lakia is a perfect example of a graduate who fits that description."

Johnson-Drayton began her career in school psychology in 2014 in Lexington County School District One and eventually joined the CCSD in 2019. She has served as a school psychologist, a behavior specialist coordinator, and the Assistant Director of Behavior Support and Intervention during her time with the district.

Johnson-Drayton said she first discovered the field of School Psychology while researching ways to help her son, who was facing behavioral challenges at school. Determined to support him, she used her vacation and sick days to volunteer in the classroom. Johnson-Drayton said that the more time she spent in the school building, the more she realized that many students needed additional support with their behaviors. This revelation ignited a deep sense of purpose and motivated her to return to college and earn a graduate degree in psychology from The Citadel.

"My cohort [at The Citadel] was small, which fostered a strong sense of community and collaboration," explained Johnson-Drayton. "As I progressed through my courses, my confidence grew, and my passion for addressing ethnic disparities in public education deepened. I found my voice as an advocate for my son and other children in my community who faced similar challenges."

During her time at The Citadel, Johnson-Drayton earned the Aline Mahan Award, which honors the top school psychology student completing the program.

"I am profoundly grateful to The Citadel for providing me with the opportunity to grow both personally and professionally, empowering me to make a meaningful impact in the lives of children and their communities," added Johnson-Drayton.

Johnson-Drayton will be honored at an induction ceremony on February 25, 2025. This is the fourth Hall of Fame class at The Citadel for the School of Psychology.

For additional information, please contact CCSD's 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.