



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Orangeburg County School District's Cope Area Career Center and Chamber of Commerce Host Dynamic Business After Hours Event

ORANGEBURG, S.C. – The Orangeburg County School District's (OCS D) Cope Area Career Center (CACC) and the Orangeburg Chamber of Commerce joined forces to present an engaging Business After Hours event at the Orangeburg County Library. Designed to foster collaboration and career advancement, the evening brought together local business leaders, educators, and community members for a firsthand look at the transformative programs and certifications offered at CACC.

The event began with warm welcomes from Mr. James McQuilla, president of the Orangeburg Chamber of Commerce, and Dr. Johnny Murdaugh, director of CACC, who emphasized the critical role of career and technical education (CTE) in preparing students for workforce success and strengthening the local economy.

Dr. Murdaugh and Mr. Robert Hemby, coordinator of Career and Technical Education, provided an informative overview of CACC's career pathways and industry-recognized certifications. Guests learned how CACC equips students with workforce-ready skills through hands-on training and real-world learning experiences. The presentation also introduced upcoming signature events, including:

- Women in STEM – Inspiring young women to explore careers in science, technology, engineering, and math.
- Completers Ceremony – Honoring students who have successfully completed CTE programs.
- Spring Fest – A community event showcasing student projects and career opportunities.
- Engineering Summit – A platform for students to connect with industry professionals in engineering and technology.

The event also provided an invaluable networking opportunity, strengthening relationships between local businesses, educators, and workforce development advocates. Attendees explored ways to collaborate, support student career pathways, and enhance workforce development in Orangeburg County.

Dr. Shawn D. Foster, superintendent of Orangeburg County School District, emphasized the importance of events like Business After Hours and the critical partnership between OCSD and the Orangeburg Chamber of Commerce, "Career and technical education is a game changer for our students and our local economy. Events like this allow our business community to see firsthand how our schools prepare tomorrow's workforce. Through our partnership with the Orangeburg Chamber of Commerce, we ensure that our students have access to real-world experiences, industry mentors, and career pathways leading to success. He said, "Together, we are building a stronger, more vibrant Orangeburg County."

As CACC continues to shape the next generation of skilled professionals, this event underscored the powerful impact of career and technical education in building a future-ready workforce. For more information about CACC's programs or partnership opportunities, please contact: Dr. Johnny Murdaugh, Director, Cope Area Career Center, Orangeburg County School District, Johnny.Murdaugh@ocsdsc.org.

Orangeburg County School District

The mission of Orangeburg County School District, the catalyst of innovation and excellence, is to ensure all students discover and develop their person, purpose, and platform through high-quality educational experiences distinguished by a culture of collaboration, equity, and inclusion; a creative learning environment with inspiring opportunities; a commitment to nurture the academic, physical, social and emotional well-being of all. Visit us online at ocsdsc.org

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