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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **Monday, October 12, 2026**

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Dr. Johnnie Wright
OCSD October Alumni Spotlight Honoree

From Eutawville to a Distinguished Career in Medicine: OCSD Celebrates Dr. Johnnie Wright Jr. as October Alumni Spotlight Honoree

Holly Hill Roberts High School's 1989 valedictorian credits his family, teachers, faith, and hometown community for helping shape a lifetime of achievement and service.

ORANGEBURG, S.C. — Long before Dr. Johnnie Wright Jr. became a respected physician, military leader, and medical educator, he was a young boy growing up in Eutawville, South Carolina, surrounded by family, teachers, church members, and neighbors who believed in him, encouraged him, and expected him to do his best.

Those early influences helped shape a remarkable journey that would take him from the classrooms of Orangeburg County School District to medical schools, military hospitals, and leadership positions across the country and around the world.

Today, as a board-certified urogynecologist with Prisma Health in Columbia, Dr. Wright has built a career dedicated to caring for others. Yet, when he reflects on his accomplishments, he is quick to recognize the people and community who helped him get his start.

Orangeburg County School District (OCSD) is proud to celebrate Dr. Johnnie Wright Jr., a 1989 graduate and valedictorian of Holly Hill Roberts High School, as its October 2026 Alumni Spotlight honoree. He will be recognized during the district's Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday, October 13, 2026.

For Dr. Wright, this recognition is more than another professional honor. It is an opportunity to say thank you to the community that helped raise him. "I was raised in Eutawville, and my formative years were shaped by a strong network of family, church, school, and community," Dr. Wright shared. "I was fortunate to grow up with loving and supportive parents, siblings, an extended family, and a church family who encouraged me, expected me to work hard, and reinforced the importance of education, faith, discipline, responsibility, and service to others," Dr. Wright continued.

Dr. Wright's educational journey began at Gillard Primary School and continued at St. James Middle School in Eutawville. During middle school, he was selected to participate in PACE, the Program for Academic and Creative Excellence, at Holly Hill Middle School. The program challenged him academically and introduced him to opportunities that helped broaden his view of what was possible. He went on to attend Holly Hill Roberts High School, graduating as valedictorian of the Class of 1989.

While he excelled academically, Dr. Wright remembers more than the lessons learned in classrooms. He remembers the people who invested in him, challenged him to reach higher, and helped him develop the confidence to pursue opportunities beyond his hometown.

"My teachers challenged me academically and helped me recognize what was possible," he recalled. "After graduation, I was confident and knew that I could compete academically wherever the next opportunity took me."

Following graduation, Dr. Wright earned a Bachelor of Arts in Chemistry from The Citadel and his medical degree from the Medical University of South Carolina. He later earned a Master of Business Administration from The George Washington University.

His medical training included an Obstetrics and Gynecology residency through the San Antonio Uniformed Services Health Education Consortium and fellowship training in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery through the National Capital Consortium and National Institutes of Health.

Dr. Wright went on to serve more than 20 years in the United States Army, where he combined his passion for medicine with a commitment to serving his country. His military career included serving as an Obstetrics and Gynecology consultant to the Army Surgeon General, Chief Medical Officer and Deputy Commander for Clinical Services at Womack Army Medical Center and holding leadership roles at several military medical centers. His service also took him to Iraq.

After his military career, Dr. Wright continued caring for patients and preparing the next generation of physicians, including serving as an Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Kentucky.

Today, he has returned to South Carolina, where he practices Urogynecology and Reconstructive Pelvic Surgery with Prisma Health in Columbia, specializing in the care of women with pelvic floor disorders. He continues to share his knowledge through resident education, mentorship, and academic medicine.

OCSD Superintendent Dr. Shawn Foster said Dr. Wright's journey represents the very best of what can happen when a community comes together to support its children. "When I think about Dr. Wright's story, I think about that young boy growing up in Eutawville who had people in his life telling him that he could achieve great things," said Dr. Foster. "His teachers saw his potential. His family reinforced the value of hard work. His community helped build his confidence. And he took those lessons with him and built an extraordinary life of service. That is what we want for every child in Orangeburg County School District. We want our students to know that their beginnings matter, their dreams matter, and there are people who believe in what they can become. Dr. Wright has given us so much to celebrate, but perhaps the most important part of his story is that he has never forgotten where it all began," shared Dr. Foster.

For Dr. Wright, being recognized by the district where his educational journey started is particularly special. "Returning to South Carolina at this stage of my career makes this recognition especially meaningful because it allows me to reflect not only on where my journey has taken me, but also on the people and community that helped me begin it," he shared.

And, while Dr. Wright's story is filled with academic honors, professional accomplishments, and distinguished service, the message he wants today's students to hear is simple: the decisions they make now can help shape the opportunities they will have tomorrow. "Life is about choices!" he emphasized. "The choices you make every day, how you spend your time, who you surround yourself with, how seriously you take your education, and how you respond when things do not go your way, will help shape the opportunities available to you later."

Dr. Wright also wants students to understand that setbacks are part of life, and that a difficult moment does not have to determine their future. "Keep working. Keep learning. Keep pushing. If one door closes, look for another. If the first plan does not work, adjust the plan, but do not stop moving forward," Dr. Wright exclaimed.

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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