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Patrick "PJ" Hubbard Jr.
Named Top 10 Finalist for Prestigious United States Senate Youth Program

Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School's Patrick "PJ" Hubbard Jr. Named Top 10 Finalist for Prestigious United States Senate Youth Program

ORANGEBURG, S.C. — Orangeburg County School District (OCSD) is proud to announce that Patrick "PJ" Hubbard Jr., a senior at Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School, has been named one of South Carolina's Top 10 finalists for the 2027 United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP), a prestigious national program recognizing exceptional high school students who demonstrate outstanding leadership, academic achievement, and a commitment to public service.

Hubbard's selection places him among an elite group of student leaders from across South Carolina competing for the opportunity to represent the state in Washington, D.C. His recognition is another significant accomplishment for a young man whose leadership, determination, and commitment to making a difference continue to distinguish him at the local, state, and national levels.

"PJ is the kind of young man who reminds us why we do this work every day," said OCSD Superintendent Dr. Shawn D. Foster. "He is bright, driven, and willing to step forward when there is an opportunity to make a difference. What makes me especially proud is that he understands leadership is not just about having a title. It's about what you do with the

opportunities you have to help others. PJ continues to represent his family, his school, and this district exceptionally well. We are proud of him, and I believe his best days are still ahead."

Established in 1962, the United States Senate Youth Program provides an extraordinary educational experience for high-achieving high school juniors and seniors interested in government and public service. Each year, two students from every state are selected to participate in Washington Week, where they meet national leaders and gain firsthand insight into the federal government. Selected delegates also receive a $12,500 undergraduate college scholarship.

Hubbard's selection as a Top 10 finalist reflects an impressive record of leadership and service. He currently serves as Student Body Vice President at Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School and has held leadership positions with the South Carolina Association of Student Councils. He is also a South Carolina Junior Achievement Ambassador, a national ambassador for the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, and founder and president of the Orangeburg-Wilkinson Bruins Business Club.

His involvement extends beyond the classroom, reflecting a genuine passion for civic engagement, youth advocacy, and creating opportunities for others. Through these experiences, Hubbard has demonstrated that young people can have a meaningful voice in the issues affecting their schools and communities.

The Senate Youth Program recognition follows another significant accomplishment for Hubbard. Earlier this fall, he was named a semifinalist for the 2027 Coca-Cola Scholars Program, advancing from a national applicant pool of more than 113,000 students. Together, these distinctions underscore his dedication to academic excellence, leadership, and service.

Hubbard's achievement also continues a growing tradition of student leadership excellence at Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School. In 2025, fellow Orangeburg-Wilkinson student Xion Goldsmith was also named a Top 10 finalist for the United States Senate Youth Program. Having students earn this distinction in consecutive years speaks to the talent within the school and the commitment of educators who encourage students to develop their leadership abilities and pursue opportunities beyond the classroom.

"To have students from Orangeburg-Wilkinson recognized among the state's top young leaders two years in a row is something our entire school community can celebrate," Foster added. "These accomplishments don't happen by accident. They reflect talented students who are willing to work hard, families who support them, and educators who see their potential and push them to reach higher. We want every student in Orangeburg County to know that these kinds of opportunities are within their reach."

For Orangeburg County School District, Hubbard's continued success is a powerful example of what students can accomplish when their talents are nurtured, their ambitions are encouraged, and they are given opportunities to lead.

As Hubbard advances through the selection process, Orangeburg County School District congratulates him on this outstanding achievement and celebrates the continued success of Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School in preparing students to lead, serve, and make a difference.

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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