



**For Immediate Release**  
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## Media Release

### Doors to Dream Builds Philanthropic Spirit at Burke

#### Burke High School

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**Charleston, SC** – Providing the vehicle that transports the will to serve into substantive action, Doors to Dream is mobilizing some of the youngest philanthropists in the Charleston area. Too often stuck between a reputation of blind self-interest and an absence of resources to effect real change, today's youth wish to address the former with "I *want* to help," but the latter leaves them with "I don't know *how*." Doors to Dream, a non-profit organization in Charleston working to dismantle the opportunity gaps for children and teenagers, encourages young people to take the initiative on serving the community.

Starting in January 2019, Doors to Dream partnered with a pair of teachers at Burke High School, Amelia Little and Kelsey McGee, and six 10<sup>th</sup> graders on a mission to replenish the supply of toys for the patients of MUSC Children's Hospital. The students took the lead in planning for a toy drive and organized a car wash to raise money for the project. The work included obtaining MUSC's Child Life management's "wish list" of toys and staffing and marketing the car wash.

"As educators, it is always exciting to see our students engaged," explained McGee.

"Watching our students work toward a common goal to better the community that they live in has been an inspiration to us as teachers, and we hope they will continue to inspire others to get involved," added Little.

The toy drive was extremely successful; they collected \$2,000 worth of items. However, the students wanted to raise more awareness for this service project and build excitement in their school for future ones. They organized an assembly in Burke's auditorium for the entire sophomore class, which took place earlier this month.

Following brief presentations from the student leadership team and Doors to Dream Executive Director Carey Dunn, the class was divided into eight color-coded teams and armed with competition guidelines. In a relay race-style format, each team organized their share of the donated puzzles, Legos, crafts supplies, magna tiles, and other toys into bins prepared for delivery to the children's hospital.

The competition was a highlight of the event, but not nearly as important as the appreciation many of the students gained from knowing they were responsible for making another child's day that much brighter.

"We believe authentic relationships serve as the foundation to all meaningful and positive growth, and therefore understand the value and importance of building relationships with teachers, staff, and students at Burke before inserting ourselves into this community," remarked Dunn. "Watching our student leaders, and the pursuit of excellence they projected, inspired their fellow classmates to take pride in the competition and leave feeling connected to a meaningful community outreach project."

This toy drive was just the beginning. The Doors to Dream after school program in the Charleston area will officially kickoff next school year (Fall 2019).

Visit [doorstodream.org](http://doorstodream.org) or email Doors to Dream Executive Director Carey Dunn at [careydunn@doorstodream.org](mailto:careydunn@doorstodream.org) to learn more about this partnership with Burke High School.

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#### **About the Charleston County School District**

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 86 schools and specialized programs. With approximately 6,100 employees district-wide, CCSD is the fourth largest employer in the region.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, charter, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), and Montessori schools, and is divided into three Learning Communities. Options include specialized programs in science, engineering and mathematics; liberal arts; music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military and other public service enterprises.

#### **About Doors to Dream**

Doors to Dream is a non-profit organization based in Charleston, SC working to dismantle the opportunity gaps many of our youth face. We invest directly in Charleston's underserved youth to empower and equip them to pursue their dreams with determination and faith. We are committed to programming that offers authentic mentorship, engages students in the design and completion of social impact projects, and promotes compassion, confidence and independence. Unlocking for each student a greater awareness of who they are and what they are capable of will transform their confidence and support them on the path towards lifelong success.