

The Palmetto

South Carolina Council for Exceptional Children
March 2023

Important Dates

Executive Board Meeting
March 25, 11:00 a.m.

Next Newsletter Submissions
April 1

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From my Heart to Yours...

On behalf of the SCCEC Executive committee, thank you for attending the 2023 annual SCCEC conference. I am so glad you chose to join us this year at our first in-person conference since the pandemic. We had an amazing time with many opportunities to learn and network with colleagues through the numerous sessions and exhibitors provided. Reflecting on our theme for the conference, I was reminded of a passage that says "...a threefold cord is not easily broken." STRONGER TOGETHER calls us to remember that we are not alone on this journey. We must stand together to withstand the scrutiny of our beloved profession. We must work together to close the gaps that our students have experienced. And we must celebrate together the successes that we see in our families, schools, and communities. It is together that we will make significant and lasting changes.

SCCEC is committed to standing, working, and celebrating with all of you. SCCEC is committed to establishing and following through on our goals related to professional development, advocacy, and closing opportunity gaps in our schools. Moving forward, we intend to collaborate with chapters and subdivisions to promote growth and diversity in our membership. We will examine policies and lend our voice to conversations that impact individuals with exceptionalities, and continue to advocate in our local, state, and national communities. We hope that you will join us in this work and stay engaged with us in various ways throughout the year. Let's stay connected and committed to our profession and to those we serve!

Jamia
SCCEC President

2023 Conference Update - Stronger Together

(Jennifer Watson, President-Elect, 2023 Conference Chair)

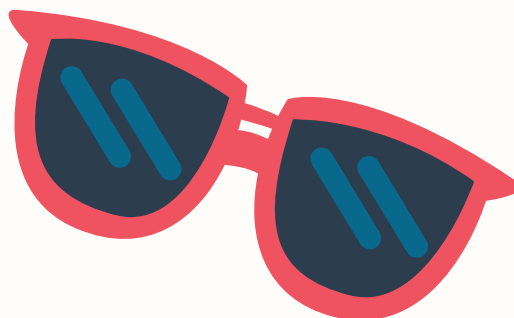
If you attended the 2023 SCCEC Conference, then hopefully you left being reassured that we ARE “**Stronger Together**.” It was great to have over 400 of us gathered together to learn and grow at the Charleston Convention Center from Thursday, February 16th through Saturday, February 18th.

Together we shared over 50 session presentations; visited over 40 exhibitors; celebrated students, teachers, and administrators that are doing great things in the field; made connections, and had a great balance of learning and playing!

The presentations from the conference are available in our [2023 Conference Presentation Google Drive](#). Remember to watch your email for those certificates of attendance for the sessions that you attended.

We also continue to gather your feedback. Feel free to leave [feedback](#) for us as we continue to strive to provide a quality experience and to meet our goal of continuous improvement.

Thank you for your partnership with SCCEC!!!! I can't wait to see you at the beach (Myrtle Beach) next year!!!



Thoughts on Conference...

"The sessions and various meetings that were held at this year's conference were beneficial, as always. However, the greatest benefit that the conference offered me was the opportunity for connection and collaboration with my peers. Since moving to South Carolina from Mississippi almost five years ago and without knowing a single SC educator beforehand, my involvement in both SC CEC and SC-TED has resulted in innumerable connections and friendships that have ONLY enhanced my professional life (stronger together, right?). But seriously – it's true! I would never, ever have known some of my most valued and reliable professional contacts without SC-CEC and our conference(s). Coming together once a year allows me to cement these bonds even further. I truly came away refreshed and rejuvenated. Our profession can sometimes be an isolating one, especially if you work at a smaller organization, so just having the opportunity to learn, relate, and grow together provides tremendous value to me and, I assume, other conference attendees. I can't wait for next year (though I definitely need to catch up on some sleep first)!"

SCCEC 2023 Elections

It is with esteemed pleasure that we introduce to some, and present to others, our newly elected Executive Committee and Board Winners:
Vice President: Mr. Michael Snipes, Richland School District Two (and previous SCCEC Membership Chair)

Treasurer-elect: Dr. Olivia Enders, Coastal Carolina University

Special thanks from Ms. Constance Mays, Past President, to the Nomination Committee: Dr. Laura Mohr, Mrs. Karen McKinney, Ms. Fran Metta, and Mrs. Barbara Johnson-Williams. It is always a joy to work with such a great committee!

From the Treasurer...

As an organization, SCCEC was able to weather the costs associated with two canceled conferences. Thanks to the leadership of former state officers, we had built the reserve funds to the point that allows us to continue operating in the black. Although we would not have chosen this course, we are moving forward.

SCCEC Conference 2023 was a success! While we do not yet have final figures, we are moving forward in a stronger financial position. The registration fees provided attendees with amenities such as the President's Reception, Coffee Break with the Exhibitors, Awards Luncheon, and Student Reception. Overall, the profits from registration fees allow SCCEC to pay operational expenses such as meetings, awards, insurance, newsletters, and national representation. We will also be able to begin rebuilding our reserve funds. But... before any profits are dispensed in this fashion, 5% of the conference profits are distributed to each of the award accounts. The award accounts include the Betty Brown Training and Assistance Grant, Mini Grants, and The Laura Mohr Scholarship. Once placed in these accounts the money becomes designated funds and is untouchable for any other purpose.



Thoughts on Conference...
"The best thing about conference is the networking! It was great to meet people from all over the state who have the same mission, to advocate for students with disabilities!"

Silent Auction Results

(Constance Mays, SCCEC Past President)

On behalf of the SCCEC Executive Committee and Executive Board, I would like to thank everyone who provided items for our Silent Auction this year. The proceeds will go toward the Betty Brown Training Grant for teachers. Your donations and the bidders are what made the Silent Auction a success! It is always so much fun watching as various attendees come by to check and ensure that they are not being outbid! It's a true joy! Because of your generous bidding and donations, we raised over \$500.00 (which includes two anonymous donations of \$100.00 each). Hopefully, next year we can double that amount.

See Items and Winners Below:

1. Beautiful Purple multi-Color Door wreath, donated by Co-Designs Wreath – Winner: Dr. Jamia Thomas Richmond
2. Autism earrings donated by “Styles by Mrs. E. – Winner: Miss Tracy Haigler
3. Air Fryer– Donated by Chapter 165 – Winner: Ms. Julie Sims
4. Scentsy Buddy–Donated by Chapter 165 – Winner: Ms. Christina Chandler
5. Teacher Survival Kit–Donated by Spider Learning – Winner: Ms. Dana Bennett
6. Teacher Fashion Basket–Donated by Chapter 451 (designed by KustomdbyK) – Winner: Dr. Jennifer Watson
7. Patio Pillows with Matching Hanger in a Basket–Donated by Greater Charter School – Winner Ms. Rhonda Polin
8. Hand Crocheted Scarf: Anonymous Donor – Winner: Ms. Cloye Woods
9. Weightloss Plaque, Anonymous Donor – Winner: Warren Joye
10. Butterfly Placemats, Anonymous Donor – Winner: Ms. Andrea Mann
11. Wine Burner Covers, Anonymous Donor – Winner: Ms. Brooke Ruth
12. Patio Pillows–Donated by Greater Charter Schools – Winner: Ms. Wendy Hite

We are definitely Stronger Together!!



Renew your membership now!

Use the code **SCCEC4ME** when checking out to receive 25% off of the regular membership rate. Take advantage of this discount any time between now and **3/31/23**. Current members can renew now to take advantage of these savings and their renewed membership won't take effect until their current membership expires.

<https://exceptionalchildren.org/membership>

Membership Minute with Michael Snipes

What an exciting few weeks to be a member of SCCEC! Thank you to all of our members who attended this year's conference in Charleston and I hope you have all recovered from a busy few days of socializing, collaborating, and learning. We truly are Stronger Together and it was great seeing all the faces we've missed the last couple of years. We had a great turnout for the conference and I got to talk to a lot of our members, but I also talked to a lot of non-members who were in attendance. I encouraged as many as I could to join, but I'm sure there were a lot of people I missed. If you attended the conference with someone who isn't a member, or if you just work with colleagues who are not members, I would ask you to invite them to join. The SCCEC currently has 496 active members, which is a testament to our resilience over the past couple of years, but we would love to see that number grow. The more members we have, the more we can accomplish as an organization and the more we can advocate for those we serve and our profession. Membership dues help us put on a great conference each year, help us fund our efforts to advocate for those we serve, and help us support local chapters as they serve their members.

To help us say thank you, and to encourage your colleagues to join, we are extending the discount code that was available during the conference. Anyone renewing their membership, rejoining after lapsing or joining as a new member can use the code **SCCEC4ME** when checking out to receive 25% off of the regular membership rate. This will apply to any membership level. Basic, premier, student, no matter the level, you get 25% off. Take advantage of this discount any time between now and **3/31/23**. Current members can renew now to take advantage of these savings and their renewed membership won't take effect until their current membership expires. Help us spread the word and let's grow our numbers even more in the new year!

On a side note, I want to take a moment to say thank you to the SCCEC for allowing me to serve as Membership Chair for the past seven years. It has truly been my pleasure and I can't express how much I've enjoyed this position. I look forward to assuming my new role as Vice President later this year and want to say thank you all for entrusting me with this position. We have big plans for our state and local chapters, so stay tuned for more to come. Thanks again, take care and remember, we are always Stronger Together!

College Night Events

(Carol Hoyle, SCCEC Student Liaison)

I want to thank our CEC student members for making our 2023 College Night events a success! They began the events with some members presenting their research during the poster session. It is wonderful to see these student members conducting studies that add to the research in special education. After the poster sessions and some delicious snacks, student members took part in our Speed-Interview Session. Thank you to the districts who came and took part in the interviews. Our student members were given a chance to meet district representatives from across the state as they spent four minutes with each district answering questions. This event benefited both the students and the districts as the students got a chance to practice their interview skills and districts got the opportunity to interview potential new teachers. We look forward to including more student members and districts in these events next year!



Teaching Social-Emotional Skills in School

(by: Markeida Singleton, NBCT

Exceptional Needs Specialist

Student & Teacher Empowerment Group)

Many students who struggle with lagging social-emotional skills act out in disruptive ways. Their lack of skills can manifest as challenging behaviors that interrupt the learning process. By proactively teaching these skills, educators and caregivers can help to address the root cause of challenging behaviors.

Read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/ys89zk4p>

Congrats to our Award Winners!!!

(Nicole Uphold, SCCEC Awards Chair)



Mr. Leon Hayes is a principal at South Conway Elementary School in Horry County Schools. His nominator, Mr. Porter, stated “Mr. Hayes has been instrumental in providing both professional opportunities for special education teachers and paraprofessionals and rich learning experiences for exceptional needs students. He has been a trailblazer with regard to innovative practices to improve the education and growth of exceptional needs students. Mr. Hayes’ advocacy and support of exceptional needs students and their families is unparalleled. He is an exceptional role model for other principals in South Carolina. He is fully deserving of the South Carolina Exceptional Needs Principal of the Year Award.”



Ms. Jessica Miller is a teacher of students with extensive support needs at Myrtle Beach Middle School in Horry County Schools. Her nominator, Ms. McDonald, stated “Being the instructional leader of a multi-grade, multi-adult classroom with students who have various cognitive, academic, behavioral, functional, and communication needs is not an easy task. Mrs. Miller embraces this challenge daily, and for that reason and more, she truly is an Exceptional Educator and deserves to be recognized as the SC CEC Exceptional Educator of the Year. Her impact goes beyond the instruction she provides to the students within her classroom; her team approach guides her influence on other students and staff within her building, across the district, and to the community as a whole.”



Ms. Emily Scheffler is a special education teacher of students with extensive support needs at St. James HS, Horry County Schools. Her nominator, Ms. McDonald, stated “Emily works with multiple paraprofessionals with leadership skills that exceed her “rookie” status. All staff in the classroom follow detailed plans, work with various students, and have a positive attitude. The climate in the classroom is a reflection of her leadership as a teacher. Mrs. Scheffler’s instruction moves beyond the classroom and occurs throughout the school environment and in the community. Her students participate in work-based learning at the high school, running a coffee shop alongside peers who are in the CTE program. Students who are ready to transition to employment experiences outside of the building are interning and/or working at local stores and organizations. Mrs. Scheffler has worked tirelessly to establish relationships with employers in the community who have become strong partners in student transitions from school-based enterprise to employment.”



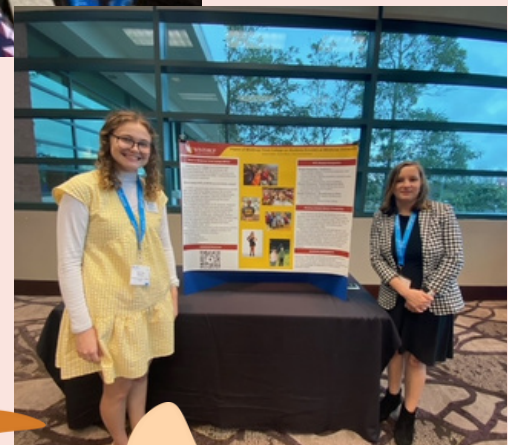
Morgan Harling is a junior at Lander University and serves as the vice president of the Lander University council for exceptional children. Her nominator, Dr. Collier, stated “she has assisted the Lander CEC in organizational meetings and fundraising activities while learning the duties of president before progressing into said role next year. Another remarkable accomplishment that Morgan achieved this year was the creation of an official Lander University American Sign Language club. Morgan created the club entirely herself: she wrote its constitution, completed all the paperwork required by Lander for club establishment, and coordinated the initial election of officers. Her peers unsurprisingly elected Morgan as president of this club, and since then, she has regularly conducted business meetings and led monthly ASL club meetings.”



Rebecca Diebold is a junior at Winthrop University. Her recommender, Dr. Costner, stated “She is engaged by representing the college and program well as a College Ambassador; she is a member of our on-campus CEC group; and is a peer mentor for the Winthrop Think College.” She noted “Ms. Diebold is a musician. She has been able to participate in music ensembles on top of a heavy class load in special education, adding to the evidence that she is developing well as a future teacher and has the skills necessary for continued success.”



SCCEC Conference 2023



2022-2023 SCCEC Officers

President - Dr. Jamia Thomas-Richmond

President-Elect - Dr. Jennifer Watson

Vice President - Dr. Tiffany Hollis

Past-President - Mrs. Constance Mays

Recording Secretary - Dr. Matt Collier

Corresponding Secretary - Dr. Nicole Uphold

Treasurer - Mrs. Darlene Stowe

Parliamentarian - Mrs. Amanda Walkup

