

Bringing Christ's Love into the Classroom



Overview

Renee' Atkinson, the South Carolina Teacher of the Year for 2024, exemplifies shining a light for Christ in the classroom.

With over 21 years of experience in the education field, Atkinson never anticipated the platform that she would have as the Teacher of the Year. Throughout the year, Atkinson has traveled across the state, speaking to other teachers and aspiring teachers. "Instead of just impacting the 90 students that I would see on a daily basis, I've been able to extend that to teachers and students across the state. That's pretty powerful," Atkinson said.

Encouraging Heart4Schools Volunteers

Atkinson shared at the recent [Heart4Schools](#) Spring Celebration, hoping to educate, inspire, and further the mission of the volunteers as they seek to grow stronger partnerships with schools throughout the state. "I think that our school and community partnerships are so important. They are just vital for our school and our student success," Atkinson said.

She emphasized that caring for students means meeting crucial needs. "Kids can't learn if they're hungry. Kids can't learn if they don't feel safe. Kids can't learn if they don't feel a sense of love and belonging," she said. She thanked the volunteers for spending time contributing to Heart4Schools programs like Backpack Buddies and Reading Buddies.

Helping Students Succeed

[Backpack Buddies](#) is a vital program that provides food-packed bags for students who face hunger, ensuring they have meals over the weekend. Another program of Heart4Schools is [Reading Buddies](#), where volunteers meet with students for thirty minutes each week to listen to them read, a critical skill that sets the foundation for all future learning.

Read the full story.

**advance
stories**

