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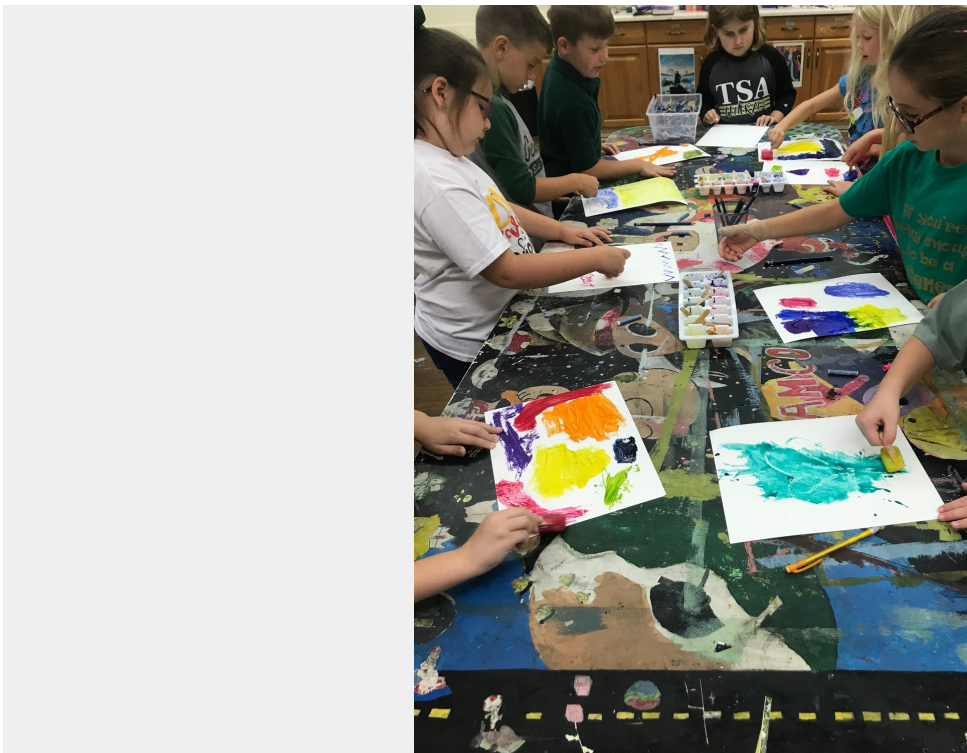
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## State group recognizes Thomas Sumter Academy as its 1st school certified for STEAM learning



Thomas Sumter Academy students take part in an exercise this year in the school's STEAM Lab to investigate thermal energy changing solids (or ice) to liquids (or water) and characteristics of the particles involved.

PHOTO PROVIDED

Posted Wednesday, May 30, 2018 6:00 am

**BY BRUCE MILLS**  
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REMBERT - As today's economy and the future job market continue to emphasize science, technology and math skills, Thomas Sumter

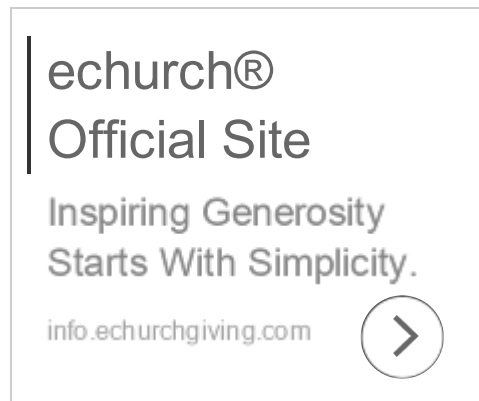
Academy is keeping up with the times.

On Thursday, the South Carolina Independent School Association recognized the school as one of just five private schools in the state this year to receive its inaugural Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) certification. The other four officially certified schools are in Florence, Myrtle Beach, Summerville and Pawleys Island, according to SCISA.

Sally Faulling of SCISA made the formal presentation to TSA Headmaster Frank Martin at a school awards ceremony in the academy's main auditorium.

Officially, the STEM certification by the independent school association to Thomas Sumter is modified to a STEAM certification - to include the Arts - because of the school's high standards in music and the arts, according to Faulling. The new certification is actually for TSA's elementary school (K-5), with the condition of later adding the academy's middle and high schools.

Any way one looks at it, TSA is the state's first-ever SCISA STEAM school, she said.



To earn the certification, Thomas Sumter met SCISA STEM standards developed this year by the agency's executive director, Larry Watt.

Those include having an inquiry-based learning environment for students that encourages problem solving, teamwork and thinking outside the box, Faulling said. Other STEM standards developed by SCISA include students using technology resources to conduct research, learning through performance-based assessments and demonstrating critical thinking. For STEM teachers, they must collaborate as a team and participate in a continuous program of STEM-specific professional learning, among other activities.

Most of the elementary school's STEAM activities this year took place in the school's STEAM Lab, according to Martin and Paige Crowe, the school's STEAM coordinator and a teacher on staff.

Students took on STEM projects that incorporated the fundamentals of physical science, thermal energy, electrical circuits (for Christmas cards that actually light up when opened) and astronomy to name just a few, Crowe said. The lab's curriculum was based on the national Next Generation Science Standards.

Limited in funding unlike a public school, Crowe described that students' science projects required outside-the-box thinking, such as using a recycled tire to design and create a structure that will support plant life - by holding water, but with every layer still receiving sunlight.

She said some of the best science projects often require some of the cheapest materials. Also, some of the most important lessons learned in the STEAM Lab involve problem solving and learning how to build and be successful.

"I think the best thing that happens in the lab is students learn to make a mistake and sometimes fail when they test a project," Crowe said. "The students learn from that mistake and problem solve. I often tell them the only bad mistake is one you don't learn from."

Martin said the STEAM certification for TSA involved a great team effort and also applies to the school's Columbia campus, which has 36 students.

An advertisement for Little's Personal Cleaners. On the left, a blue vertical bar contains a list of services in white text: "Full-Service Dry Cleaning &amp; Laundry Services", "Unsurpassed Stain Removal", "Detailed Cleaning", "Hand Finishing", "Garment Restoration", "Specialty Cleaning", and "Bridal Services". To the right of this bar is a photograph of four people (three men and one woman) standing together. Below the photo, the business name "Little's Personal Cleaners" is written in a large, bold font. Underneath the name is the address "717 Bultman Dr." and the phone number "803-778-1565". Below that is another address "500 Pinewood Rd." and the phone number "803-778-1788". At the bottom, the hours of operation are listed: "Monday-Friday 7:00am - 6:00pm" and "Saturday 9:00am - 1:00pm".

At the presentation, he recognized the STEAM team of teachers, which included Crowe, Heather Gore, Carly Smith, Sandi Dixon and

Cheryl Hale. Hale is a teacher at the academy's Columbia campus, Martin said.

TSA's enrollment at the local campus is 355 students, according to Martin.

"This, I believe, is very important as we move forward from an academic standpoint," Martin said.

**5 SCISA SCHOOLS RECEIVING STEM CERTIFICATION**

- Thomas Sumter Academy (Rembert)
- Christian Academy of Myrtle Beach (Myrtle Beach)
- Lowcountry Preparatory School (Pawleys Island)
- Pinewood Preparatory School (Summerville)
- All Saints Episcopal Day School (Florence)

Source: South Carolina Independent Schools Association

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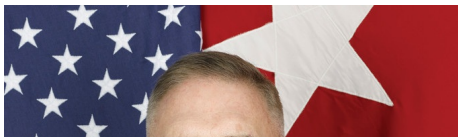
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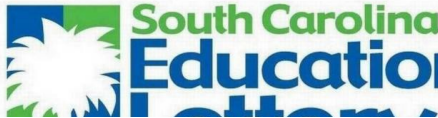
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### ALBERT SMITH SR.

Albert Smith Sr., 70, died on Monday, May 28, 2018, at his home. Born on Jan. 26, 1948, in West Virginia, he was a son of Albert Collins and Ethel Smith. The family will receive relatives and friends at the home, 925 Miller Road, Poplar Square ...

### EDITH JACKSON

Edith Jackson, 72, of Summerton, died on Monday, May 28, 2018, at Palmetto Health Tuomey. She was born on April 27, 1946, in Clarendon County, to the late Charlie and Georgia Ragin. Funeral arrangements are incomplete and will be announced at ...

### DAVID A. SANDERS

David Arnett Sanders was born on Oct. 4, 1944, the second son of the late Deacon William Baker Sanders Sr. and Dr. Beatrice Gregg Sanders. He departed this life on May 24, 2018. He was baptized at a young age at Rafting Creek Baptist Church and ...

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