

GSSM Honored with Dual Wins at 2025 InnoVision Awards

GSSM receives dual honors at the 2025 InnoVision Awards for excellence in STEM outreach, student innovation, and environmental research.

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EINPresswire.com/ -- The South Carolina Governor's School for Science & Mathematics (GSSM) received top honors at the 2025 InnoVision Awards, earning recognition in both the Community Service and Young Innovators categories for advancing [STEM education](#) and innovation across South Carolina.

Hosted at The Palmetto Club in Columbia, the annual InnoVision Awards ceremony celebrates organizations and individuals whose work exemplifies innovation, creativity, and impact across the state's growing technology and education sectors.

[GSSM's Golden Dragons](#) was recognized in the Community Service category for combining technical excellence with more than 460 hours of outreach and mentoring statewide. Students lead workshops, mentor new robotics teams (particularly in rural and under-resourced areas), and host public demonstrations that expand access to hands-on [STEM learning](#).

The school's From Seeds to Shoreline initiative, honored in the Young Innovators category, connects science education with environmental stewardship. Through a partnership with the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium, students collect, cultivate, and transplant *Spartina alterniflora* to restore coastal salt marshes, integrating research, ecology, and sustainability into their coursework.



GSSM students participate in the From Seeds to Shoreline initiative, collecting *Spartina alterniflora* seeds to help restore South Carolina's salt marsh ecosystems at the Fort Johnson campus of the S.C. Marine Resources Center in Charleston.

"It was an honor to see community service, a vital part of robotics, get recognized at this event," said Albert Mathisz, GSSM student. "Everyone in GSSM robotics spends hours out in the community teaching about STEM, and it often goes unrecognized. This night truly felt like a great way to acknowledge those efforts."

Caroline Locklair, GSSM student, reflected on how outreach has shaped her own path in STEM. "Before GSSM, I never thought robotics or engineering was for me," she said. "The most important part of outreach is being able to be that person for younger kids and expose them to robotics for the first time. We've worked so hard to help get more kids across the state interested in robotics, and this award feels like all of our efforts being recognized."

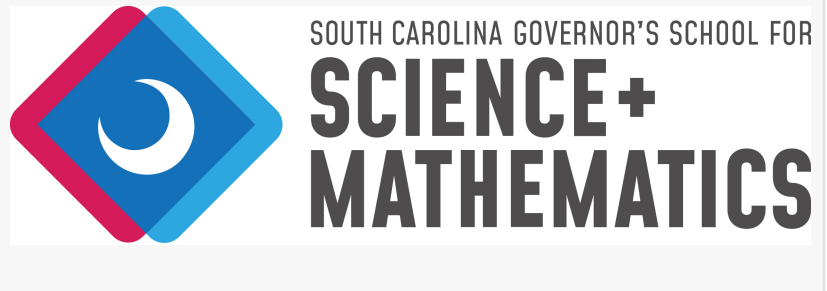
Dr. Neval Erturk, executive director for research, global, and innovation initiatives, said the recognition underscores the school's commitment to statewide impact. "At GSSM, we aim to create opportunities for young people across South Carolina to lead, innovate, and solve real problems through research, outreach, and hands-on learning," Erturk said. "Our students' work in robotics and environmental science shows that STEM education is not confined to a classroom; it is lived, shared, and multiplied across communities."

President Danny Dorsel said the dual recognition reflects GSSM's mission to expand opportunity through innovation. "These programs showcase the ingenuity, compassion, and curiosity of GSSM students," Dorsel said. "Their work represents the best of South Carolina's next generation of scientists, engineers, and leaders."

The awards highlight the dedication of GSSM students and the faculty mentors who guide them. Dr. Jennifer Brown, instructor of biology, and Dr. Elaine Parshall, instructor of engineering, have played key roles in leading the programs recognized by InnoVision. They attended the ceremony along with students Caroline Pringle (York), Caroline Locklair (Charleston), Albert Mathisz (Greenville), Sami Freeman (Hanahan), and Ava Hamm (Greenwood), who represented GSSM's commitment to innovation and outreach in STEM education.



GSSM's Robotics Team, the Golden Dragons, celebrates winning the Inspire Award at the 2025 South Carolina FIRST Tech Challenge State Championship, recognizing excellence in engineering, teamwork, and community outreach.



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About the South Carolina Governor's School for Science & Mathematics

The South Carolina Governor's School for Science & Mathematics (GSSM) is a nationally ranked top 10 public high school that exists to bring world-class STEM education to students across the state. Founded in 1988 by Gov. Carroll Campbell, GSSM is a state resource that offers a variety of programs including an intensive two-year residential high school, a challenging virtual engineering program, summer camps, and in-school experiences for students in 3rd through 12th grades. At GSSM challenge is viewed as a gateway to opportunity. Learn more about how we help students realize their full potential by visiting www.scgssm.org.

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