



Polaris Tech

CHARTER SCHOOL

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Brandi Boseman at Polaris Tech helps students soar by embracing the ‘productive struggle’ for long-term success

Helping Polaris Tech students tackle the “productive struggle” for long-term learning and understanding is part of what makes the Ridgeland charter school special for Brandi Boseman, director of teaching and learning.

Polaris Tech, serving students in grades 5-12 this year, is working remotely by computers until Jasper County’s virus rates drop lower. The switch to online learning in March went smoothly for Polaris Tech students because much of their daily work is done virtually.

“What sets Polaris apart from the ‘traditional’ way of teaching is the fact that teachers act as facilitators to student learning,” Boseman said. “They plan units based on real world problems, provide students with the resources to solve the problem, and guide their learning through questioning. Sometimes we do that in the classroom and sometimes we do it online.

“Students of today and leaders of tomorrow need to be able to access information online, sort through what is accurate, and manage the data and information to solve challenges,” she said. “That is something we excel at here at Polaris Tech.”

Before joining Polaris Tech when the school opened in 2018, Boseman gained valuable experience as the science facilitator and coach at Cougar New Tech in Colleton County High School in Walterboro. She’s also worked as a middle and high school science teacher since 2008.

For nine years prior to joining the educational world, Boseman worked as the regulatory and safety manager at Floralife chemical company in Walterboro. She earned her Master of Education in Teaching from the University of South Carolina and her bachelor’s degree in biological sciences from Clemson.

At Polaris Tech, there’s a different feel for the way teachers – also known as “navigators” – work with students. There is more independence, more accountability and greater expectations for students to shoot for the stars.

“One of my favorite books is ‘Make It Stick’ which talks about the importance of ‘productive struggle’ by students for long term learning and retention of content. We are teaching our students to solve problems with multiple solutions and develop strategies in the process that can be applied to any real-world situation,” she said. “That’s going to make a huge difference for them in coming years, whether they go to college or into a job.”

Polaris Tech is a state-approved charter school serving fifth grade through high school students from Jasper County and the Lowcountry. It is a free school (no tuition), that focuses on preparing young people for successful work and college.

The Polaris Tech academic emphasis is on six career areas, starting with: Aerospace, Health Sciences and Business Management. Although online classes have started, Polaris Tech continues to accept student applications for students in grades 5-12.

Dr. Melissa Crosby, executive director at the school and mentor to Boseman, said her understanding of the school’s mission and educational approach, plus her science background, make her a natural leader at Polaris Tech.

Since the school opened with its different approach to teaching and learning, Boseman said she’s seen the staff grow as well as the school’s families.

“I’ve seen the school team grow in a way that we are able to collaborate and recognize each other's strengths to get the job done regardless of what our job descriptions say. The teachers have grown in their ability to establish relationships and classroom culture with students to increase academic achievement.

“Personally, I am most proud of my professional growth from Instructional Coach to Director of Teaching and Learning,” she said.

“This is my first job as a school administrator. Now I have a better understanding now that the tasks I’m responsible for are accomplished in other districts by instructional coaches, assistant principals, principals and district level employees. We wear a lot of hats at Polaris Tech, but it’s a great place to teach and learn,” Boseman said.

The newly constructed school is located on Grays Highway across from the Ridgeland Airport. Young people from Jasper, Colleton, Hampton and Beaufort counties attend.

To keep updated about Polaris Tech Charter School, follow them on Facebook and at www.polaristech.org. For specific questions, email info@polaristech.org or call 843-645-0605.

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