digital
CONNECTIONS

Computer science teacher takes action inside and outside of school to make quality education accessible

A s students filter out of **Mayo Olagundoye's**, faculty, classroom, many are unaware that their teacher has furthered the education of kids from all over the country with the help of his very own software.

Ever since Olagundoye started Munch Math Co.–an online education company that matches students with compatible tutors–in 2004, he has been dedicated to giving students from all backgrounds access to quality academic resources.

''[The] business that I run, it's like an educational consultant... I have different people in different parts of the country, and they service the local students,'' Olagundoye said.

Olagundoye's background as a programmer ensures that students are having their unique needs met by a teacher specifically equipped to serve them.

''I have a database of experts and teachers,'' Olagundoye said. ''I apply it to each person and whatever their need is. I have some software that does that based on ZIP code and other [information].''

In addition to running his business, Olagundoye is now a teacher himself, and has learned a lot from his company, working with professional tutors and struggling students. His experience has equipped him to teach cybersecurity and computer science with compassion.

''Speaking to my service providers about the challenges that people are presenting them with... helps me to understand the way to address students in terms of their future, their course,'' Olagundoye said. ''It just gives me a little bit more breadth of experience, so that when students push me with things I have more empathy.''

Soren Orcutt, 11, who has been in Olagundoye's classes for three years, sees this empathy reflected in his teaching style.

''[His classes] are at your own pace, unless you need his help,'' Orcutt said. ''He's a person to talk to if you need him.''

This understanding and experience not only made Olagundoye a better teacher, but also a teacher who now shapes the minds of South Carolina students through his work for VirtualSC. **Ian Banker**, Olagundoye's fellow computer science teacher, commends him for his work ethic in teaching these extra classes.

''When you look at his schedule he has three times as many classes as anybody else because the bottom two-thirds are VirtualSC classes,'' Banker said.
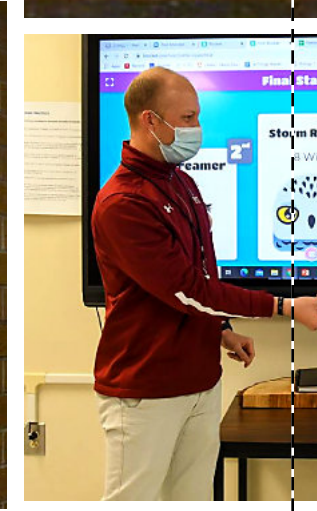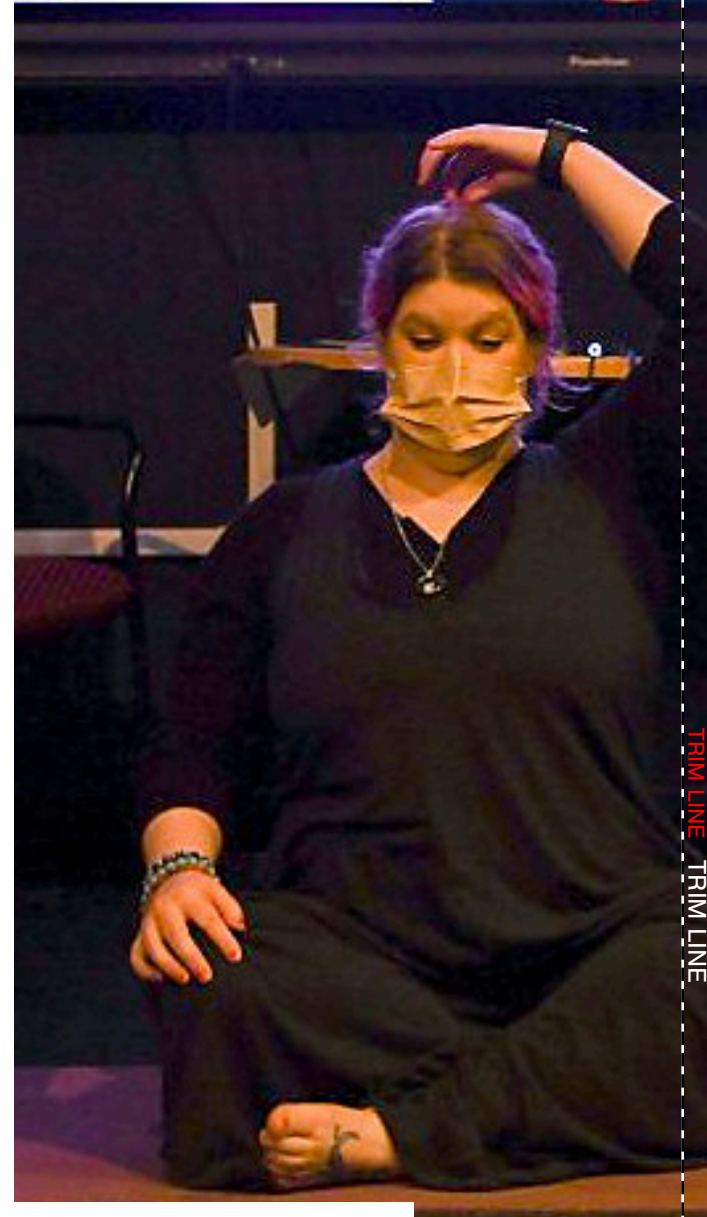
Teaching web page design and development online in addition to his in-person classes, Olagundoye goes above and beyond to provide quality computer science instruction to students from all areas of the Charleston community.

''He'll be teaching that web page design and development class to kids in West Ashley, or to some kids at Burke, or some kids at Stall, a couple at Beckham,'' Banker said.

According to Banker, Olagundoye is extremely devoted to making computer science accessible to all students, mirroring the very mission that led to the birth of his company.

''He's out there helping these kids get a worthwhile computer science education when they don't have access to it in another facet,'' Banker said.

Story by Sydney Lewis
Designer Gavin Hall

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WORKING SPIRIT: (right) Student council adviser **Hannah Brisini**, faculty, helps prepare for the second Spirit Week with themed posters. "Right now I am putting up a poster for surfer vs skier day. We like to come up with versus themes for the second Spirit Week so that students have more choices as far as what they want to dress up as," Brandel said; photo by b. schwinne