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Charleston Middle School Receives Sy Williams Award

MAY 22ND 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Charleston, Missouri - The Charleston Middle School is the recipient of the 2018 Sy Williams Annual Award for Education to support a new STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) course at the school.

Principal Dr. Kimberley Blissett accepted the award of \$1,000 during a presentation in the school's recently-renovated library on Tuesday, May 15.

The award will be used to purchase equipment for the course including an iPad and a 3-D printer. The new class will meet in a specially-equipped lab. STEM curriculum uses an interdisciplinary approach and real-world applications to teach science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Students taking STEM courses increase in their math and science proficiency and problem-solving ability. The elective STEM course at Charleston Middle Schools will be offered in addition to standard math, science, computer courses currently offered by the school.

The Sy Williams Annual Award for Education is named for lifelong Charleston resident Syllas "Sy" Williams (1840-1944). Mr. Williams was a founding trustee of Perry Chapel A.M.E. Church. His daughter, Mary Hawkins, and granddaughter, Pauline Murphy, were career educators in the Charleston public school system.

As a young man, Mr. Williams, his parents, and siblings were enslaved on a farm just outside of Charleston. According to U.S. Census figures in 1860, 1,010 enslaved African Americans lived in Mississippi County. Following emancipation, Williams lived in a cabin located on what is now Sy Williams Avenue.

Photo provided.

LAST UPDATED ON MAY 22ND 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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