



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Kindergarten students at Virtus Academy pay special tribute to local law enforcement**

**FLORENCE** – Kasey Bradley knew she needed to take action.

After a shooting on October 3 in Florence claimed the lives of two police officers and injured five others, the kindergarten teacher at Virtus Academy searched ways her students could impact a community in need.

“This tragedy really hit home for us,” Bradley said. “One of our teachers and several students live in the neighborhood where the shootings took place.”

As part of Virtus’ curriculum, kindergarten students participate in “Community Helpers,” – an initiative where local professionals visit the classroom and share about their employment. Bradley knew this was the opportunity she needed.

“I reached out to several parents to see if they had a connection with anyone in law enforcement, and luckily, we found someone who did,” Bradley said.

In preparation for their special guest, Bradley’s students wrote individual thank you cards to present to the officer.

Virtus Academy principal Amanda Bailey was in the class when Sgt. Eric Jacobs arrived and described the emotional moment.

“I was amazed at how our students’ eyes opened up when the police officer walked in,” Bailey said. “He had his full uniform on and they really saw him as a hero. It’s a credit to our teachers. They have taught our students what an officer’s job is and how they protect and serve our community. It was a great moment to be a part of.”

In addition to the officer visit, Virtus Academy held a “Back the Blue” event where students and staff wore their blue school uniforms and raised over \$600 that was donated to families affected from the shootings.

“I’m just so proud to be their teacher,” Bradley said. “This was a special day I’ll never forget.”

180-year-old Erskine College established the Charter Institute at Erskine in mid-2017, to improve education in public charter schools across the state of South Carolina. The Institute currently serves as the Sponsor for 13 schools with an additional seven schools currently scheduled to open in the fall of 2019. For more information, please visit [www.erskinecharters.org](http://www.erskinecharters.org).

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