



Media Information
April 27, 2026

South Carolina's Teacher of the Year will Drive a New BMW X5.

- Dr. Christie Palladino Named 2027 South Carolina Teacher of the Year

Spartanburg, S.C. – South Carolina State Superintendent of Education Ellen Weaver announced Thursday that **Dr. Christie Palladino**, a biomedical sciences teacher at Aiken County Career and Technology Center, has been named the **2027 South Carolina Teacher of the Year**. Dr. Palladino received the state's top education honor during the South Carolina Department of Education's annual Gala in the Garden, held at the Governor's Mansion in Columbia. A former obstetrician-gynecologist and medical researcher, Dr. Palladino transitioned to the classroom 12 years ago and brings real-world experience to hands-on learning every day. As part of the celebration, **BMW Manufacturing**, the program's premier sponsor for nearly three decades, presented Dr. Palladino with the keys to a new **2026 BMW X5 sDrive40i**, which she will drive during her year of service as South Carolina's public education ambassador.

"We know great educators help shape South Carolina's future," said Max Metcalf, Manager of Government and Community Relations at BMW Manufacturing. "Dr. Palladino's hands-on approach to biomedical sciences reflects the kind of learning that builds confidence, curiosity, and career pathways. We're proud to support the Teacher of Year program as part of our broader commitment to education and workforce development."

The BMW X5 presented to Dr. Palladino features a sporty design, advanced technology, and driver-focused comfort. She will use the vehicle throughout her

**Media Information**

April 27, 2026

year-long sabbatical while traveling the state as an advocate for public education and representing educators across South Carolina.

Since 1992, the BMW Group has invested nearly \$16 billion in its South Carolina operations. BMW Manufacturing is the largest BMW Group plant globally, assembling more than 1,500 vehicles each day and serving as a key pillar of BMW's worldwide production network. The Spartanburg facility plays a vital role in meeting strong global demand for BMW Sports Activity Vehicles and Coupes, with about 50 percent of its production exported to nearly 120 international markets—a distinction that has made the BMW Group the largest automotive exporter by value in the United States for more than a decade. In 2025, more than 52 percent of BMW vehicles sold in the U.S. were assembled at Plant Spartanburg. The site's model portfolio includes five top-selling BMW X models, three Motorsport X models, and two plug-in hybrid electric X models. With an annual production capacity of up to 450,000 vehicles, the plant supports more than 11,000 jobs onsite.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Corporate Communications

Nathalie Bauters, Head of Plant Communications, North America
Telephone: 864-794-0842 | Email: Nathalie.Bauters@bmwgroup.com

Derek Lowe, Media Communications Specialist, BMW Manufacturing
Telephone: 864-451-3571 | Email: Derek.Lowe@bmwmw.com

BMW Manufacturing Co., LLC

BMW Manufacturing Co., LLC is a subsidiary of BMW AG in Munich, Germany, and assembles the BMW X3, X5, X5 M, X7, and XM Sports Activity Vehicles and the BMW X6 and X6 M Sports Activity Coupes. In addition to the South Carolina manufacturing facility, BMW Group North American



Media Information

April 27, 2026

subsidiaries include sales, marketing, and financial services operations in the United States, Canada and Latin America; a manufacturing plant in San Luis Potosi, Mexico; and a design firm and technology office in California. For more information on BMW Manufacturing, visit

www.bmwusfactory.com.

BMW Group in the United States.

BMW Group began operations in the U.S. over 50 years ago. In addition to the sales, marketing, and distribution of BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce, and BMW Motorrad vehicles, BMW Group's business in the U.S. spans 30 locations in 12 states including BMW Group Financial Services, BMW Manufacturing, Designworks, BMW Technology Office USA, and BMW i Ventures. The company's U.S. plant in South Carolina is the largest single BMW production facility in the world and the global center of competence for BMW Sports Activity Vehicles. The BMW Group sales organization is represented by a nationwide network of 355 BMW retailers, 147 BMW motorcycle retailers, 105 MINI passenger car dealers, and 37 Rolls-Royce Motor Car dealers. Taken together, BMW Group's business activities in the U.S. provide and support over 120,000 jobs and contribute more than \$43.3 billion to the U.S. economy annually.

For more information about BMW Group's business and products in the U.S., please visit: PressClub USA.

###