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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Bald Head Island Academy Receives Large Donation from Multimillionaire Philanthropist Douglas Witcher

(BALD HEAD ISLAND, NC) Last week, BHI Academy™ (BHIA™), the island’s science-focused tuition-based K through ninth grade school, received a significant financial contribution of \$50,000 from part-time BHI resident, Doug Witcher, founder and CEO of Smart Choice, a prominent Triad-based insurance network with over ten thousand independent agencies and one hundred partners, and the driving force behind the Douglas S. Witcher Family Foundation. The funds, given via the BHI Academy Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, will be used for school operational expenses.

“This generous contribution represents the largest single donation in BHI Academy’s history,” said BHIA Board Chair Dr. Louis Vaickus. “This gift demonstrates that Doug Witcher understands the importance of a supportive school experience. He recognizes the importance of a nurturing, one-on-one learning environment and the invaluable role of dedicated teachers.”

According to School Co-founder and Interim Head of School Sheree Vaickus, this partnership inspires hope and promise for the future leaders currently being educated at BHI Academy. “This sizeable contribution was a life-changing moment for our school and we are deeply grateful for Mr. Witcher’s profound impact on our mission,” she said. “He believes in our vision of an intentionally-designed island school with a child-centric approach and unique focus on science and environmental preservation. Bald Head Island is the ideal location for a school of this nature, allowing children to be children, to thrive in an environment free from distractions, where they can explore all aspects of life and earth sciences.”

BHI Academy plans to build a permanent charter school structure on Bald Head Island. The advocacy of donors like Witcher is instrumental in making that happen. “Supporting education is an investment in our future,” he said. “Together, we can create opportunities for children to flourish and realize their potential, despite their challenges, whatever they may be. I invite all with means and who could to support BHI Academy; it’s more than a school, it’s a way to preserve BHI’s Legacy.”

To learn more about BHI Academy and opportunities to make a tax-deductible gift to the BHI Academy Foundation, visit <https://bhiacademy.org/bhi-academy-foundation/>

(More)



About Bald Head Island Academy™

BHI Academy™ (BHIA™) is a K through ninth grade tuition-based private school providing a rich, credentialed, best-in-class, on-island education that meets federal and North Carolina standards. With a unique emphasis on earth sciences, maritime sustainability, and island ecosystem preservation and a mission to embed respect for self, others, and the environment for generations to come, the Academy is open to all students, regardless of financial means. To accomplish its purpose, the BHI Academy Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization that ensures education equity and access to children ages five to fifteen, provides guidance on and raises funds for scholarships to low-income families, school trips and activities, and much-needed equipment and school supplies. For details, visit bhiacademy.org.

About Smart Choice

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PHOTO CUTLINE: Doug Witcher, founder and CEO of Smart Choice, and the driving force behind the Douglas S. Witcher Family Foundation, recently made a generous donation to BHI Academy on Bald Head Island, NC.

