

Dr. Michele Wise Wright's **My Water Buddy**

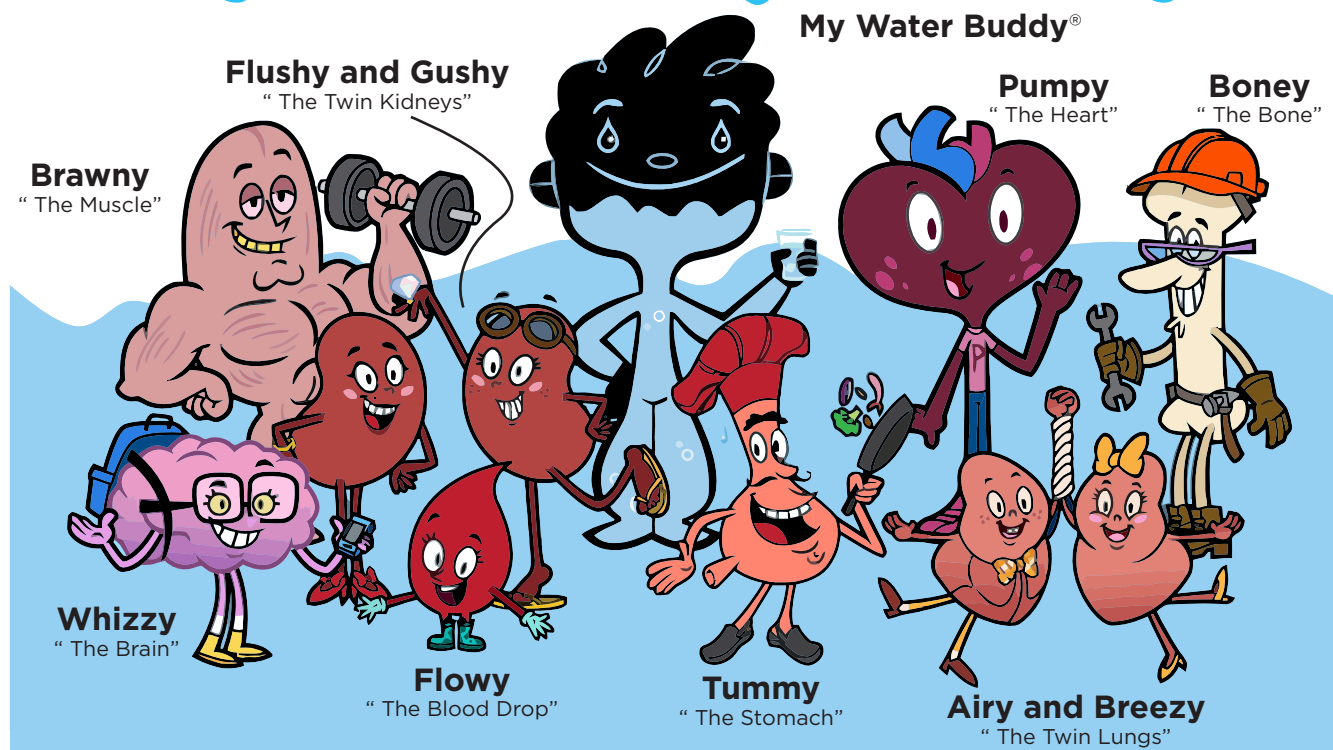
Promoting Global Awareness & Importance of Drinking Water



Inside every boy and girl is an adventure and a battle to keep them strong, healthy, and alert so they can live the best life possible. *My Water Buddy and Family*® was created by Michele R. Wright, Ph.D. in 2011 with a mission to bring global awareness to the importance of drinking the daily recommended intake of water. The multi-faceted brand uses edutainment to educate and encourage children and their families to understand the health benefits of drinking enough water and getting good nutrition, so they can have a better and more fulfilling quality of life through a healthier body. ▶▶

My Water Buddy and Family uses fun characters fashioned as anthropomorphic organs with special powers that are relatable and aspirational to children. The Main character of the brand is *My Water Buddy*®, a unique personification of water (H2O) as well as the human body. *My Water Buddy* embodies “*The Family*” which consists of various anthropomorphic body parts and organ characters that drinking water positively impacts, including: *Airy and Breezy* the Twin Lungs, *Boney* the Bone, *BRAWNY* the Muscle®, *Flowy* the Blood Drop, *Flushy and Gushy* the Twin Kidneys, *Pumpy* the Heart, *Tummy* the Stomach, and *Whizzy* the Brain.

My Water Buddy and Family®



I wanted to learn more about *My Water Buddy and Family*. Here is my conversation with Dr. Wright:

Lumbie: Tell me a about yourself? Where do you live?

Dr. Wright: I was born and raised in Tuskegee, Alabama. I've been living in North Little Rock, Arkansas for about 22 years. There is a unique story on how I migrated to Arkansas. After spending many years in engineering and project leadership, I knew that I wanted to step outside my comfort zone and get into sales. Everybody thought I was pretty insane, because I had invested so much time on my education. At the time, I was working as an engineer at Procter and Gamble in Tennessee. A door opened up for me to step into a sales position, and I had to relocate from Tennessee to Arkansas. After a 15-year successful track record in the pharmaceutical/biotechnology industry, I shifted to various Senior Leadership roles.

Lumbie: What made you come up with this concept?

Dr. Wright: I've always struggled with drinking water. Growing up there was never really anything that made water cool or inviting to drink, so I preferred soda, Kool-Aid, etc. Thus, I created the *My Water Buddy and Family* concept out of my own passionate concern for children and to inspire them to drink more water and achieve better health. This idea initially started with the creation of the *My Water Buddy* character. I developed him to be adorable and unique, but then I asked myself what he's missing. I realized he was missing his organs. I then conceptualized and created the organs to become his family, which encompasses blood – bones – brain – heart – kidneys – lungs – muscles – stomach, etc. Each of these internally makes up *My Water Buddy* and has a purpose and special entertaining powers. Kids and parents will not only love and adore *My Water Buddy and Family*, but will be living, eating, and drinking them up. ▶▶



Lumbie: You mentioned the kids love My Water Buddy. Would you elaborate?

Dr. Wright: Yes! Kids will absolutely love and adore *My Water Buddy and Family*, because the brand makes water cool, fun, and inspirational to children. Kids are engaged by parables and edutainment with animation, plush characters, games, books, stories, music, rhyme, rhythm, dance, and other ancillary products. The characters and stories are meaningful to a kid's point of view and are full of excitement and adventure. Children are motivated to learn about their bodies, how the body is made up of water, the benefits of water on each part of the body, and all the nutritional outcomes of drinking water. Additionally, they will learn and understand the consequences of not drinking water, such as becoming dehydrated, low on energy, and fatigued. There is nothing on the market like *My Water Buddy*. We are the first to humanize water. This is also the first time that organs have been personified like this.

Lumbie: How are you marketing My Water Buddy? How do the kids and parents know about it?

Dr. Wright: I created a website: MyWaterBuddy.com. I have a Facebook page: [@MyWaterBuddy](https://www.facebook.com/MyWaterBuddy). I network across many venues including private and public partner organizations, children networks, educational institutions, health and governmental agencies, water bottled companies, toy companies, amusement parks, and entertainment platforms. I take every opportunity that I have to get out and promote *My Water Buddy*, including doing water festivals so that *My Water Buddy and Family* can meet the children firsthand. The kids love it! It's exciting to see which of the anthropomorphized organs and family members children are going to gravitate towards. Overwhelmingly, they love *My Water Buddy!* ▶▶

Dr. Wright has worked with Fortune 50, 100 and 500 organizations including Genentech Biotech Company, Novartis Pharmaceuticals, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, The Pillsbury Company, The Procter and Gamble Company, Honeywell, and Martin Marietta Corporation. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from Tuskegee University, where she graduated with High Honors and “Electrical Engineering Student of the Year”; a Master of Science degree from the University of Tennessee Space Institute (UTSI), where she chartered the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) and was UTSI’s first full-time African-American student to earn a Master’s degree in Engineering Management/Industrial Engineering; and a Ph.D. in Public Policy from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, with a double specialization in Health and Leadership Policy.

Dr. Wright currently serves as the Senior Director of the National Biotechnology & Pharmaceutical Association (NBPA) and formerly served as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Greater Ozarks-Arkansas Region with the American Red Cross. She is also the past recipient of Sister Friends United, Inc. Inaugural “Women of Excellence Service Award” and the organization’s “Business Award”.

She was a Featured Speaker at the Inaugural 2017 “World Woman Summit” in Little Rock, Arkansas and the Keynote Speaker during the South Metro Atlanta Tuskegee Alumni Club (SMATAC) Inaugural 2018 “Signature Scholarship Gala” in Atlanta, Georgia.

As a former Miss United Negro College Fund (UNCF) for Tuskegee University and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) Catalyst, Dr. Wright was the recipient of the 2018 “Outstanding STEAM Leader Award” presented by Ms. Denise Blake, Area Development Director of the UNCF, on behalf of SMATAC.

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Lumbie: Is your company My Water Buddy established as a nonprofit or for profit?

Dr. Wright: It is established as two separate entities, a for-profit corporation and a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, because my goal has always been to give back. The intention is to take a percentage of the proceeds from the profit side and use that to help the community and underrepresented areas. We are now working on animation to make sure that *My Water Buddy* can reach people worldwide. We have a series of storybooks, plush toys, and movie scripts that are being developed. We want everyone, not just kids, to enjoy the brand. We plan to branch out into other programs featuring *My Water Buddy and Family* members like a “*Just For Children*” talk show hosted by *My Water Buddy*, a kids’ cooking show with the *Tummy the Stomach*, a kids’ comedy hour featuring *Boney the Bone*, healthy and workout programs for kids with *BRAWNY the Muscle*, and STEM/STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) initiatives with *Whizzy the Brain*, etc.

Dr. Wright looks forward to the time when kids will go to supermarkets and not want anything else to drink but water, because “*Water is Everybody’s Best Buddy*”!

To learn more about Dr. Wright’s efforts on My Water Buddy and Family, visit <http://www.mywaterbuddy.com>. **E**