

Turning Points



Communities
In Schools

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS of Georgia News

FALL 2011

Strategies Summit Energizes Youth Advocates

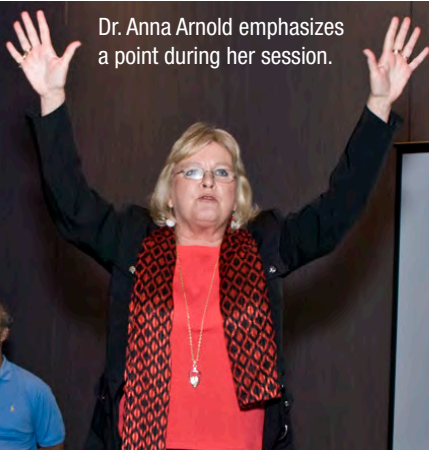
This year's annual Youth Success Strategies Summit at the Georgia Aquarium energized attendees through a variety of workshops, and presenters provided useful ideas and practical ways to help children, families and schools succeed. A partnership with Georgia Parental Information and Resource Center, Georgia Mentor Partnership, AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA made it possible for over 200 youth advocates from across the state to experience unique and affordable learning opportunities. The attendees included parent-engagement professionals as well as youth-serving program staff.

A full day of seminars and luncheon keynote speaker provided participants a way to learn in an interactive setting. Attendees found new ways of reaching out to their desired audience of youth and/or parents. The sessions focused on leading-edge strategies in areas such as bullying, leadership habits, social media, connecting with generation Y, and life choices for teens.

Dr. Farrah Gray, the luncheon keynote speaker and self-made millionaire by the age of 14, delivered a riveting message about how hard work and

determination can lead to achievement in life. At the conclusion of the presentation, Gray asked for examples of success from the attendees, and the crowd was more than willing to share stories of at-risk students defying the odds and achieving goals.

If you are interested in learning more about school and community collaboration, dropout prevention and other youth development and parental engagement strategies, consider attending next year's conference in September 2012. If you are a presenter who can provide leading-edge, interactive techniques that can easily be implemented, we would like to hear from you.



Dr. Anna Arnold emphasizes a point during her session.

Calendar of **EVENTS**

American Education Week **NOV** 13-19

National Parental Involvement Day **NOV** 17

National Mentoring Month **JAN** 1-31

CIS Student Achievement Month **JAN** 1-31

ML King, Jr. Day of Service **JAN** 16

Keynote speaker
Dr. Farrah Gray





With the 2011-12 school year in full swing, I am struck by the enormous opportunities a successful program of learning carries for every person in our state, even beyond the 4-18 year olds served by our public school systems. Stressing this, business and government leader in the 1960s and '70s, Clifford Alexander resolutely noted, *"There is only one way to end poverty, reduce crime, cure illness, ensure peace, and create opportunity. That one single way is education."* Powerful and TRUE! The sum of these ideas means through education there's a much better life for every person, unassailable strength for our economy and the promise of a vastly better America and world. Without effective education, we create a weak economy and we're all in big trouble.

Despite weaknesses in our economy today, there are huge opportunities. The Wall Street Journal noted in an op-ed piece on August 21, *"There is a profoundly positive story because some of our strongest companies are starved for talent. Qualified software engineers, managers, marketers and salespeople in Silicon Valley can rack up dozens of high-paying, high-upside job offers any time they want, while national unemployment and underemployment is sky high " ... but "...There's no way through this problem other than education."*

All students deserve an opportunity to attain economic success and it's our job to help them understand education is the key. Let's work harder to show kids how they can have successful careers in Silicon Valley, Georgia and elsewhere, in spite of today's economy, and provide them with the necessary tools to compete in today's global marketplace.

How do we go about providing the support to help kids succeed? By serving on school councils, volunteering as mentors and tutors and creating scholarships. We can also work with teachers, parents and educational leaders to ensure all students are challenged and supported, just like we do for our own children.

Thanks for Making Dine Out For Kids® a Success

The annual Dine Out For Kids® (DOFK) event allows Communities In Schools (CIS) to raise awareness and funds so that we can provide more students with literacy, youth leadership, after-school and other educational programs. This year's DOFK event raised more than \$26,000. DOFK provides restaurateurs, diners, sponsors and partners an easy way to get involved with CIS. Restaurateurs give a donation of 5-20% on DOFK day. Sponsors and media partners help defer the costs of printing and marketing. And of course without the diners, we would not have a successful event. We are grateful to all who supported this event and hope you will continue to support us. To view a statewide listing of our participating restaurants and learn more about DOFK, please visit dineoutforkids.com.

This year's partners/sponsors included the Georgia Restaurant Association, KISS 104.1 FM, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, WSB-TV and their Family2Family partners (Northside Hospital, American Signature Furniture, Scana Energy, Kroger and AirTran). We'd also like to thank Publix and Quick Trip for their donated gift cards and AirTran who donated two tickets for our drawing. Catherine Cage from Newnan, who dined at STEEL Restaurant & Lounge, was the lucky winner of the AirTran tickets. **If you are a restaurateur or a business who would like to support DOFK, please contact the marketing/communications department at 404-835-8907 or dblair@cisgeorgia.org. Next year's event will be held on Thursday, August 23.**



ommunities In Schools of Candler County is a valuable resource in fulfilling the needs of our children, as well as our families. We can sufficiently provide academic interventions to help at-risk children with reading and math deficiencies. However, without CIS, many of our students would not be adequately prepared with school supplies and other items such as basic hygiene essentials, clothing and nutritional needs. It's the advocacy of CIS in these areas that help us meet the non-academic challenges many students experience, which affect their ability to learn.

While we have a fantastic school staff, without the assistance of partners like CIS, our school-based student services division would only be able to scratch the surface in meeting needs. With CIS' help, we are able to identify and assist more young people who otherwise may slip through the cracks.

The Communities In Schools concept of "surrounding students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life" is alive and well in Candler County. It takes an advocacy group of citizens, led by a board of directors and engaged employees and parents in each of the

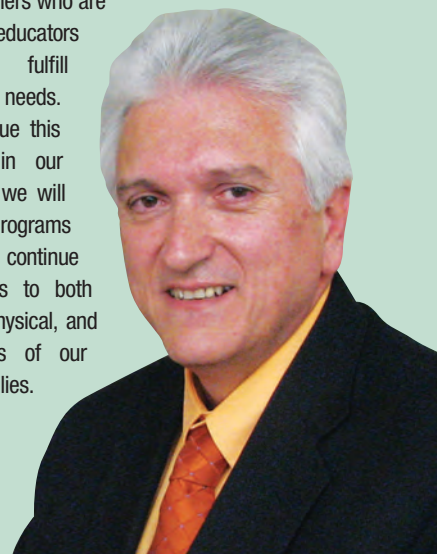
schools, to deliver direct and indirect services. CIS provides basic need resources, mentoring services, and literacy and tutoring programs at the elementary and middle school levels. CIS has a high school site coordinator in the Academic Success Center, a non-traditional school environment lab, to provide students with one-on-one assistance to recover academic credits and graduate on time. This coordinator meets with students weekly, delivers basic resources like food and clothing and assigns student mentors and tutors to help them succeed.

The graduation rate in Candler County has risen from 56 percent to 82 percent during the past four years, and I believe the leadership provided by CIS has been extremely instrumental in "saving lives." We are very grateful to our citizens and partners who are willing to help educators identify and fulfill non-academic needs. For us to continue this upward trend in our graduation rate, we will need more programs like CIS as we continue to find solutions to both the academic, physical, and emotional needs of our children and families.

Did You Know?

- CIS of Georgia was recognized in the Walmart Associates Choice Program and received \$10,000. The program awards monetary contributions based on voting by Walmart Associates.
- CIS of Laurens County Executive Director Jackie Curtis was recently selected as a Baldwin Fellow. The program is designed to help meet CIS' potential leadership challenges through opportunities for past and current leaders to share their wisdom and experience with emerging leaders.
- Grammy award-winning recording artist John Legend helped raise money and awareness for CIS through Procter & Gamble's *School the Nation* campaign. P&G also donated products to CIS, which was graciously distributed to local affiliates by Walmart.
- Shayla Jones of the Marietta Performance Learning Center® received a CIS Unsung Heroes Award. Jones is one of six recipients nationwide and the only nominee from Georgia. The award recognizes site coordinators who embody CIS' core values and demonstrate excellence in their work.

Guest Columnist
Dr. Tom Bigwood
Candler County Superintendent





Domino's Pizza



Subway

Dine Out For Kids®



McDonald's



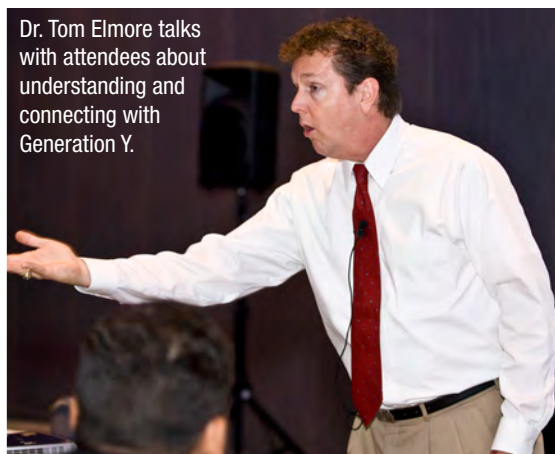
Metropolis Cafe



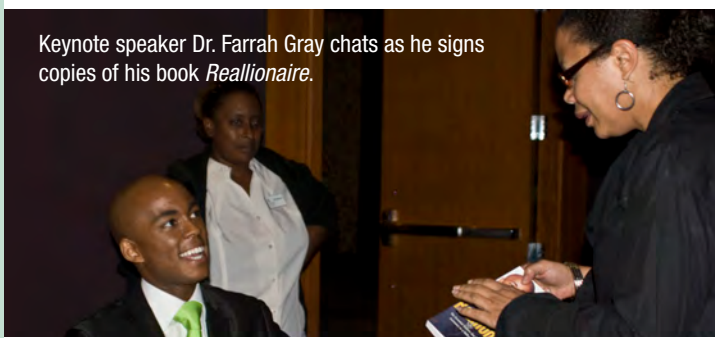
STEEL Restaurant & Lounge



Youth Success Strategies Summit



Dr. Tom Elmore talks with attendees about understanding and connecting with Generation Y.



Keynote speaker Dr. Farrah Gray chats as he signs copies of his book *Reallionaire*.



Event attendees participate in an exercise of blind musical chairs.



AT&T has a commitment to help improve education and strengthen communities, which makes them an ideal partner for Communities In Schools (CIS) of Georgia. During this year's 2011 AT&T Community NETWORK's National Professional Development Forum, the Community NETWORK, which is comprised of employees and retirees of AT&T Communications, Inc., had 50 volunteers from around the country help the Cobb County Performance Learning Center® (PLC) harvest crops and deliver to MUST Ministries, an organization that serves the underserved and homeless. Volunteers also assembled computer stations, helped beautify the campus and donated clothes to the Baby and Dress for Success Closets. *"Cobb Performance Learning Center is a wonderful learning environment and AT&T Community NETWORK was excited to partner with the school for a community service project. CIS is a wonderful organization supporting our youth and I encourage everyone to get involved,"* said Brenda Neal, AT&T Sr. Product Development Manager. Each year this type of community service project is conducted in the host city during AT&T's annual National Professional Development Forum.

AT&T also shares Communities In Schools' vision of investing in a well-educated workforce, and AT&T Aspire is the most significant education initiative in the



company's history. The initiative is working to reduce the number of high school dropouts and increase the number of college graduates and qualified, career ready workers. As part of AT&T Aspire, CIS National receives funds that are passed down to local affiliates. The affiliates in turn use the money to hire CIS site coordinators who provide at-risk students with mentoring, tutoring and other services to help them succeed in school. These coordinated services and funding help kids as they transition into college life and should improve the number of youth graduating from post-secondary institutions. This partnership is one of many that help CIS prepare students for careers and the workforce, which leads to thriving communities.

Successful Partnership

Communities In Schools of Georgia Key Program Areas:

- Mentoring
- Parent Engagement
- Performance Learning Centers®
- Literacy
- Youth Leadership Development

Georgia CIS Local Programs

Albany/Dougherty	Decatur	Jefferson
Athens/Clarke	Dodge	Jenkins
Augusta/Richmond	Douglas	Laurens
Baldwin	Effingham	Marietta/Cobb
Barrow	Elbert	McDuffie
Berrien	Fitzgerald/Ben Hill	Rome/Floyd
Bulloch	Fulton/DeKalb	Savannah/Chatham
Burke	Glascock	Screven
Candler	Glynn	Stephens
Catoosa	Hancock	Sumter
Cochran/Bleckley	Harris	Troup
Coweta	Hart	

CIS of Georgia provides training, technical assistance, and funding to locally managed programs to help young people succeed.

Communities In Schools of Georgia

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www.cisga.org

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Communities In Schools surrounds students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.