



## **Communities In Schools of Georgia**

### **A History of Accomplishments**

#### **Mission**

Communities In Schools of Georgia (CIS of Georgia) is part of a national network that uses a unique, scientifically-proven model to empower young people and their parents to take responsibility for their futures by removing obstacles to learning, providing and coordinating social services directly in the community, easing the burden on parents, and allowing teachers to teach and students to learn.

CIS of Georgia is different from traditional education support organizations because we partner with local school districts and community organizations to connect needed resources and services both to kids at risk of dropping out and their families. We are able to increase student achievement by meeting the unique needs of each youth, which might include providing social services in one case or a more intensive after-school tutoring program for another. CIS believes every child needs and deserves the Five Basics<sup>®</sup>:

- A personal, one-on-one relationship with a caring adult
- A safe place to learn and grow
- A healthy start and a healthy future
- A marketable skill to use upon graduation
- A chance to give back to peers and community

CIS has been working to help kids nationally for more than 30 years. Here is a brief history of our successes:

#### **1968**

- Postmaster General Winston Blount convinces Daniel Patrick Moynihan, head of President Nixon's Domestic Affairs Council, to expand the street academy concept into the Postal Academy Program. Street Academies helped inner-city youth graduate from high school.

#### **1970**

- Eighteen Postal Street Academies open in six cities: Washington DC, Newark, Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit and San Francisco. The Atlanta academy, formerly under the leadership of C.T. Martin, David Lewis and Victor Ware, opens its doors at three locations.

#### **1971**

- First Lady Pat Nixon holds a White House reception for six Postal State Academy directors.
- Bill Milliken, Neil Shorthouse and their families moved to Atlanta, and along with David Lewis created a precursor to CIS to support and develop academies, Exodus, Inc.

#### **1977-1980**

- CIS incorporates, under the name "Institutional Development Corporation," with three programs serving 2,674 students. The name is soon changed to "Cities In Schools."

- President Jimmy Carter, who became supportive of CIS as Georgia's governor, earmarks \$2.1 million to fund and expand CIS initiatives. Founding board members Dean Overman and Lilly Landrum Bolling write the first major CIS planning document – "The Blue Book" – and present it to the President. First Lady Rosalynn Carter, Budget Director Bert Lance and Senator Richard Lugar host a Cities In Schools kickoff for private-sector leaders.
- The CIS National office opens in Atlanta.
- President Carter then establishes offices for CIS in the Old Executive Office Building on the White House grounds. Jim Parham of the Georgia Department of Health and Human Services, Willoughby Walling and Jane Hansen coordinate the federal government's participation.

#### **1981**

- In Atlanta, Rich's Department Store provides an unused floor for an alternative school, plus jobs for CIS participants and time for its employees to work with CIS students.

#### **1983**

- Local CIS programs are independently incorporated to strengthen community-building, local ownership and funding responsibility.

#### **1984**

- Five local CIS programs serve about 8,000 students annually.

#### **1985**

- The Partnership Plan begins a unique collaboration among the US Departments of Justice, Labor, Health and Human Services and Education to support and expand CIS' work.

#### **1986**

- Fifteen CIS programs serve 6,287 students annually.

#### **1987**

- Twenty-three CIS programs serve 15,480 students annually.

#### **1988**

- Vice President George H.W. Bush visits an East Harlem CIS project and cites CIS as a "point of light" in the presidential debates.
- Twenty-eight CIS programs serve 16,857 students annually.
- Burger King Corporation, through its president and a CIS National Board Member, J. Jeffery Campbell, launches the CIS/Burger King Academy program. The US Department of Justice contributes \$600,000 in start-up funds; the first academy opens in a Miami synagogue.

#### **1989**

- Under the leadership of CIS Vice President of Administration Jim Hill, the National Center for Partnership Development is created in collaboration with Lehigh University's Iacocca Institute. Each year hundreds of community builders from throughout the United States learn how to replicate and expand CIS programs. CIS documents its strategies, methods and operations and translates them into training curricula.
- Jill Shaw Binder and Texas First Lady Linda Gale White begin the state program in Texas. The state legislature, with the leadership of State Senator Gonzalo Barrientos, provides funding to support and expand CIS in Texas.
- Neil Shorthouse and Ivan Allen, III work with the BellSouth Foundation who donates \$1 million to launch CIS state offices in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

#### **1991**

- Sixty-one CIS programs serve 36,747 students annually.

#### **1992**

- CIS signs a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of the Army, linking former Army personnel to job opportunities within the nationwide CIS network – the first such agreement the Army ever signed with a nonprofit organization.
- An evaluation of five Texas CIS programs finds that 84 percent of students were promoted to the next grade; 93 percent completed the academic year; and 95 percent of seniors graduated.

- The first CIS National Conference “Celebrating the CIS Vision,” is held in Arlington, VA. President Bill Clinton, who as governor, helped start CIS in Arkansas, delivers a video address to the attendees.

#### **1994**

- The CIS state-level concept solidifies with offices in twelve states: Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas and Washington.
- Championed by CIS of Georgia, the State Alternative Schools Program (aka-CrossRoads) gained approval (with the strong backing of Governor Miller and the Georgia Legislature). The creation of CrossRoads paved the way for substantial funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to Communities In Schools of Georgia for the development of the Performance Learning Centers®, which expanded to five other CIS states.
- Ninety-seven CIS programs serve 130,819 students annually.

#### **1995**

- The CIS Quality & Standards program, led by national board member Linda Gale White, is approved by the board of directors. This review process guarantees that local and state CIS programs have achieved the highest standards of management and accomplishment. El Paso becomes the first “chartered” CIS program under the new plan.
- One hundred sixteen CIS programs serve 200,241 students annually.

#### **1996**

- Cities In Schools is changed to Communities In Schools to more accurately capture CIS’ service to all communities, not just cities. The change also reflects the true nature of CIS’ relationship with and commitment to schools – the creating of community. CIS National launches a network identity program – “One Vision, One Voice” – to assist state and local programs during the brand evolution.

#### **1997**

- CIS enhances its national reputation with Bill Milliken helping to develop President Clinton’s “Summit for America’s Future,” and General Colin Powell’s “America’s Promise” adopts CIS’ “Five Basics” as its “Five Promises” delivered to all children.

#### **1998**

- Cisco Systems partners with CIS to develop the Global Networked Campus (GNC), a web-based application providing tools to better manage local programs, project sites, state offices and the entire CIS network. The GNC includes a virtual library of best practices, online toolkits, RFP and grant proposal templates, and CIS web-based training courses.
- The second CIS national conference, “Seeking Solutions through Partnerships for Youth,” is held in Washington, D.C.
- The School Success Profile (SSP), a powerful survey instrument, is unveiled after six years in development. CIS and experts at the University of North Carolina created this diagnostic tool to measure students’ needs, beliefs and success.
- One hundred thirty-five CIS programs serve 500,000 students annually.

#### **1999**

- *People* magazine chooses CIS as one of three charity beneficiaries for its 25th Anniversary Celebration, including magazine ads and a celebrity concert in New York City to raise funds and awareness for the program.
- One hundred fifty-four CIS programs serve 700,000 students annually.

#### **2000**

- The Corporation for National and Community Service becomes a primary donor of CIS.
- The CIS national network budget surpasses \$110 million and counts upon more than 40,000 volunteers who donate their time and expertise.

- One hundred sixty-four CIS programs operate in 2,300 education sites and provide services to 1.4 million students annually.

#### **2001**

- *Worth Magazine* names CIS one of the “100 charities that will save the world.”
- One hundred seventy-nine CIS programs provide services to 1.9 million students annually, operating in nearly 2,500 education sites and benefiting from two million volunteer hours from 45,000 individuals.

#### **2002**

- CIS launches the “Lunch with a Leader” online auction to raise funds and public awareness.
- CIS celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, now totaling 193 local programs.

#### **2003**

- CIS of Georgia receives more than \$6 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to launch the Performance Learning Center® (PLC) program. PLCs provide another learning option for high school students not succeeding in the traditional school setting.

#### **2006**

- The Governor’s Office, under Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue, launches a Graduation Coach program modeled after PLC “services coordinators,” providing funding for one coach to each of Georgia’s 385 high schools.
- CIS of Georgia helps launch the Graduation Coach program through a training services contract with the Georgia Department of Education. Georgia Power, with the Governor’s Office and CIS of Georgia, launches a Community Coaches initiative to support Graduation Coaches.

#### **2007**

- CIS of Georgia’s success with PLCs leads the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to grant an additional \$10 million for expanding the program into four additional states, while strengthening CIS’ national infrastructure.
- CIS National and CIS of Georgia hold a national conference to commemorate 30 years of service and the founding of CIS as a national network.
- Independent research by ICF International declares: “CIS is one of a very small number of dropout prevention programs in the country proven to keep students in school and is the *only* dropout prevention program in the nation with research to prove that it both increases graduation rates and decreases dropout rates.”
- CIS of Georgia launches the affiliate Five Star Fundraising Program to strengthen and expand local affiliate fundraising. This program included matching grants of personal donations to CIS local affiliates.
- Georgia’s Graduation Coach program expands to include more than 400 middle schools.

#### **2008**

- CIS of Georgia turns 20 and remains the national network’s largest state office (by number of local affiliates served).
- ICF International research validates the PLCs’ impact on increasing graduation rates, calling the work “substantively important.”
- CIS of Georgia develops a program to provide professional development for teachers and administrators through the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia and the Professional Association of Georgia Educators.
- The CIS network provides services to more than one million students in more than 3,400 schools in 27 states and the District of Columbia.

#### **2009**

- Governor Perdue allows each school district to decide how to use funds allocated for Graduation Coach’s, many elected to use the funds for other instructional needs.
- Performance Learning Centers® are now in six states: Georgia, North Carolina, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Washington.

- Performance Learning Centers in Georgia graduate 4,036 students.
- CIS partnerships with Board of Regents, Technical College System of Georgia, the Georgia Finance Commission, the Georgia Department of Education and other groups help to dramatically expand outreach to increase college enrollment for underrepresented students.
- Georgia State School Superintendent Kathy Cox announces graduation rate now at 78% - up from 63% in seven years; credits Communities In Schools as an important factor in these results.
- CIS of Georgia expands outreach to more than 47,000 parents.

**2010**

- ICF International completed their multi-year independent evaluation and concluded that CIS is the only dropout prevention program in the country that both reduces dropouts and increases graduation rates.