

Turning Points



Communities
In Schools

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF GEORGIA NEWS

F A L L 2 0 1 5

New Direction

As we enter our second year under new leadership, the state office, Communities In Schools (CIS) of Georgia, is working to position the CIS network as the premier model of success for high school graduation and dropout prevention. With this in mind, Dr. TJuan Dogan, CIS of Georgia board member and IBM corporate citizenship and corporate affairs manager, helped CIS secure an IBM Impact Grant to develop strategic planning goals. The grant provided consulting expertise to assist CIS of Georgia leadership and stakeholders with creating a new strategic plan with the following priorities:

- Raise brand awareness and influence throughout the state
- Align staff with strategic objectives and invest in professional development
- Recruit additional board members and develop a high capacity board that partners for leadership success with CIS of Georgia's team
- Increase fundraising capacity for growth and sustainability of CIS of Georgia and the network
- Create and maintain a CIS state level organization that provides impactful support to the network and drives increased reach and outcomes for students

In addition to our strategic planning work, the state office is also embarking on a two-year program with The Bridgespan Group. Bridgespan's team coaches and supports the CIS of Georgia leadership team in classroom

sessions with other nonprofits and individually during project work. The collaboration will help accelerate our social impact through an organizational diagnostic process that provides tools to make better decisions regarding resource allocation. Success in the program requires an investment in analytical rigor metrics and stakeholder involvement.

We believe all of this work will help clarify the outcomes that CIS of Georgia wants to achieve, provide strategies to achieve them and measure results. It will also provide a stronger connection with our stakeholders as we are able to better articulate the impact CIS of Georgia and our network of affiliates have on increasing graduation rates in Georgia.



Calendar of EVENTS

Georgia Gives Day	NOV	12
American Education Week	NOV	16-20
National Parent Involvement Day	NOV	19
Georgia Apply to College Month	NOV	1-30
CIS Student Achievement Month	JAN	1-31
National Mentoring Month	JAN	1-31
Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday & Day of Service	JAN	18
Georgia Family Engagement Conference	FEB	4-6



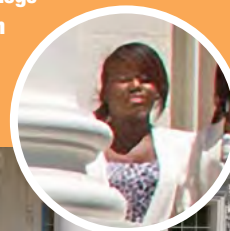
As fall settles in, most of us think of leaves turning, Friday night lights and cool weather. I'm contemplating a new fact of public schools. For the first time in history, poor children are now the majority in public schools. These students face a plethora of obstacles that affect their ability to come to school prepared to learn. So many come to school hungry, homeless, ill-clothed or lacking basic medical and dental care, while their families struggle to meet everyday economic challenges. Teachers are overwhelmed by their level of need. But they know that student poverty is a barrier to effective learning in the classroom. That's why a recent poll of teachers nationwide found last year that 54% used their own money to help feed students and 49% helped their students get new clothing or footwear. Teachers are doing what they can to improve classroom learning.

With these realities, we should ask ourselves what we can do as individuals and corporations to help. As a citizen, I've volunteered with youth organizations. There's always a need for volunteers. As you can probably surmise, schools need help; they can't do it alone. Fall is a good time to start thinking about how you can contribute to a successful school year. Sociologists tell us that "we only count what matters to us." So ask yourself if your local schools and teachers matter. Don't wait until you hear through the news about a school or a specific teacher needing help with a project or event. Why not contact your local school or CIS affiliate now and find out how you can volunteer? We can all do something to help kids focus on learning and provide educators extra support so they can focus on teaching. Let's all work harder this school year to ensure students struggling academically and their families in low-income communities understand that education is the key to success, and advocate for disadvantaged youth so they can have the same opportunities as their peers and reach their full potential. Get more involved and be supportive of local schools. Caring adults make a difference, particularly in the life of a child who lives in poverty and faces academic and non-academic challenges to learning.

Beating the Odds

A Cobb County high school graduate who received CIS services, Mahogany Roundtree, was one of three Georgia students and among the 130 who attended an educational summit at the White House this past summer. The summit is part of First Lady Michelle Obama's Reach Higher Initiative, which encourages students to pursue and complete post-secondary education programs. Mahogany was chosen based on academic achievement, leadership skills, college aspirations and her ability to overcome challenges faced as one of six children raised by a single mom. She was able to beat the odds (while working a job) with the help of her CIS site coordinator, Shay Montgomery, and become the first in her family to go to college. Mahogany is currently enrolled at Chattahoochee Tech.

As we roll into November, which is Georgia Apply to College month, CIS of Georgia will provide the network with information for students and parents about how to make attending college a reality for students like Mahogany.



I joined the CIS of Georgia board because I am passionate about helping young people realize their full potential. In most instances, their journey toward success begins with obtaining a solid education and seeking opportunities to pursue college and career. Many students are faced with societal hurdles that make it difficult for them to succeed and that's where CIS steps in. I'm inspired by the CIS model which provides a community of support, with school-based site coordinators who help connect students and their families to services that will help them succeed. This model of integrated student support has been nationally evaluated and proven to be highly effective.

I also joined the CIS board because I recognize that education is one of the most important issues facing our state and fundamental to economic growth. In my role at IBM, I am concerned about how we will recruit our next generation workforce, especially employees with skills in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math. According to the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education's Economics of Education Report, Georgia is predicted to add 1.5 million jobs by 2020, with more than 60% of those jobs requiring education beyond high school. This is a clear indication that we all need to be concerned about how to ensure that Georgia's students graduate and are prepared to enter the workforce with 21st century skills.

As a board member, I continue to learn more about how CIS of Georgia helps affiliates in the network with core

functions that support development, infrastructure, financial viability, and sustainability. IBM recently supported CIS of Georgia with an Impact Grant to focus on strategic planning, strengthen its organizational capacity and better serve the CIS network. I encourage you to get involved with a CIS affiliate in your community, or any other youth serving organization. Our students' futures are at stake and it will take our collective efforts to help them reach their full potential and position them for success.

Guest Columnist

Dr. Tjuan Dogan

IBM Corporate
Citizenship &
Corporate
Affairs



Did You Know?

- **Communities In Schools of Georgia** is a collaborative partner and host with Georgia Department of Education and other youth advocates for the 2016 Georgia Family Engagement Conference February 4-6.
- A full-page Communities In Schools *Change the Picture* ad was featured in a September issue of Time magazine.
- Partnerships help local affiliates support students struggling academically. **AT&T** awarded CIS of Glynn County with a check for **\$45,000**. The donation will help support their work with ninth-grade students.
- Communities In Schools of Georgia received a \$172,705 AmeriCorps grant and was one of 17 nonprofits in Georgia to receive this state funding through their partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Dine Out For Kids®

Fall Events



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Communities In Schools of Georgia Network Key Program Areas:

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

Georgia CIS Local Programs

Albany/Dougherty	Cochran/Bleckley	Marietta/Cobb
Athens/Clarke	Coweta	Rome/Floyd
Atlanta	Dodge	Savannah/Chatham
Augusta/Richmond	Douglas	Troup
Baldwin	Fitzgerald/Ben Hill	Turner
Berrien	Glascok	Walton
Burke	Glynn	Warren
Candler	Hancock	Washington
Carrollton/Carroll	Hart	Wilkes
Catoosa	Henry	
Central Georgia	Laurens	

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

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

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The AmeriCorps Reading Tutorial is an important program for many of Communities In Schools (CIS) of Georgia's local affiliates. This program, funded by the **Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism**, allows 26 AmeriCorps members an opportunity to cost-effectively serve children in grades 3-12 and families in Atlanta, Augusta, and Baldwin, Ben Hill, Burke, Carroll, Dodge, Glascock and Washington counties this school year. After attending training conducted by CIS of Georgia, attendees learned innovative tutoring techniques from the National Tutoring Association. These members are now equipped to provide reading assistance to hundreds of students in small groups or one-on-one tutoring.

CIS of Georgia's role with this reading program is to ensure contract guidelines are followed and data is collected for reporting, as well as conduct 3-4 hands-on trainings and monthly webinars and teleconferences throughout the year. Additionally, CIS of Georgia provides guidance and support to local affiliates as they recruit AmeriCorps members and determine what works best within their respective schools and communities.

Last year AmeriCorps served 400 students in 21 schools, helping 67% improve their average in academic coursework and providing assistance to 95% who graduated or were promoted to the next grade level. Members hope to increase the number of students served during this school year by utilizing their new learned tutoring techniques, which provides additional support to improve academic success.

AmeriCorps members earned certificates in tutoring from the National Tutoring Association and pledged to help improve reading performance on end of year assessments.



Successful Partnership