



Communities In Schools to Help Students in their Quest to Graduate with \$1.25 Million from AT&T

North Carolina Boasts 2 of 18 Programs Receiving \$10 Million in Contributions Across U.S.

Raleigh, NC, Aug. 8, 2016 — Two of North Carolina’s Communities In Schools (CIS) organizations have been selected to receive \$1.25 million from AT&T, reflecting the success of CIS in supporting and motivating underserved students to stay in school and prepare for their next step in life.

CIS of North Carolina and CIS of Wilkes County are two of only 18 recipients nationwide that will share in \$10 million from AT&T through the [Aspire Connect to Success Competition](#). Recipient organizations deliver integrated student supports, focus on college or career preparation, and/or provide mentoring or peer-to-peer supports to help underserved students graduate.

CIS of North Carolina will receive \$750,000 to support the Powering the Future program, which serves students in grades 9 - 12, in six rural high schools in Conway, Littleton, Oxford, Warrenton, Weldon, and Windsor, where graduation rates are far below the state average and fewer than 25% of students are grade-level-proficient.

“We are passionately committed to changing the future for children,” said Dr. Eric Hall, President and CEO of Communities In Schools of North Carolina. “Combining the art of one-on-one relationships with the science of proven, evidence-based programs and the power of community support, we help remove barriers that keep students from succeeding in school and life. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to make a difference for students in these six rural communities where resources are very limited.”

CIS of Wilkes County will receive \$500,000 to expand the Increasing Intentionality Initiative, which serves 5,516 students in grades 9 - 12, into seven high-poverty, rural high schools in North Wilkesboro and Taylorsville. Of the more than 5,500 students in grades 9-12 who will be served by this expansion, more than 1,000 will receive individualized, case-managed services.

“For far too many students, their vision of the future stops at the closest mountaintop,” said Glendora Yarbrough, Executive Director of CIS-Wilkes. “By engaging caring adults and providing the link between educators and the community, we seek to encourage students to look beyond their horizon and pursue their dreams, a journey that begins with staying in school and preparing for life.”



A dedicated CIS Site Coordinator will be located in each of the 13 high schools impacted by this contribution to coordinate and implement targeted and schoolwide interventions aimed at increasing graduation rates and improving student achievement.

Voices from Around the State

- “North Carolina’s future economic success begins with academic success today. That’s why continuing to work together to reduce the dropout rate is vital. Programs like Communities In Schools, supported by the private sector, open the door to a new, positive future for students who might otherwise be left behind.” -- **Gov. Pat McCrory**
- “Every child deserves the opportunity to succeed and to fully realize their gifts and abilities. The CIS program makes that possible for many children who have been trapped by circumstances not of their making. I am thrilled that this program will now be coming to six schools in eastern North Carolina and look forward to the impact which it will have.” – **U.S. Rep. G.K. Butterfield (NC-1)**
- “Growing up in the mountains of North Carolina, I learned firsthand how education plays a vital role in the success of individual Americans. Education can change lives, especially when you have community support and a network of caring adults dedicated to helping all children reach their potential. That’s what CIS is all about and why I am excited to see it expand in North Carolina’s 5th District.” –**U.S. Rep. Virginia Foxx (NC-5)**
- “My top goal since I took office hasn’t changed: a 100 percent graduation rate. A high school diploma is the minimum requirement students must meet to land a job that will lead them into a successful career. Private-sector support, like this funding from AT&T, can help make that goal a reality.” – **NC Superintendent of Public Instruction June Atkinson**
- “At BEST NC, we envision a North Carolina in which every student graduates from high school with the knowledge, skills and behaviors to succeed in a competitive global economy. We are convinced that every student can succeed if they are surrounded by systems of support, like those provided by Communities in Schools, and that the business community has the opportunity and capacity to increase the college and workforce readiness of all students. Initiatives like AT&T’s support for the CIS program will help ensure the well-educated workforce that our businesses and economy require.” -- **Brenda Berg, CEO, BEST NC (www.BESTNC.org)**

Hundreds of organizations applied to the [Aspire Connect to Success Competition](#), which is part of [AT&T Aspire](#), our signature philanthropic initiative to help students succeed in



school and beyond. Through a competitive request for proposal process, the 18 non-profits were selected based on their effectiveness in helping students graduate ready for career or college. Selected programs use evidence-based approaches to serve students and are able to demonstrate quantitative results.

“For every young person, a high school diploma is essential, not only for future success in academics or their career, but as a milestone which affirms they can accomplish what they set out to do,” said Venessa Harrison, president of AT&T North Carolina. “At AT&T, we see young people as the future of our company, our communities, and our country. That’s why, through Aspire, we support programs that invest in students, especially those who need it the most, so they can walk across the graduation stage with excitement, prepared for success in the next chapter of their lives.”

About Philanthropy & Social Innovation at AT&T

AT&T is committed to advancing education, strengthening communities and improving lives. Through its community initiatives, AT&T has a long history of investing in projects that create learning opportunities; promote academic and economic achievement; or address community needs. AT&T Aspire is AT&T’s signature philanthropic initiative that drives innovation in education by bringing diverse resources to bear on the issue including funding, technology, employee volunteerism, and mentoring. Through Aspire, we’ve passed the \$250 million mark on our plan to invest \$350 million in education from 2008-2017.

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