Communities In Schools Announces Challenge Schools Winners

CIS of Georgia to Receive $881,111 in Grant Funds to Address Student Achievement Gap

Arlington, Va. -- Communities In Schools (CIS), the national organization that empowers at-risk students to stay in school and on a path to a brighter future, today announced the CIS affiliates that will share $13 million in grant funding to support students in 23 communities across 11 states.

The winning affiliates were selected in a competitive grant process funded through a multimillion-dollar donation by AbbVie, a research-based global biopharmaceutical company. Recipients were chosen based on their ability to improve graduation rates, reduce chronic absenteeism, and increase college and career readiness for students in kindergarten through grade 12, especially in high-poverty neighborhoods.

Over the 3-year project period, 4,487 additional students in Georgia will benefit from CIS services. CIS of Georgia will seek to match AbbVie’s investment to sustain this accelerated growth and expansion into seven additional schools in seven communities including:

- Athens/Clarke County
- Troup County
- Marietta/Cobb County
- Glynn County
- Muscogee County
- Dougherty County
- Meriwether County

Across the country, 94,300 students from 127 schools will be supported with the grant funds. The grant winners include Communities In Schools affiliates or state offices in:
“We are Georgia’s leading organization in providing student wrap-around services to support student success in school. Every day, we work inside schools helping kids who come to school hungry, homeless, lacking medical care or needing emotional support,” said Communities In Schools of Georgia President and CEO Carol Lewis. “This major investment by Communities In Schools National and AbbVie will allow us to accelerate that work in our communities and ensure more kids have a brighter future.”

“There are millions of at-risk students who live in poverty and face significant barriers to education,” said Dale Erquiaga, president and CEO of Communities In Schools. “These grants are an important step in connecting those students to caring adults and community resources so they can fulfill their potential.”

The Challenge Schools winners are receiving support under a grant from AbbVie. In November, AbbVie announced a total donation of $30 million to the Communities In Schools National Office to provide essential support services to underserved children. This investment is the largest single corporate donation Communities In Schools has received in its 40-year history. The remaining support from the AbbVie grant is going to students in 16 high-need Chicago Public Schools.

“We believe that nothing is more important than a foundation in education, and Communities In Schools has dedicated over 40 years to making a high school diploma a reality for millions of students,” said Laura Schumacher, vice chairman, external affairs and chief legal officer, AbbVie. “We choose to work with CIS because their programs work, and they can reach our shared ambition to give youth across the country the confidence and tools they need to succeed.”

**About Communities In Schools (Georgia)**
Communities In Schools (CIS) Georgia is part of the nation’s largest organization dedicated to empowering at-risk students to stay in school and on a path to a brighter future. Working directly inside more than 244
schools across Georgia, we connect kids to caring adults and community resources designed to help them succeed. We do whatever it takes to ensure that all kids—regardless of the challenges they may face—have what they need to realize their potential. For more information about Communities In Schools of Georgia, please visit cisga.org.

About AbbVie
AbbVie is a global, research and development-based biopharmaceutical company committed to developing innovative advanced therapies for some of the world’s most complex and critical conditions. The company’s mission is to use its expertise, dedicated people and unique approach to innovation to markedly improve treatments across four primary therapeutic areas: immunology, oncology, virology and neuroscience. In more than 75 countries, AbbVie employees are working every day to advance health solutions for people around the world. For more information about AbbVie, please visit us at www.abbvie.com. Follow @abbvie on Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn.