

# 2010-2011 ANNUAL REPORT



Communities  
In Schools

Miami

## Choosing Success



# From **The Executive Director**



Elizabeth Mejia  
Executive Director

Communities In Schools has become one of the most effective dropout prevention organizations in America because of our deep commitment to an evidence base and rigorously evaluated approach to assisting young people in need. We are very proud and fortunate to have this model available to our schools and students in Miami.

This report highlights the triumph of sound practice and strategies over severe economic challenges. The majority of our students and their families (86%) come from low-income households. Poverty combined with health, personal, and other obstacles that students face, contributes to the national dropout epidemic where every nine seconds a student drops out of school. In Miami, we are mobilizing community resources to support our schools in addressing the holistic needs of students so that they are empowered to succeed and achieve in life. After a five-year longitudinal study conducted by renowned social science research leaders, ICF International, the Communities In Schools model has been proven to be effective in reducing dropout rates and increasing on-time graduation rates. The study also concluded that the more fully the model is applied, the stronger the impact. To ensure fidelity to the model, CIS National launched a Total Quality Standards Accreditation process. I am proud to share that Communities In Schools of Miami, Inc. was the first Florida affiliate to achieve accreditation. Our investors can rest assured that we are using the best, evidence-based approach to make a difference in Miami.

We are grateful to all of our stakeholders who contribute to our success. It is only through such collaborations that we are able to succeed. The accomplishments detailed in this report reflects our joint efforts to effectively deal with the dropout epidemic in our nation. Much work is still needed, but we are confident that together we will continue to make a difference.

*Elizabeth Mejia*

# The **mission** of Communities In Schools is to **surround** students with a **community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.**

## Our programs are guided by the **Five Basics**

Developed by our founder, Bill Milliken, the “Five Basics” are a set of essentials that every child needs and deserves.

### 1. A one-on-one relationship with a caring adult

Children need positive role models to create expectations for success, offer encouragement and provide academic support. We connect students with mentors and tutors. Often, site coordinators are the caring adult in a child’s life, providing encouragement, academic support, or a simple hug.

### 2. A safe place to learn and grow

Through after-school and summer programs focused on academics and life skills, we are dedicated to ensuring that students have a safe and appropriate environment in which to learn and achieve their potential. Violence prevention programs also works to promote safe environments.

### 3. A healthy start and a healthy future

Many school-aged children lack basic health services and nutritious food—essential for healthy development. We provide access to vision and health care services, food backpack programs, and counseling services for thousands of students who might otherwise go without.

### 4. A marketable skill to use upon graduation

When students see that they have options in life, they get excited about their future. We work with students on career development and readiness and help create pathways to college.

### 5. A chance to give back to peers and community

We work with students to build their confidence, develop their talents and leadership skills, and strengthen their involvement in community service initiatives.

These Basics were provided in **16 schools and four community base centers** through the following programs:

**Bridges to Graduation**—serving five high schools: Dorothy Wallace COPE South (alternative school for pregnant teens and teen mothers), Corporate Academy North, Corporate Academy South, Miami Jackson Senior High, and Miami Northwestern Senior High School. Services provided included mentoring, counseling, tutoring, life skills, and career readiness. This year a pilot Diplomas Now project, a national school transformation initiative, was launched in partnership with John Hopkins University’s Talent Development and City Year.

**Violence Intervention Project**—serving three middle schools: JFK Middle School, Miami Edison Middle School, and North Miami Middle School plus two high schools, Miami Edison Senior High School and North Miami Senior High School. Services provided included mentoring, counseling, tutoring, violence prevention services, and family strengthening programs.

**AmeriCorps Programs**—serving five elementary schools: Poinciana Elementary, Earlington Elementary, Holmes Elementary, Caribbean Elementary, and Liberty City Elementary and three community-based after school and summer camp sites.: NFL YET, Allen Park, and Miami Rescue Mission. Services included: in-school reading tutoring, after school and summer programs that offered homework assistance, visual and performing arts, fitness and health programs, technology programs, and literacy programs.

**Supplemental Education Services (SES)**—CIS of Miami is an approved SES provider that provides free math and reading tutoring to eligible students in grades k-12. CIS Provider Code #0292.

# HOW COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS WORKS

Through school-based coordination, Communities In Schools connects students and their families to needed community resources.

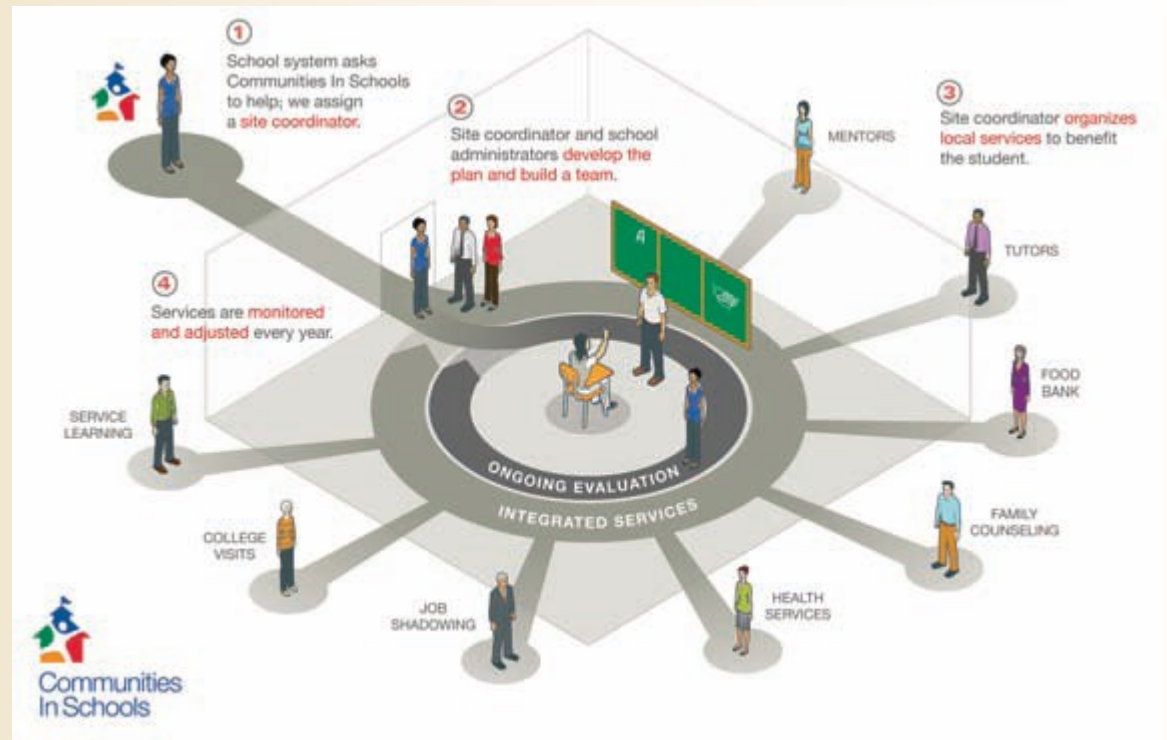
Using an evidence-based and rigorously evaluated model of helping students with the greatest need, Communities In Schools has become one of the nation's leading dropout prevention organizations and the only one proven to both decrease dropout rates and increase on-time graduation rates.

## National Evaluation

In 2010, Communities In Schools completed the most comprehensive evaluation of dropout prevention programs ever conducted. The five-year study, conducted by ICF International, one of the nation's foremost social science evaluation firms, concluded that Communities In Schools' model resulted in the strongest reduction in dropout rates of any existing fully scaled dropout prevention program that has been evaluated, that CIS is unique in having an effect on both reducing dropout rates and increasing graduation rates, and that the model is effective across states, school settings, grade levels, and student ethnicities. The more fully the model is implemented the stronger the effects.

This led to a national effort to launch an accreditation process which affirms that an affiliate is applying the model with fidelity and adhering to the best nonprofit management standards.

**CIS of Miami was the first Florida affiliate to achieve national accreditation.**



**Every year, 1.2 million students dropout of school. That means every nine seconds a student in America loses his or her path to a better future.**

**Thanks to your support, we are successful in redirecting thousands of students in Miami-Dade county back on the path to stay in school and graduate.**

# Summary of Successes

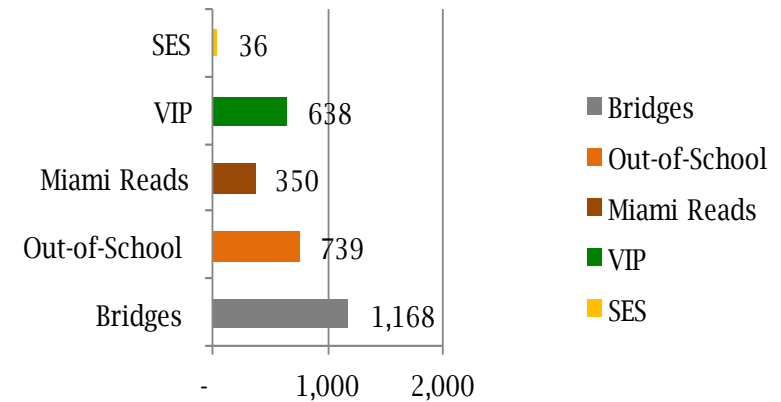
Communities In Schools of Miami (CIS of Miami) served 2,931 children through four (4) programs: Bridges to Graduation, AmeriCorps Programs, Violence Intervention Project (VIP), and Supplemental Education Services (SES). In addition, CIS of Miami served 7,365 youth and children through school and community-wide special activities and events held throughout the year. **A total of 10,296 students in Miami-Dade County benefited from CIS of Miami's services.**

Highlighted outcomes for this year include:

- CIS of Miami experienced a 55% increase in the number of students receiving targeted Level Two services and a 40% increase in those receiving Level One services (school-wide services not tracked for outcomes).
- 77% of the eligible students in Bridges to Graduation graduated and received their diploma or certificate.
- 91% of students were promoted.
- 88% of Bridges students that were referred to CIS due to academic needs improved their grade point average, and 80% of students who participated in the mentor program improved their grade point average.
- 81% of the children in Miami Reads! and Out-of-School programs improved their reading skills.
- 91% of youth in VIP increased their knowledge on non-violent problem solving skills.
- 92% of students serving their suspensions in the Alternative to Suspension program did not incur a repeat suspension.

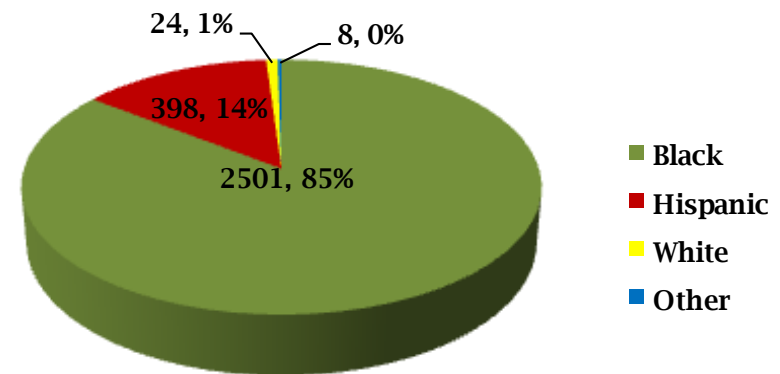
CIS of Miami mobilized the following community resources: 1) **356 volunteers** provided 53,162 hours of service; 2) In all, 95 agencies, groups, and businesses partnered with CIS of Miami and contributed programming and services; 3) \$1,276,331 in in-kind facilities, goods, and services were received, representing a 71% increase from the prior year.

## Enrollment By Program

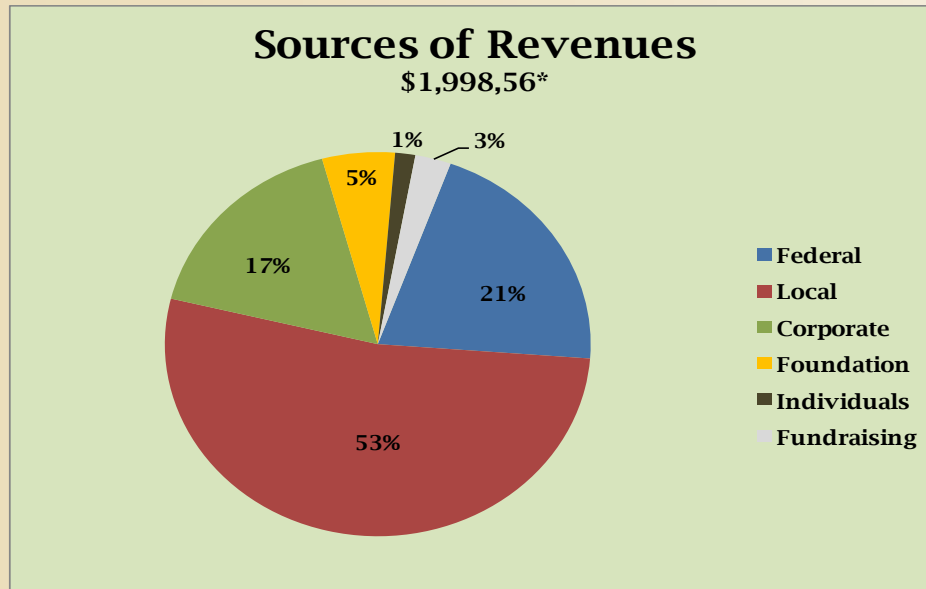


\*An additional 7,365 students benefited from CIS of Miami level one services

## Participant Demographics



# Investing In Our Future



\*excludes in-kind resources (facilities, goods and services) that totaled to \$1,276,331

**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:** AT&T, Bank of America ~ Carlton Fields ~ Carnival Cruise Lines ~ The Children's Trust ~ CIS of Florida ~ CIS National ~ Florida Marlins ~ Gibraltar Private Bank & Trust ~ Gwen Cherry Park Foundation ~ Home Builders Institute ~ Jack and Jill of America Foundation ~ JP Morgan Chase Foundation ~ Miami-Dade County ~ Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs ~ Miami-Dade County Parks & Recreation ~ Miami Dolphins ~ Miami Foundation ~ Miami Seaquarium ~ NBC Universal Foundation ~ Office Depot Foundation ~ Payless Shoes 4Kids ~ Peacock Foundation, Inc. ~ PepsiCo ~ Publix Super Markets Charities ~ Rachlin Foundation ~ Joseph H. and Florence A. Roblee Foundation ~ William J. and Tina Rosenberg Foundation ~ Wells Fargo ~ State Farm Insurance ~ Volunteer Florida ~ Individual Donors.



# Why CIS is needed

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## *Who Would Have Thought?*

“Who would have ever thought that I would be visiting an actual property manager’s office?” Such was the thoughts in Dominique Houser’s mind as she was invited to join the Communities In Schools of Miami’s school to work mentor program.

According to Dominique, who graduated from Miami Northwestern Senior High School, “being in the mentor program was one of the best things I’ve ever done.” Dominique was matched with a mentor from KW Property Management Company. The once quiet senior blossomed, eventually earning a summer job as an Assistant Manager at one of the KWPM properties. The position was right up her alley, as she would like to pursue a degree in Hospitality and Tourism at Miami Dade College.

Dominique’s journey to graduation has not been easy having lost her mother to a rare form of lung cancer after battling with the illness for many years. Since then Dominique has struggled just to stay afloat. With all of the obstacles she has faced in her young life, she considers herself a stronger person today thanks to the support of Communities In Schools of Miami.

Dominique was invited to attend the HBI National Summit in New Orleans where she presented on a Youth Panel about the impact of mentoring. She has also been awarded the Patsy and Herman Smith Fund Scholarship through the Home Builders Institute to assist with transportation and college expenses.

Who would have thought? **CIS of Miami definitely thought and believed in Dominique!**



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# *Empowering Students to Achieve*

11965 SW 142 Terrace, Unit 102, Miami, FL 33186 ~ (305) 252-5444 ~ [www.cismiami.org](http://www.cismiami.org)

