

Communities In Schools of Greater Greensboro Celebrates Students' Success at its 18th Annual Student Awards Luncheon

In partnership with Citi, Communities In Schools of Greater Greensboro (CISGG) held its 18th Annual Student Awards Luncheon at the Greensboro Coliseum Special Events Center on April 29, 2010. Over 470 students and guests attended. CISGG is a United Way member nonprofit organization with 21 years of success in helping kids stay in school and prepare for life, utilizing the best community resources and partnerships.

The celebration was emceed by The Incredible Busta' Brown, 90.1WNAA-FM afternoon DJ and a favorite of the students. The Citi Versa-Style employee band provided entertainment. Featured speakers included Alan W. Duncan, Chairman, Guilford County Board of Education, and The Honorable Bruce E. Davis, Guilford County Commissioner. Patrice Brown, Principal, Archer Elementary; Rayshawn McKinnon, Executive Pastor, Awaken City Church and a Dudley CIS alum; and Hugh Holston, Area Manager, AT&T Mobility and Chairman of the CISGG Board of Directors, also spoke. They challenged the students to continue their success in school and in life, noting that each of them can achieve with self-confidence and hard work.

One hundred thirty-four (134) students were recognized for reading improvement, school to career transition preparation, improvement in attendance, grades, and behavior, overcoming adversity, consistency, citizenship, and outstanding all-around performance.

Elementary school students who made Great Leaps in their reading were recognized, along with Dudley and Smith High School students who are 21st Century Scholars. Much cheering and clapping was heard, as students and guests applauded the award winners, many of whom would be considered at-risk students.

Two students received special recognition as recipients of the Francine Scott Keep Comin' Back Award. This award is presented to the high school senior who refuses to give up and perseveres in school despite adverse circumstances. This year's recipient from Dudley High School was Terrell Collins. Terrell was unable to attend school first semester this year when he had to step up and provide a home and basic needs for himself and his two younger siblings. When he returned to school second semester, CISGG assigned a mentor and case workers who helped get Terrell back on track to graduate with his class. He attended school from 8 am to 8 pm in order to make up his first semester and complete his second semester. He made straight A's and received the highest score in the district on the Biology benchmark test.

This year's recipient from Smith High School was Nicholas Hill. Nicholas was having discipline problems beginning in freshman year. He spent a lot of time in suspension and was sent to an alternative school for his junior year because of his behavior. Despite these issues, he worked well with and developed a good relationship with the CISGG social work intern who was assigned to him. After his year at the alternative year, when

most kids would just drop out, Nicholas came back to Smith and asked to work with CISGG again. After much hard work this year, Nicholas will graduate in June.

The D. Hayes Clement Outstanding Student Award is presented to the high school senior who has demonstrated the highest standard of character and leadership. Mr. Clement is the chairman emeritus and founder of CISGG. This year's awards went to Dudley High School senior Nanagoul Shol, and to Smith High School senior Justin Jackson.

The Most Improved Student award is presented to those students at each high school grade level who succeeded at demonstrating significant improvement in grades, attendance and behavior. This year's recipients from Dudley High School were Sherrod Davis (12th grade), Kiera Baskerville (11th grade), Almoubarak Abdoulaye (10th grade), and Walter Morehead II (9th grade). From Smith High School, the awards went to Khorrie Cochran (12th grade), Askia Abdul-Rahman (11th grade), Drewone Williams (10th grade), and Breanca Allred (9th grade).

CISGG Executive Director Jimmi Williams and his staff presented Champion's Cup Awards for compassionate and thoughtful service to thirteen guests, including Sebrina Cooke-Davis, Sherby Terrell, E. Floyd Guidry, Dr. Tony Watlington, Jeff Thigpen, Frederick Cundiff, Paula Ritter-Lipscomb, the Greensboro Housing Coalition, Frances Hodges, Susan C. Wiseman, Hugh Holston, Ricky and Kelly Proehl, and Anne McCabe Beamon.

Community partners and supporters who attended this event included:

- Mr. Keith Barsuhn, President, United Way of Greater Greensboro
- Tina Akers Brown, Executive Director, Greensboro Housing Authority and volunteer chairwoman of the Growing Successful Kids Focus Area of the United Way
- Dr. Nora Carr, Chief of Staff, Guilford County Schools
- Ms. Sandra Alexander, Board of Education, Guilford County Schools and CIS Board of Directors
- Ms. Mona Edwards, Vice President, Chief of Staff and Secretary to the Board of Governors, Center for Creative Leadership, and incoming member of the CIS Board of Directors
- William "Bill" Guill, Greensboro Regional REALTORS Association
- Mr. Angelo Kidd, GCS Regional Superintendent, Western Region
- Francine Mallory, principal, Peck Elementary and site of a new CIS project in 2010-2011
- Karen Martinez, Guilford Child Development
- John Modest, GCS Regional Superintendent, Northern Region
- Steve Oates, Executive Director, GCS Southeastern Region
- The Hon. John Parks, County Commissioner
- Corey Pitz and John Whisnant, Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro

- Diane Poe, Division Director, Economic Services, DSS
- Beverly I Williams, Coordinated Services Manager, Guilford County
- Gwen Willis, Chief Student Services Officer, GCS
- Eric C. Wiseman, Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, VF Corporation
- Dr. Terry Worrell, Regional Superintendent, Central Region

The staff of CISGG would like to thank the following in-kind contributors for providing many gifts and donating their time for the students in attendance: Busta' Brown, Citi, Gregory J. Deans and Citi Versa-Style, Syngenta, Dudley Junior Air Force ROTC, David Durham (Citi-Videographer), Guilford Education Alliance, The Natural Science Center, Kenneth Smith and Domino's Pizza, and VF Corporation.