



PRESS RELEASE
February 26, 2008

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Communities In Schools' founder to visit Charlotte, speak about urgency of dropout crisis at CIS event

CHARLOTTE, N.C. - Communities In Schools' founder and longtime youth advocate, Bill Milliken, will visit Charlotte March 6 to speak at a Communities In Schools (CIS) of Charlotte-Mecklenburg "friend-raiser," hosted by CIS-Charlotte and UNC-Charlotte Chancellor and Mrs. Philip Dubois at UNC-Charlotte's Bissell House.

Milliken has recently authored a book, *The Last Dropout: Stop the Epidemic!* [Hay House, 2007]. One in three children fail to graduate high school, and *The Last Dropout* explains how an entire community can come together to reverse a crisis that will have a lasting impact on the future of the country.

"Children dropping out in record numbers is one of the greatest justice issues of our time," said Milliken. "But when communities come together and employ the nine principles contained in *The Last Dropout*, a blueprint for change is created that helps young people stay in school and graduate prepared for life."

"We are excited that Bill Milliken is coming to share the CIS story with the Charlotte community," said Dr. Bill Anderson, Executive Director of CIS of Charlotte-Mecklenburg. "Every business in Charlotte needs to understand the gravity of the dropout numbers right here in our community and how it impacts us all – and more importantly, learn how their involvement can help reduce the dropout rate."

The Last Dropout offers nine key principles that have been the cornerstone of CIS's work over the past 30 years and gives insight into the organization's grassroots, personalized approach that embodies Milliken's long-held philosophy, "Programs don't change children - relationships do." The book contains stories about how CIS leaders have successfully incorporated this philosophy and these nine principles in over 200 communities across the nation. One chapter is devoted to CIS of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, which was initiated in Charlotte in 1985. Today CIS-Charlotte is a key partner of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and provides services and support to nearly 4,000 students in 33 CMS schools.

Containing a foreword by President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter, *The Last Dropout* has been praised by more than 20 notable leaders, including Bank of America Chairman and CEO Ken Lewis, who has an endorsement in the book. For more information, visit www.thelastdropout.com.

The Last Dropout is available at retail outlets and online at www.amazon.com, www.barnesandnoble.com; www.costco.com; www.borders.com; www.olssons.com; and www.bamm.com. All author proceeds from the book are being donated to Communities In Schools.

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About Communities In Schools, Inc.

Communities In Schools is the nation's largest dropout prevention organization, working in more than 3,200 K-12 public schools. Founded in 1977, Communities In Schools is headquartered in Alexandria, Va. Today, nearly one million young people every year receive direct services through more than 200 Communities In Schools local affiliates in 27 states and the District of Columbia. Between 80-90 percent of our tracked students show improvement in academic achievement, attendance, behavior and promotion to the next grade level. www.cisnet.org

About Communities In Schools of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Inc.

Communities In Schools of Charlotte-Mecklenburg (CIS) is part of the nation's leading dropout prevention network, helping young people stay in school, successfully learn, and prepare for life by connecting needed community resources with schools. Since 1985, CIS has mobilized locally existing resources and coordinated partnerships with health and human service agencies to help thousands of at-risk students overcome academic, social, and economic barriers. CIS currently provides services to 4,000 students in 33 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. CIS is funded in part by the United Way of Central Carolinas, Mecklenburg County, and the Charlotte Merchants Foundation, as well as corporations, civic and faith organizations, and individuals. www.cischarlotte.org

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