



April 17, 2007

## **MEDIA ADVISORY** from Communities In Schools of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Inc.

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### **WHO: Communities In Schools of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Inc. (CIS)**

CIS is the nation's leading community-based dropout prevention network, helping young people stay in school, successfully learn, and prepare for life by connecting needed community resources with schools. CIS of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Inc., coordinates partnerships with businesses, human service agencies and volunteers to help thousands of at-risk students overcome academic, social and economic barriers. Currently, CIS provides relationships and resources to more than 2,100 students annually in 25 CMS schools.

### **WHAT: "Celebrating Our Graduates"**

Graduation Celebration/Luncheon for 200 CIS graduating seniors, representing 10 CMS high schools (Phillip O. Berry, East Meck, Garinger, George T. Lewis, Olympic, Performance Learning Center, Vance, E.E. Waddell, West Charlotte, and West Meck). Many of the students in our program have been "at-risk" for dropping out at some point and many have faced personal/family, academic and/or behavioral challenges to reaching their goal of graduating from high school. So we are especially proud of these young people who are on track to graduate in June!

**WHEN: Thursday, April 19 from 11:30 - 1:00 p.m.**

**WHERE: Hilton Charlotte Center City – in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Hall  
222 E. Third Street**

### **SPECIAL GUESTS:**

- **Dr. Ruth Perez**, Chief Academic Office – Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools
- **Jennifer Roberts**, Chair- Mecklenburg County Commission
- **CIS Graduate Edwin Waleh** (2002-West Mecklenburg, 2006-UNC-Charlotte) will be special guest speaker. Edwin immigrated to the U.S. (Charlotte) from Liberia when he was 13. He will share his story and how CIS helped him do well in high school and win several scholarships to attend UNC-Charlotte, where he graduated just this past Dec.

\* There will also be **two student speakers** during the Program– the 1st and 2nd place winners of CIS' annual "Speaking Your Way into the Future" Contest.

\* There will be opportunities for interviews with a CIS student and/or a parent We are PROUD of these students!!

\* **Many are the first in their families to graduate from high school and/or attend college!**

- see next page for current Dropout Statistics and "Why We Need Communities In Schools" -

# Facts Related to High School Dropouts and Economic Impact

## Did you know.....?

- **1,700** students dropped out of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools last year.
- Last year, **22,000** students dropped out of school across the state of North Carolina.
- North Carolina's high school graduation rate is only **60%**. The national average is 73%.
- **75%** of N.C. prison inmates are dropouts. Last year the state spent **\$600 million** to incarcerate 24,000 prisoners.
- **26%** of dropouts receive welfare compared to **7%** of high school graduates.
- On average, a high school graduate earns approximately **\$9,400** more in annual income than a high school dropout, and a college graduate earns approximately **\$18,700** more in annual income than a high school graduate.

## Recent CIS Success Rates

- CIS provides services to approximately **2,100** students annually in **25** Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.
- For the 2005-06 school year:
  - **99%** of CIS students stayed in school
  - **88%** were promoted to the next grade
  - **90%** of CIS seniors graduated (179 out of 199)
  - **26 of 28** seniors in the Safe Journey (teen mother) program graduated from high school.
- **225** CIS graduates are currently enrolled in 44 colleges and universities on scholarships received with the assistance of CIS. Most of these students are the first in their families to attend college.
- CIS collaborates with more than **150** community partners – including social services agencies, businesses, faith organizations, civic groups, and health care providers – to provide support services to schools.

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