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Please Welcome New CIS Board Chair, Veronica Calderon

In January, we welcomed **Veronica Calderon** as Chair of our Board of Directors. Heading into her sixth year of serving on the CIS Board, Calderon's passion and commitment to CIS are unparalleled. Calderon recently shared why this leadership opportunity with Communities In Schools is especially meaningful for her:



"As I begin my term as Board Chair, it marks an extraordinary time when my advocacy, life, and passion for education have come full circle," Calderon said. "As a graduate of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School system, the daughter of an educator, an immigrant, and a former ESL (English as a Second Language) student, I have gained a more profound understanding of our students' obstacles and needs."

[Read More](#)

Welcome to Our New Board Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to our Board of Directors, who joined the board in January. Welcome to Mordecai Scott and Tom Scrivener!

Mordecai Scott

Chief Business Development Officer, Loftin & Company Printers



Mordecai Scott

Tom Scrivener

Chief Operations Executive, Bank of America



Tom Scrivener

We are grateful to all of our board members for their time, expertise, and commitment to CIS and our students. Visit our website for a complete list of our current [Board of Directors](#).



CIS-Charlotte featured in "Power of Mentoring" Story on WBTV News

Did you know? January was National Mentoring Month! Building trusting relationships and serving as mentors to students is foundational to our work at Communities In Schools. In collaboration with Share Charlotte to highlight National Mentoring Month, WBTV's "On Your Side Tonight" produced a

story on the power of youth mentoring. News anchor Jamie Boll interviewed our CEO, Men Tchaas Ari, and CIS team member Lex Bibbs, who shared his personal story and why he is so passionate about his role as a CIS Site Coordinator and TRIO Counselor at West Mecklenburg High School. [View it here.](#)

Celebrating Black History Month

CIS-Charlotte Team Member Selected for QCity Metro's "Great 28" List

We are proud to uplift CIS staff member Dr. Daisy Walker, who was selected for QCity Metro's prestigious ["Great 28" list](#). The "Great 28," launched by QCity Metro in 2021, recognizes Black excellence among Charlotteans who have used their power, platforms, and influence to make our city a better place. "Dr. Daisy" has been with CIS for 12 years and serves as our Volunteer Coordinator at West Charlotte High School. Prior to CIS, she was a teacher, assistant principal, and principal with CMS for over 36 years. She has connected hundreds of individuals, companies, and groups to serve as mentors or provide other resources and support for students. Congratulations, Dr. Daisy!



Speaking Out on the Critical Importance of Educational Equity

Our CEO, Men Tchaas Ari, was recently the featured guest on Charlotte's new KnowMore podcast, which focuses on current challenges in our community, in particular those affecting our more economically-vulnerable neighbors. Hosted by Common Wealth Charlotte executive director Chuck Jones, this podcast episode addressed the barriers and challenges that students from low-income and

marginalized communities encounter, and how CIS champions solutions to ensure educational equity for students in Charlotte's Title I (high-poverty) schools. Listen here on [Apple Podcasts](#) or [Spotify](#).

Make a Lasting Legacy through a Planned Gift to CIS

"Planned Giving" (arranging legacy gifts through a will or trust) as part of your financial strategy is not just for those over 50. Whatever your stage in life, planned giving can benefit you and your loved ones, while also helping to ensure that the charitable causes you care about will benefit according to your wishes. Some planned gifts have an impact now, some after your lifetime. Many offer tax savings, and some even provide you with income for life. Your planned gift with CIS will enable us to plan for the future, grow and increase the number of students we serve, and ensure that future generations will have every opportunity to succeed and live purposeful, meaningful lives. **What better gift could you leave our community's children?**



Visit our website to learn more about [Planned Giving](#) or contact [Jordan Fletcher](#), CIS Director of Development.



Connecting Students to Diverse Career Pathways

Last month a group of CIS students from Rocky River High School enjoyed a fantastic career day at Cummins, Inc., a leader in industrial innovation and manufacturer of engines, generators, power systems, and vehicle components. The team at Cummins enthusiastically shared the many diverse career paths available at Cummins and emphasized the importance of skilled trades in today's economy. Students learned that a career in trade offers a viable alternative to a traditional four-year college degree and can open doors to well-paying jobs and long-term career growth. Thank you to Cummins for providing this excellent opportunity for our students and opening doors to new possibilities for their future!

If your company would like to host a career or job-shadowing event for students, please contact Rhonda Bishara at CIS, rbishara@cischarlotte.org.

Dine Out For Kids®



Save the Date! Dine Our For Kids® - June 18, 2024

Graduation and the end of the school year will be here before we know it - and that means Dine Out For Kids® is not far behind. Please mark your calendar and save the date for **Tuesday, June 18**. This year marks the 25th Anniversary of this fun, community-wide event that raises support and awareness for CIS. By dining out at participating restaurants on June 18, you'll be supporting local students *and* local restaurants - please join us!

If you are a restaurant or company that would like to support Dine Out For Kids®, please contact Teri Alexander, talexander@cischarlotte.org. Thank you!



Be Inspired: DifferenceMakers® CLT

Need a little inspiration today? You will surely be inspired by this video of the 2023 "cohort" of our DifferenceMakers® CLT program and their transformational trip to Washington, D.C. Generously funded by The Gambrell Foundation, this unique leadership program brings together student leaders and community members to support social capital connections and college and career readiness for high school juniors. The program seeks to empower youth voice, promote economic mobility, and develop an inter-generational network of connections, ultimately creating a legacy of "difference makers" in our local community and beyond. Enjoy learning more about DifferenceMakers® through the [video](#), or contact DifferenceMakers® Program Manager Faith Fox at differencemakers@cischarlotte.org.

Forward to a Friend

Please help spread the word about CIS, the needs in our schools, and how CIS is supporting students by forwarding this e-newsletter to a friend. And if by chance you are reading this e-newsletter because someone shared it with you, we hope that you will [subscribe](#) so you'll receive the latest news in your In-Box directly from us.



Celebrating HBCU Pride During Black History Month

At our monthly staff meeting in February, our team recognized the contributions of African Americans in the field of education. Staff celebrated Black History Month and HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) Pride by wearing apparel from their alma mater and/or fraternity/sorority. North Carolina is the state with the most HBCUs. Throughout the year, CIS takes hundreds of CMS students to visit HBCUs both in state and out of state.

[#BlackHistoryMonth](#) [#HBCUPride](#)

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