

Bank of America

Bank of America Grants \$500,000 to Communities In Schools To Improve Florida's Graduation Rate

Two Year Partnership to Support Dropout Prevention Efforts in Florida



Presentation of check from Bank of America to Communities In Schools Florida.

Communities In Schools (CIS), Florida's leading stay-in-school organization, is proud to announce the award of \$500,000 in grants from Bank of America to support its work to reduce the state's dropout rate. "The high school dropout rate has become a national epidemic – as many as one out of three students nationally are not graduating each year. In Florida, without support, as many as 1 million currently-enrolled students are in jeopardy of not graduating with their peers. With the monumental task facing educators today, schools simply cannot meet all the needs of the students alone. The public, private, and nonprofit sectors must increase our collaborative efforts to ensure that Florida's graduation rate improves. Corporations like Bank of America, who have an eye on the future, are making a real difference as we work together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable population – our children," said CIS State Director Lois Gracey.

These generous grants totaling \$500,000 from Bank America offers \$100,000 to support the work of Communities In Schools of Florida, as well as two \$200,000 two-year Neighborhood Builders grants to support Communities In Schools of Palm Beach County and Communities In Schools of Miami. Neighborhood Builders recipients are focused on local neighborhood priorities, receive \$200,000 in general operating support – \$100,000 annually for 2 years. They also benefit from specially designed leadership development programs. Since its inception in 2004, Neighborhood Builders has helped 402 nonprofits with operating and support and rigorous leadership training.

"This two-year partnership allows CIS to continue its work decreasing Florida's dropout rate and improving its graduation rate. We will now be able to serve many more students at the local affiliate level with both prevention and intervention services and also increase our support to local affiliates by the state office. These grants are a great kick-off to our 25th Anniversary of being Florida's premiere dropout prevention program", said Frank Messersmith of FSM Associates, CIS of Florida's Chair.



Presentation of check from Bank of America to CIS Miami.

Mike Fields, President, Bank of America Florida said: "Bank of America has a long-standing tradition of investing in the communities it serves. We believe our partnership with Communities In Schools is making a profound difference in the

lives of at-risk students, their families, and the schools these students attend. We are excited to be part of reducing Florida's dropout rate and increasing the graduation rate. We believe these grants are an investment in Florida's future – in individual lives, in communities, and in Florida's ability to have a well-prepared workforce."



Presentation of check from Bank of America to CIS of Palm Beach County.

For more than three decades, Communities In Schools has been working in partnership with public schools, integrating the services that students need to stay in school and achieve high academic outcomes. Services such as tutoring, mentoring, after-school programs, career development, financial literacy, community service and life skills development are coordinated through a single point of contact at the school. This coordinated, integrated way of serving the whole child is the hallmark of the Communities In Schools Model, which is now proven to produce better outcomes. Among similar research-based dropout prevention organizations, the Communities In Schools Model is one of the few proven to actually keep students in school. It is also the only program among this small group of organizations that is proven to increase graduation rates.

About CIS: CIS is the nation's leading community-based organization helping kids stay in school and prepare for life. Today, more than 2 million young people every year have access to services through over 200 Communities In Schools programs in 28 states. In Florida, the CIS network currently serves more than 40,000 students. CIS' outcomes prove that its model of integrated student services is effective, with 97 percent of tracked students staying in school, and 86 percent graduating on time.

About Bank of America: Building on a long-standing tradition of investing in the communities it serves, Bank of America this year embarked on a new, ten-year goal to donate \$2 billion to nonprofit organizations engaged in improving the health and vitality of their neighborhoods. Funded by Bank of America, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation gave more than \$200 million in 2008, making the bank the most generous financial institution in the world and the second largest donor of all U.S. corporations in cash contributions. Bank of America approaches investing through a national strategy called "neighborhood excellence" under which it works with local leaders to identify and meet the most pressing needs of individual communities. Through Team Bank of America, bank associate volunteers contributed more than 900,000 hours in 2008 to enhance the quality of life in their communities nationwide. For more information about Bank of America Corporate Philanthropy, please visit www.bankofamerica.com/foundation.