



For Immediate Release...

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OVER 25 DEKALB, APS, FULTON & CLAYTON STUDENTS AND STAFF RECOGNIZED AT 2017 CHOOSE SUCCESS AWARDS

Communities In Schools of Atlanta Celebrates Students and Raises \$16,500 for a Good Cause

ATLANTA – On Tuesday, April 18, Communities In Schools (CIS) of Atlanta hosted its 13th Annual “Choose Success” Awards Dinner in the engaging, extraordinary Oceans Ballroom at the Georgia Aquarium. Principals, teachers, and students from APS, Dekalb, Fulton, and Clayton counties came together with CIS of Atlanta to celebrate Atlanta students who have made significant improvements in school and a difference in their communities through their “Choose Success” service projects. Schools that received awards included Cross Keys High School, F.A. Toomer Elementary School, M. Agnes Jones Elementary School, West End High School, Maynard Jackson High School, Gideons Elementary School, McNair High School, and Sylvan Hills Middle School. The “Choose Success” program began in 2004 as a means of providing students with opportunities to give back to their peers and communities, and allows students to apply for grant funds to develop and implement projects to meet needs in their communities.

“We welcomed over 300 guests and local supporters to help spotlight our mission to surround students with community support and empower them to stay in school and achieve in life,” expressed Frank Brown, CEO of CIS of Atlanta. “It wouldn’t be possible without the incredible support of those that attended and beyond. This is what keeps me energized about our work – the impact that we can make, changing the trajectory of kids’ lives. Let’s ensure Atlanta students have what they need to be successful.”

Highlights and honorees included:

- Creekside High School’s step team opened the program with a performance and video with the “Choose Success” theme
- Jane S., a 12th-grade student at Langston Hughes High School that recently won the “Winning on Purpose” essay at the AT&T Aspire Mentoring Summit, gave words of inspiration on choosing success
- Special viewing of Church’s Chicken “Church’s Loves Atlanta” documentary that featured CIS of Atlanta, who is also partnered with Church’s Chicken
- Principals and staff recognized for going above and beyond for students, personally and academically, included:
 - Dr. Evelyn Mobley – Principal of West End Academy High School
 - William “Flip” Wilson – Staff at West End Academy High School
 - Lisa Wilson – CIS of Atlanta Site Coordinator at West End Academy High School
- Schools and students received awards for the “Choose Success” Community Service Project. Winners included:
 - *First Place*: Cross Keys High School
 - *Second Place*: F.A. Toomer Elementary School
 - *Third Place*: M. Agnes Jones Elementary School
 - *Honorable Mention*: West End Academy High School
- Individual Achievement Awards were given to students based on significant improvements made in school. Winners included:
 - Sakoria D. – Maynard Jackson High School
 - Castro D. – Cross Keys High School
 - Tykee H. – Gideons Elementary School
 - Shakira M. – Sylvan Hills Middle School
 - Jennell S. – McNair High School

The nonprofit received an overwhelming amount of support from the community and sponsors such as Church’s Chicken, Cox Enterprises, Wells Fargo, The Coca-Cola Company, Delta Air Lines, Mercedes-Benz, The Home Depot Foundation, Anthem, and the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation. In addition to honoring students, CIS of Atlanta continued its tradition of presenting the Anne Cox Chambers Champion for Kids Award to a philanthropist who has gone above and beyond to support students and the entire community. This year’s recipient was Honoree Mike Donnelly, Atlanta Regional President of Wells Fargo and a long-time champion of kids in the community.

“Choose Success shows us all what can happen when we find the solutions to remove the barriers that stand in the way of success,” said Honoree Mike Donnelly. “So whatever small part I have played to help CIS of Atlanta continue to be a champion for children, to

help students continue to choose success despite the barriers they face, and to challenge all of us to care for *all* of Atlanta's children – it has been a privilege to do it. Thank you, CIS, for everything your team is doing in schools all across Atlanta to stand in the gap for children who don't have the privileges that I, and so many of us here tonight, had."

Hear more from this year's Individual Achievement Awards winners and view the full 2017 "Choose Success" Student Achievement video [here](#).

Photos available upon request. For media interested in receiving more details on the "Choose Success" Community Service Projects or in interviewing Frank Brown, CEO of CIS of Atlanta, please contact Morgan Rabby at morgan@360media.net or 404-577-8686.

About Communities In Schools of Atlanta: Communities In Schools (CIS) of Atlanta, established in 1972, is the nation's first, largest and most effective dropout prevention organization, dedicated to doing whatever it takes to help students succeed in school and achieve in life. Operating in more than 50 schools, mainly in Atlanta Public Schools, as well as Clayton County Public Schools, DeKalb County Schools and Fulton County Schools, CIS of Atlanta supports more than 41,000 students and their families in the 2015-2016 academic year. Based directly inside the schools, CIS of Atlanta connects students and their families to basic and critical educational and community-based resources, tailored to each student's specific needs. Click here to learn more about CIS of Atlanta. Follow along on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#). To hear some of CIS of Atlanta's exciting accomplishments from the last year, watch their [2015-2016 Annual Report Video](#).

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