



For Immediate Release
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The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics Honors Communities In Schools Programs as Bright Spots in Hispanic Education

(AUSTIN, TEXAS) – On September 15, The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics named two Communities In Schools of Central Texas programs as Bright Spots in Hispanic Education. They are ASPIRE Family Literacy and the XY-Zone. These local programs will be part of a national online catalog that includes over 230 programs from around the country that invest in key education priorities for Hispanics. The catalog is located online: <http://www.ed.gov/edblogs/hispanic-initiative/> and includes programs that address the educational disparities faced by the Hispanic community through data-driven approaches, promising practices, and effective partnerships.

The announcement was made by Alejandra Ceja, Executive Director of the Initiative on September 15, 2015 at the launch of Hispanic Heritage Month and in honor of the Initiative's 25th anniversary in Washington, D.C. "There has been notable progress in educational achievement, and it is due to the efforts of these Bright Spots in Hispanic Education, programs and organizations working throughout the country to help Hispanic students reach their full potential," said Ceja.

"Every child deserves an education and the opportunity to achieve in life," says Suki Steinhauser, CEO of Communities In Schools of Central Texas. "I am thrilled that two of our exemplary programs that demonstrate a strong commitment to improving educational achievement were selected as Bright Spots in Hispanic Education. These programs are 21 and 16 years old respectively, reflecting our longstanding commitment to educating every child. We are proud of this honor."

ABOUT ASPIRE FAMILY LITERACY

The CIS ASPIRE (Achieving Success through Parental Involvement, Reading and Education) Family Literacy program breaks the cycle of illiteracy and poverty within families by providing comprehensive, integrated literacy services for the entire family. ASPIRE families have children 0-7 years old, parents in need of ESL and/or GED classes, and live in southeast Austin. School district performance data indicate that ASPIRE children academically outperform their peers even years after having left the program. More information is online: <http://www.ciscentraltexas.org/what-we-do/aspire-family-literacy/>

ABOUT XY-ZONE

The XY-Zone is a leadership development and peer support program that develops productive life skills in high school-age, at-risk males. XY-Zone participants demonstrate improvements in grades, attendance or behavior; they decrease risky behaviors, increase volunteerism, leadership, and future aspirations, and they are challenged and empowered to aim high, get an education, and break the cycle of poverty. More information is online: <http://www.ciscentraltexas.org/what-we-do/xy-zone/>

ABOUT COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS

The mission of Communities In Schools is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. In the 2014-2015 school year, we served more than 50,000 individuals with services ranging from mental health counseling to crisis intervention, basic needs assistance, mentoring, and academic intervention. More than 6,000 students received intensive case management. Of the children we serve, 99% stay in school and 87% improve their grades, attendance, or behavior.

Learn more about our programs online at <http://www.ciscentraltexas.org/>

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