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Communities In Schools of Central Texas to Receive \$554,607 in Grant Funds to Expand into Elgin ISD and Address Student Achievement Gap

Austin, Texas – March 4, 2019 - [Communities In Schools](#) (CIS), the national organization that empowers at-risk students to stay in school and on a path to a brighter future, will share \$13 million in grant funding to support students in 23 communities across 11 states.

The winning affiliates were selected in a competitive grant process funded through a multimillion-dollar donation by AbbVie, a research-based global biopharmaceutical company. Recipients were chosen based on their ability to improve graduation rates, reduce chronic absenteeism, and increase college and career readiness for students in kindergarten through grade 12, especially in high-poverty neighborhoods.

Locally, Communities In Schools of Central Texas will be expanding into Elgin ISD and will serve 6 new campuses over the span of 3 years. Across the country, 94,300 students from 127 schools will be supported with the grant funds.

“We are extremely excited about our new partnership with Communities In Schools,” says Jodi Isaac Duron, Superintendent of Schools for Elgin ISD. “The value and expertise CIS brings to bridging the opportunity gap for our most at-risk students compliments and supports our current wrap-around services, allowing students to realize their future potential.”

The grant winners include Communities In Schools affiliates or state offices in:

- [Austin, Texas](#)
- [Charlotte-Mecklenburg, N.C.](#)
- [Georgia](#)
- [Houston, Texas](#)
- [Indiana](#)
- [Lehigh Valley, Pa.](#)
- [Memphis, Tenn.](#)
- [Nevada](#)
- [New Orleans, LA](#)
- [North Texas](#) (in collaboration with [Fort Worth, Texas](#))
- [West Palm Beach, Fla.](#)
- [San Antonio, Texas](#)
- South King Co Alliance - [Kent, Wash.](#), [Renton, Wash.](#), and [Federal Way, Wash.](#)
- [Virginia](#)

“There are millions of at-risk students who live in poverty and face significant barriers to education,” said Dale Erquiaga, president and CEO of Communities In Schools. “These grants are an important step in connecting those students to caring adults and community resources so they can fulfill their potential.”

“CIS of Central Texas serves the students in our community who face significant obstacles,” said Communities In Schools of Central Texas CEO Suki Steinhauer. “This major investment by Communities In Schools National and AbbVie will allow us to accelerate our work in Central Texas, expand to serve the Elgin community, and ensure that more kids can reach their potential and enjoy a bright future.”

The Challenge Schools winners are receiving support under a grant from AbbVie. In November, AbbVie [announced a total donation of \\$30 million](#) to the Communities In Schools National Office to provide essential support services to underserved children. This investment is the largest single corporate donation Communities In Schools has received in its 40-year history. The remaining support from the AbbVie grant is going to students in 16 high-need Chicago Public Schools.

“We believe that nothing is more important than a foundation in education, and Communities In Schools has dedicated over 40 years to making a high school diploma a reality for millions of students,” said Laura Schumacher, vice chairman, external affairs and chief legal officer, AbbVie. “We choose to work with CIS because their programs work, and they can reach our shared ambition to give youth across the country the confidence and tools they need to succeed.”

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About Communities In Schools of Central Texas

[Communities In Schools of Central Texas \(CIS\)](#) works directly inside K-12 schools full time in partnership with teachers and administrators to address immediate student needs. Whether it is clean clothes, help with school work, or emotional support and counseling, CIS connects students to the relationships and resources they need to succeed.

When students are hungry, experiencing homelessness, or are preoccupied with concerns for an unemployed parent or violence at home, they can't learn. That means they're disengaged in the classroom themselves, and can be a distraction to their classmates. CIS ensures that students are connected to resources to help meet basic needs like food, shelter, counseling, and clothing. The result is reduced discipline referrals and more engagement in learning, for them and their peers, letting teachers teach, and improving outcomes for all students.

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. Last year, we served over 40,000 individuals in 66 schools with services ranging from mental health counseling to crisis intervention, basic needs assistance, mentoring, and academic intervention. Learn more about our programs online at ciscentraltexas.org and connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About AbbVie

AbbVie is a global, research and development-based biopharmaceutical company committed to developing innovative advanced therapies for some of the world's most complex and critical conditions. The company's mission is to use its expertise, dedicated people and unique approach to innovation to markedly improve treatments across four primary therapeutic areas: immunology, oncology, virology and neuroscience. In more than 75 countries, AbbVie employees are working every day to advance health solutions for people around the world. For more information about AbbVie, please visit us at www.abbvie.com. Follow [@abbvie](#) on Twitter, [Facebook](#) or [LinkedIn](#).