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**COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS of DELAWARE RECEIVES \$300,000 AS PART OF AT&T ASPIRE  
Delaware Gov. Markell, other local officials highlight efforts to prepare students for success**

NEW CASTLE, DE (November 13, 2012) – Today Delaware Governor Jack Markell joined officials from AT&T, Communities in Schools of Delaware (CISDE), and other community leaders to announce a \$300,000 contribution to CISDE as part of the AT&T Aspire initiative.

The announcement was made at William Penn High School, one of five high schools in Delaware that partner with CISDE to provide services to students.

CISDE is one of 47 Aspire grant recipients nationwide that this year shared nearly \$10 million under AT&T Aspire, one of the largest corporate commitments focused on helping students graduate and prepare for college and careers. AT&T announced an additional quarter-billion-dollar expansion to the program earlier this year, bringing the total commitment to \$350 million since the program was launched in 2008.

Communities In Schools of Delaware is part of the largest and most effective dropout-prevention organizations in the nation, and the only one proven to both decrease dropout rates and increase graduation rates. AT&T's contribution will provide support for site coordinators at Dickinson High School, McKean High School, Newark High School and William Penn High School to focus on nearly 300 students at risk of dropping out of school.

"Communities In Schools of Delaware is doing extraordinary things to help students in the First State stay in school and achieve their dreams," said J. Michael Schweder, president AT&T Mid Atlantic. "Their work, combined with the efforts of Gov. Markell and his administration, will help keep students on track for graduation and prepare for success in school, on the job, and in life."

Schweder added that CISDE received \$104,000 in 2010 during the first round of AT&T Aspire, allowing the organization to support and enhance its work in the Wilmington area. With this new National Aspire Grant, CIS of Delaware will be able to expand its work by helping to support four Delaware High Schools in New Castle County.

"Improving public education is the most important way we can invest in our future," said Gov. Markell. "AT&T's contribution to Communities In Schools supports the kind of help that gives young people a better

chance at success. We want to do everything we can to ensure our young people are on the right path for graduation and beyond.”

“This opportunity that is being afforded Communities In Schools of Delaware through the AT&T Aspire contribution supports a foundation of making sure our students are healthy, safe, engaged, and academically challenged to be successful in school and life,” said Jim Purcell, president of Communities In Schools of Delaware. “We are very grateful to receive this generous contribution from AT&T, which will allow our staff and volunteers to go deeper into our schools and track and report more thoroughly the impact that the CIS model has on a student’s life.”

CISDE facilitates and develops mentoring/tutoring, after-school programming, individualized interventions, counseling sessions, and family assistance. Communities In Schools positions a dedicated site director inside partner schools. In this pivotal role, the director works with school staff to identify students at risk of not graduating. He or she assesses school and student needs and establishes relationships with local businesses, social service agencies, health care providers, and volunteer organizations to harness needed resources, making student success initiatives more effective and efficient.

One hundred and seventy seven 9<sup>th</sup> grade students have been specially chosen for inclusion in a multi-year evaluation, focused on facilitating the Communities In Schools model. Goals of this initiative include improving attendance, behavior, academic performance, and graduation rates. An additional 76 students in grades 10 through 12 will also be monitored for progress.

“CISDE is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary at William Penn High School. We are proud of the relationship that has grown over the past two decades. Through workshops, mentoring and resource brokering, CISDE has had a positive impact on the students we serve,” said Kevin White, assistant principal at William Penn High School.

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- [AT&T Aspire: Helping Students Prepare for the Future](#)

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AT&T Inc. (NYSE:T) is committed to advancing education, strengthening communities and improving lives. Through its philanthropic initiatives, AT&T has a long history of supporting projects that create learning opportunities; promote academic and economic achievement; and address community needs. In 2011, more than \$115 million was contributed through corporate-, employee- and AT&T Foundation-giving programs.

#### **About Communities In Schools of Delaware**

Communities In Schools (CIS) is the nation’s leading dropout prevention organization, and is the only one proven to increase graduation rates and decrease dropout rates. CIS surrounds students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. Through a school-based coordinator, CIS connects students and their families to critical community resources, tailored to local needs. Working in more than 3,400 schools in the most challenged communities, in 25 states and the District of Columbia, CIS focuses its activities in the most disadvantaged districts, serving nearly 1.3 million young people and their families every year. In Delaware we’re located in 12 schools serving over 10,000 students in rural and urban areas of Delaware. [www.cisdelaware.org](http://www.cisdelaware.org). [Facebook](#)