

# Communities In Schools of Brunswick County

Surrounding students with a community of support,  
empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.

## CIS News: Fall 2019



Communities  
In Schools

Brunswick County

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### Look who's talking:

The Sanford Harmony program at CIS taught me that I have a lot more in common with my friend than I thought.

- Waccamaw School CIS student

CIS and their community volunteers engage and work with at-risk Cedar Grove students. Students benefit from the support, allowing them to gain the most from their education."

- Justin Hayes,  
Cedar Grove Middle School  
Principal

CIS makes you feel very included. I love CIS Peer Court and helping students with a second chance not hurting their permanent record.

- CIS Peer Court  
student volunteer



### Board Spotlight

#### Alan Slobodien

Alan Slobodien is currently the chair of the Board of Directors at CIS of Brunswick County. He has lived in the Southport area for four years. Alan retired in 2015 and moved to North Carolina from Connecticut. His passion for youth and families is evidenced by forty years working as a youth counselor, program manager, grant writer, Director of Youth Services and President of the CT Youth Services Association.

Alan noted, "Prior to moving to Oak Island, I did a fair amount of research regarding nonprofit organizations in Brunswick County. CIS clearly matched my career experience and I wanted to continue my work for youth and families whose challenges demand that my compassion moves from theory to practice. I greatly value the CIS staff and volunteers who dedicate themselves to the mission of surrounding students with a community of support."

Alan enjoys walking the Oak Island beach, hanging out with friends and simply enjoying life in this wonderful community.

## CIS 21CCLC keeps students learning after the bell rings

During the 2018-2019 school year, 131 students received free after school programming through the CIS 21st Century Community Learning Center (21CCLC) at Supply Elementary School (24% of entire school population). The program is free and students receive a healthy snack and drink as well as bus transportation home after the program each day.

The CIS Supply Elementary School based program delivers exceptional STEM based learning experiences to students. The program serves students in grades 2 - 5 operating Monday through Friday, from school dismissal until 6 p.m. Program services include homework assistance, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) project learning, enrichment activities, snack time, parent engagement activities, and a focus on increasing individual student proficiency in the core subject areas of Reading/Language Arts and Math.

The 21CCLC Program serves at-risk, high-need students that benefit in further learning from the program operating after the regular school day ends. Being available for elementary age students to shape their educational learning habits in formative years is beneficial as they continue their education. This grant-funded program is free-of-charge to all participants. The program is entering the last year of grant funding in School Year 2019-2020. The program has shown measurable improvement in student outcomes in the 2018-2019 school year.

Academic Outcomes for 2018-2019 (Achieved through daily one-on-one and group tutoring):  
**Reading/Language Arts Performance** - 60% increased by one letter grade and 14% increased by two letter grades. **Math Performance** - 47% increased by one letter grade.

Diana Fotinatos is a dedicated volunteer in the CIS Supply Elementary 21CCLC afterschool program. She has worked with Supply Elementary 2nd – 5th grade students for five years. Each



Diana tutors a group of students in CIS 21CCLC Afterschool Program at Supply Elementary School.

Tuesday she can be found going over multiplication tables, flashcards, and serving as a reading partner in CIS Reading Buddies program. "I love working with the kids and helping them learn, stay on track, or improve in an area. Volunteers and teachers can't do it alone, parents must partner with teachers to continue the learning at home and equip students with the skills needed to succeed in school," said Diana.

# Communities In Schools of Brunswick County

## The verdict is in: Twenty-year-old Teen Court Program a success

Twenty years ago, Brunswick County had a problem with too many young people entering the juvenile justice system for demonstrating poor judgement and having that mistake follow them forever. Thanks to Brunswick County Teen Court, first time offenders are given a second chance at a clean slate.

Communities In Schools of Brunswick County (CIS) along with former Rep. David Redwine, Rep. Dewey Hill, and Sen. R.C. Soles were instrumental in providing funding for and implementing this program 20 years ago. Brunswick County Teen Court started in 1999 and is a partnership program between CIS and the Brunswick County District Attorney's Office, made possible through financial support provided by the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council and Brunswick County. It gives young people an opportunity at having a second chance. Teen Court provides an alternative system of justice for first time juvenile misdemeanor offenders ages 6-17.



Primarily serving students at Brunswick County's five high schools, Teen Court allows offenders to accept responsibility for their offense, have their case heard by a jury of their peers and complete a constructive sentence so they can avoid a juvenile court record. Teen Court does not determine guilt or innocence, rather it recommends a constructive sentence for the juvenile defendant that includes restitution, community service, and counseling.

Teen Court gives first time offenders a "second chance" to "get things right" and learn from their mistakes. It provides the student volunteers with an opportunity to practice their public speaking and presentation skills while learning more about the legal system. Cases are heard one evening each month at the Brunswick County Courthouse. The school system and the justice system have joined forces in the program and it is working.

Student volunteers are recruited from all five Brunswick County high schools and trained by adult volunteers with legal backgrounds to fulfill the roles of attorneys, jurors, clerks and bailiffs during case hearings. Student volunteers get a hands-on educational experience that helps them better understand our system of justice. A significant number of Teen Court student volunteers have gone on to pursue law degrees and positions in the legal field upon high school graduation as a result of their Teen Court experience. Juvenile offenders participating in this diversion program save the county at least \$2,000 per case. During the 2018-2019 school year, 81 defendants were served, and student volunteers donated more than 465 hours of their time to participate in the program. Offenders who complete their sentencing requirements in the designated timeframe avoid a permanent juvenile record.

Brunswick County District Attorney Jon David credits Teen Court with turning a problem into a passion for the adult and student volunteers, as well as volunteer lawyers and judges who preside over the cases. David states that Judge Napoleon Barefoot originally chaired the task force working with CIS that started the program in Brunswick County. Volunteers John Kelso, Pete Erbe, Fred Amman, and Ed Kay were also instrumental in the early years of getting Teen Court up and operational, working with student volunteers to teach and mentor them in learning about the law, legal proceedings, and courtroom etiquette. Community organizations Southport-Oak Island Kiwanis Club, Southport Rotary, and North Brunswick Kiwanis Club also volunteer regularly with Teen Court in mentoring and teaching youth.

Members of the Southport-Oak Island Kiwanis Club serve as jury mentors and as defense counsel advisors. The civic club got involved in early 2000 after then president, Pete Erbe, went to a mock trial. "I was so impressed I suggested Kiwanis become a part of it," said Erbe. "I was impressed how the middle and high school students handled themselves." The Kiwanis motto is, 'Serving the children of the world.' Erbe went on to say, "Teen Court is exactly what Kiwanis is all about."

John Kelso has been an integral part of Brunswick County Teen Court, almost as long as Teen Court has been around. During this 20th Anniversary year for Teen Court, Kelso celebrated 17 years as a volunteer, volunteering each year since 2002, serving as a volunteer in jury deliberations and as a mentor to prosecuting and defense attorneys.



*Brunswick County Teen Court in session.*

"When I went in to help with jury deliberations the first time, I was amazed at how much attention the students paid to detail and how involved and thorough they were," he said. "I walked out of there thinking, 'This is a really good program.'" Kelso, went on to say, "This has evolved into something that means so much to me that I want to do whatever I can to help."

2019 is the 20-year Anniversary of Brunswick County Teen Court! For stories and images of Teen Court and to see how the program has impacted lives visit [www.cisbrunswick.org](http://www.cisbrunswick.org). If you have questions about Teen Court, contact the Teen Court Director Sam Davis at 910-253-4087 or [teen.court@brunswickcountync.gov](mailto:teen.court@brunswickcountync.gov). Visit Teen Court on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for updates.

# Communities In Schools of Brunswick County

## Thank you for our biggest back to school drive yet!

CIS wants to thank community members and businesses who supported our recent Back to School Supply Drive, collecting backpacks and school supplies for Brunswick County students in need. This was our most successful supply drive yet, resulting in many donations distributed to children in Brunswick County Schools. With overwhelming community support this year, we completely filled our storage container. We would like to share our heartfelt gratitude and thanks for donations of backpacks and carloads of school supplies to help prepare students for the start of school. Thank you also to our supportive partner 1-800-Pack-Rat for providing a storage container to collect supplies.



Many families struggle to provide all the supplies necessary for the start of school, resulting in students not prepared for the start of the new school year. The rising cost of school supplies place them out of reach for many families. For those families, donations from generous community members and businesses help to ensure all children arrive at school prepared to learn. Without the support of a caring community, many children would go without the resources they need.

Across the country, the majority of teachers report they purchase school supplies for students throughout the school year, often using their own personal resources. Donations of school supplies are always needed locally and can be donated year-round by contacting Communities In Schools of Brunswick County at 910.351.8007.

Thank you for supporting Brunswick County students so they can be engaged in learning and excited about the new school year. They are the future of our community and each one deserves the same opportunity for success.

## Sunset Beach CIS Thrift Shop celebrates 10-year anniversary



The first CIS Thrift Shop opened ten years ago in Southport. The second CIS Thrift Shop opened later that same year in a Sunset Beach shopping plaza on Chandlers Lane. Today there are four CIS Thrift Shops in Brunswick County, each a strong support of the CIS mission to empower students to stay in school and achieve in life. CIS shops also serve as a place for the community to find high quality, name brand merchandise at a fraction of department store prices. Lorrie Evans, Sunset Beach CIS Thrift Shop Lead Manager, was reminiscing of the last ten years in business serving Sunset Beach and said, "We are proud to have been one of the earliest thrift shops in Sunset Beach area and still strengthening the community and students today."

The nonprofit thrift shop was one of the earliest in the area. "We were looking for an alternative income source outside of grant funding and after opening our first thrift shop in Southport, we wanted to develop a supportive presence in the southern end of the county," said Bonnie Jordan, CIS Executive Director. "A past executive director performed extensive research on the thrift shop market, and Sunset Beach was the perfect location, with the need for a shop offering gently used items at greatly reduced prices." The Sunset Beach CIS Thrift Shop opened October 1, 2009.



After early years of struggling to become known and recognized as a high quality merchandiser of donated items, the Sunset Beach CIS Thrift Shop has survived and thrived, setting the standard for the nonprofit thrift shop customer experience by offering personalized service, advice, and some of the best customer service experience around.

"Implementing the CIS Thrift Shop model around Brunswick County was a great decision," said Todd Beane Communications and Thrift Shop Operations Director for CIS. "It's created a steady income stream to help support our Action for Success dropout prevention programs in Brunswick County Schools." CIS Thrift Shops became successful and a third shop was opened in Boiling Spring Lakes in 2010. The three CIS shops grew to be seen as community partners in accepting donated goods and offering excellent quality, name brand merchandise at a reasonable price. Since then, CIS has opened a fourth CIS Thrift Shop location in Leland in July 2016.



The CIS Thrift Shop family has been growing steadily every year. The shops' popular "Monday Madness Sale," for example, is a big draw and customers stream into the shops to get the best deals and take advantage of other weekly sales.

Since CIS Thrift Shops were started in 2009, much has changed. Shops' selection of merchandise expanded including a broad range of clothing for men, women and kids along with jewelry, housewares, art, home decor, books, magazines, music items, electronics, tools, furniture, and sporting goods. The CIS brand is stronger than just merchandise. CIS Thrift Shops offer a chance to contribute to changing a student's life through donating, purchasing, or even volunteering at a CIS Thrift Shop.

# Communities In Schools of Brunswick County

## Volunteer Spotlight



*Diana Fotinatos,  
CIS volunteer at  
Supply Elementary  
School*

**1. Tell us about your volunteer work with CIS.** I'm a homework tutor with CIS at Supply Elementary School and serve as President of Friends of the Library Southport & Oak Island. I'm also Constitution Chairperson for Brunswick Town Daughters of the Revolution working for a strong future with better education for children.

**2. What is your favorite thing about CIS?** I love the enthusiasm of children we work with.

**3. What is your favorite thing to do in Brunswick County?**

Watching the sunset with my husband, line dancing, my book club, and even though it's not in Brunswick County, going to the theater at Thalian Hall.

**4. What inspires you to continue giving back to CIS and the students of Brunswick County?** The confidence and sense of accomplishment students feel when they master a subject. There is nothing better than knowing we make a difference.

**5. Tell us one of your most rewarding experiences as a CIS volunteer.** Seeing a struggling student break through when they learn multiplication squares, or how to use the finger method with the nine times table, then sharing their excitement using flash cards to improve their speed!



*Donna Anderson,  
Southport Thrift  
Shop volunteer*

**1. Tell us about your volunteer work with CIS.** I have volunteered over two years working 15 hours each week in Southport CIS Thrift Shop processing donations, store organization, working the register, and assisting customers.

**2. What is your favorite thing about CIS?** The CIS shop staff and my co-volunteers who have all become friends and make the hard work we do fun every day!

**3. What is your favorite thing to do in Brunswick County?** I enjoy spending time with family and friends at the beach; I love boating, gardening, and shopping local!

**4. What inspires you to continue giving back to CIS and the students of Brunswick County?** The belief that every student, regardless of their personal situation and obstacles, should have an equal opportunity to access the tools and support needed to thrive and become their very best self.

**5. Tell us one of your most rewarding experiences as a CIS volunteer.** Seeing firsthand the overwhelming generosity of our community and their sincere appreciation of CIS volunteers.

## Social share the CIS love (or likes)

When CIS supporters tap into their own personal networks on social media and share CIS posts, it reaches out to a large group of people that would be difficult for CIS to reach on our own. We encourage our supporters to share posts they've read or actions taken with CIS (a donation, a ticket purchase to an event, attendance at an event, a personal experience, etc.). By sharing with your network of friends, they are heavily invested in what you share. The share is authentic and can create interest in your network to take action themselves, whether it's taking a look at the CIS website, or Facebook page, making a donation, or even sharing the original share with their personal network, and expanding the reach even further. Social shares have the power to create increased awareness for organizations who need to let people know a need exists. They can increase general awareness connecting an organization's work with people who may need help or want to learn more.

Depending on what's going on in the life of a supporter, sometimes they can't give monetarily or give time, but can still lend their voice and share. Social sharing, friendraising, and fundraising is something that can be layered onto everything you're already doing. It's a powerful strategy that can add tremendous value to organizations you support. Tapping into the power of social sharing and encouraging friends to share actions they take with CIS, those shares will spread in an authentic way leading to more awareness, supporters, and donations. Click the icons below to access our social media channels and interact with us daily. Get social and stay connected with timely information from CIS of Brunswick County!



CIS page



CIS Thrift Shop page



CIS Twitter



CIS Instagram

For current CIS of Brunswick County happenings, visit [www.cisbrunswick.org](http://www.cisbrunswick.org)

To remove your name from our mailing list, please [click here](#).

Questions or comments? Email us at [tbeane@cisbrunswick.org](mailto:tbeane@cisbrunswick.org) or 910-351-8007



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