April 2026
Newsletter

Communities In Schools®
Brunswick County

This month we are honored to recognize our wonderful volunteers who so generously give their time to our school-based programs and our thrift shops to help us fulfill our mission. Having the community support our work through volunteering helps us keep merchandise in our thrift shops fresh and ready for shoppers; helps us provide additional student tutoring time; provides mentors as positive role models for students without optimal emotional support in the home; and helps us host successful Career Days and other school-wide events that impact thousands of students annually. Last year our volunteers gave 8,987 hours, valued at $312,657.73 based on Independent Sector's 2026 volunteer wage equivalent. That is an amazing contribution, but the real contribution is the love, caring, and commitment these volunteers embody for serving others. In this month's newsletter, we highlight some of our volunteers who are representative of the team of volunteers that work alongside our paid staff each day, ensuring students have the resources and support needed to succeed. We cannot thank them enough! If you have ever thought about volunteering in a thrift shop or local school, please reach out to us so we can facilitate a volunteer opportunity for you. I promise it will be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life and will allow you to meet new, like-minded neighbors who give back to your community every day. From a few hours each month, to an hour or more each week, or periodically helping with a special event, there is always a need for more volunteers to help us be consistently available and have the resources needed to meet the growing needs in our local schools. I found this quote about volunteerism particularly poignant, and I hope you will too. Marianne Williamson said, "In every community, there is work to be done. In every nation, there are wounds to heal. In every heart, there is the power to do it," We thank those who see a need and choose to do something about it and help make our world a better place for us all to live and fulfill our dreams. Happy Volunteer Month 2026!

Bonnie Jordan, Executive Director

CIS Thrift Shop in Boiling Spring Lakes Volunteers Mary Rowe (left) has volunteered for the past 5 months, sorting and pricing donations for the sales floor. She previously worked as a team lead, department manager, and zone manager so she brings great experience with her! Mary volunteers because she wants to help her community. She always brings joy and laughter to the team and is described by shop Manager, Brian Sanie, as being jovial with everyone. Pam Frandano (center), a member of the CIS Board of Directors, knows how vital the thrift shops are to fulfilling our mission to help at- risk students stay in school and graduate ready for bright futures. Pam is a former small business owner and her son is a previous employee of the Southport thrift shop. We thank Pam for volunteering on our Board of Directors and in our thrift shops. She is a wonderful advocate for CIS. Marjorie McAteer (right) has volunteered for the past 5 months at our Southport and BSL thrift shops. She previously volunteered for 7 years with another non-profit thrift shop, bringing with her a wealth of experience. She enjoys knowing her time volunteering supports local schools. She is a hard worker and is willing to tackle whatever task needs to be done. We are so grateful for her support!

Thank You to Our Volunteers!

Kathy has been colunteering at our CIS Thrift Shop in Southport for the past six months. Kathy is a retired Finance Direcotr who volunteers because she loves supporting local schools, teachers, and children. Kathy always comes to the thrift shop with a warm smile and a consistent, caring attitude.

Christine and Tina prepare and price donations at our Boiling Spring Lakes Thrift Shop. They have been volunteering for the past 3 months. They bring kindness, humor, and attention to detail to their work and to the thrift shop team!

The ABCs of Volunteering

Our Success Coaches work with at risk students at nine Brunswick County elementary and middle schools daily, helping them reach their academic goals, reduce truancy, grow their interpersonal skills, and decrease negative behaviors that disrupt learning. Many of the students we work with come to school with barriers that can impede their success and well-being, including poverty, living in a home with substance abuse or domestic violence, having an incarcerated parent, a disengaged parent, or a family member with a serious physical or mental health issue. These students require regular, intensive support to help them navigate school and life so they can benefit from the same opportunities as their peers. While our Success Coaches work to individualize the support they provide to these students, it can be difficult to manage over 50 students and provide for their multitude of needs, while also being available should a personal crisis occur for one of them that requires the Success Coach to spend extended time intervening to address an urgent need. This is why dedicated volunteers are vital to the success of our programming.

By having volunteers supporting student needs, we can serve a greater number of students. Volunteers help provide one-on-one and small group tutoring in core subject areas, serve as mentors for students needing emotional support, and help with special school-wide events, sharing their life experiences, professional expertise, and most importantly their caring hearts.

Learn more:
https://cisbrunswick.org/

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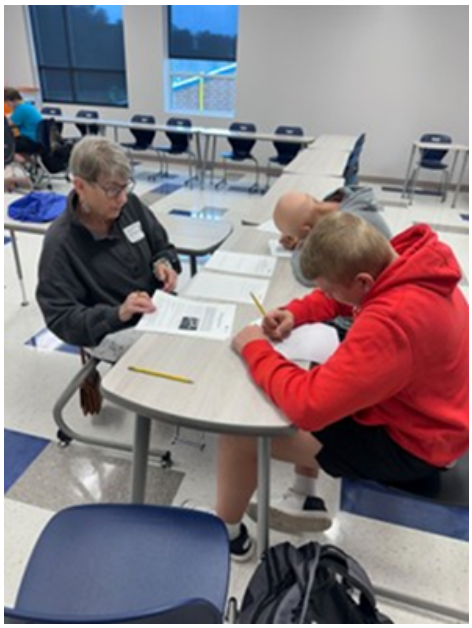

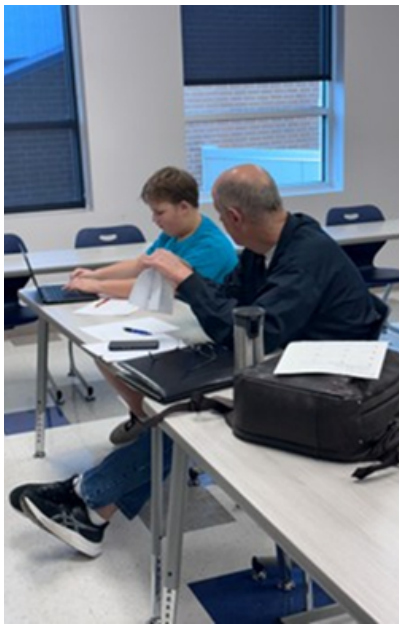

Keeping it in the family: Steve and Gwen Whiting, a husband-and-wife duo, have both generously volunteered their time for the past 3 years tutoring students at Town Creek Middle School.

Larry Tolep is a Math tutor for a Town Creek Middle School student. Larry wants to “Provide support guidance to students who need it the most so they can have a fulfilling life as they move into adulthood.”

Bruce Gorman works with Leland students, where he has spent the past 8 years as Middle School volunteer Math tutor. Bruce says, “When things “click” it is rewarding for both the student and the tutor.”

Learn more:
https://cisbrunswick.org/

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How You Can Support Communities In Schools of Brunswick County

Serve on our Board of Directors:

We are looking for people who want to help us sustain and grow our organization by aiding in decision making, planning, fundraising, and advocacy. Our Board meets every other month on the 3rd Thursday from 3 – 5 PM, with board members also participating in one of our board committees – Finance, Board Development, Resource Development, or Executive Committee. If you are someone who would like to get involved with others who are committed to helping us fulfill our mission, please contact Bonnie Jordan, Executive Director, for more information at bjordan@cisbruswick.org.

Shop, Donate, or Volunteer in our Thrift Shops:

Our shops in Boiling Spring Lakes, Southport, Shallotte, and Sunset Beach sell high quality, gently used clothing, household items, books, linens, jewelry and accessories, and more. All shops are open Monday through Friday 10 AM to 5 PM and Thursday evenings until 7 PM. Come in and shop, donate, or volunteer! For shop locations visit our website https://www.cisbrunswick.org or if interested in volunteering visit one of our shops to pick up a volunteer application.

Donate or Volunteer at a School Site:

Consider volunteering at an elementary or middle school as a mentor or tutor. You can give as little as one hour per week of your time and make a difference in a student's life. For more information, contact our Program Operations Officer, Mallory Wells at mwells@cisbrunswick.org.

We are always in need of individually packaged snacks, hygiene products, new reading books, sweatpants or leggings, and small incentive items for students. To donate contact Drew Jordan, Program Director, at djordan@cisbrunswick.org.

Make a Financial Contribution:

We rely on the generosity of our community to help keep our programs consistently available to serve at-risk students across Brunswick County. To contribute, please visit our website https://www.cisbrunswick.org and click the red DONATE button or mail a check to P. O. Box 10087 Southport, NC 28461. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law, and you will be provided with an acknowledgment letter verifying your tax- exempt contribution.

Thank you for supporting children in your community
When Each One of Us Does Our Part, We All Thrive

Learn more:
https://cisbrunswick.org/

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