Our Journey: A Case Study
Lutheran Services in America
April 2015 | San Antonio, Texas
Communities In Schools’ Journey Towards Impact Intertwines

- Our Values
- Our Work
- Our Identity
- Our Credibility
Communities In Schools’ Journey
Early Days

- Charismatic and visionary leaders demonstrated authentic relationships
CIS’ Journey Toward Our Identity

Institutional Development Corporation

April 28, 1977
Cities In Schools

June 22, 1979
CIS’ Journey of Building Credibility
Retaining the CIS Value System

We believe that relationships, not programs, change people’s lives.
CIS’ Journey of Scaling Our Work

- Expanded the network, built service capacity through newly-formed state offices
- Secured funding and credibility through partnerships with leading policymakers, prestigious universities and household corporate brands
- Recruited accomplished business, entertainment and philanthropic board leaders and supporters
CIS’ Journey Toward Our Identity

Communities In Schools

August 28, 1996
Retaining the CIS Value System

We believe that relationships, not programs, change people’s lives.
CIS’ Journey of Building Credibility

• Rigorous, ongoing evaluation, paired with the implementation of accreditation based on national standards lead to philanthropic funding partnerships

• External evaluation measures model’s impact, attracting more sustainable funding
Where CIS’ Journey Has Brought Us

2007

- 217 CIS organizations
- 1.24M students
- $199M network revenue
- $164 per student

2014

- 165 CIS organizations
- 1.48M students
- $199M network revenue
- $159 per student

Consistently strong student outcomes
- 24% fewer organizations operating
- 20% more students served

CIS locally expended/raised $2.4B
CIS served 9.28M students cumulatively
CIS’ Journey Toward Our Identity

Communities In Schools

May 2011
“Throughout its 35-year history, CIS has kept a laser-like focus on dropout prevention.”

“CIS applies a rigorous approach to research, evaluation, staff training, and ongoing improvement. This combination of soft skills and hard data adds up to a highly effective model for dropout prevention that yields results in urban, rural, and suburban settings.”

“Such evidence has prompted the Social Impact 100, an index of effective nonprofits, to call Communities in Schools “the nation’s leading dropout prevention program.”

Growing Our Awareness of where CIS’ Journey Has Brought Us
Evolving the CIS Value System

1. We believe that relationships, not programs, change people’s lives.

2. We are a learning organization.
Yet the Problem Remains...

There are 11 million K-12 kids in poverty in America.

Students served by CIS over time.
The Journey of Building Credibility Towards Impact

- Lead development of a field of high-quality, evidence-based Integrated Student Supports providers to reach the 11 million in need.
Evolving the CIS Value System

1. We believe that relationships, not programs, change people’s lives.

2. We are a learning organization.

3. We commit to a future in which EVERY child has the opportunity to shape his or her world, and ours, for the better. No restrictions.
Only Collective National Effort Will Close The Gap

There are 11 million K-12 kids in poverty in America

Number of Students Served in Millions


Remaining Need for ISS

Students served by CIS over time
What Can I Offer For Your Consideration?

• Those in need must be served....WELL.

• The national need will overwhelm us unless we become COMMUNITY and create:
  – Understanding of Challenges
  – Collective Action for Systematic Solutions

• What is LSA uniquely positioned to do as the fullest expression of its values to create the greatest impact?