



www.cischarleston.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: JANUARY 22, 2016
FOR INTERVIEWS, PHOTOS and B-ROLL:
Erin Billmayer | 843-740-6793 | ebillmayer@cischarleston.org

CIS of Charleston Receives National Recognition for Service *Precious Oliver Alexander Named 2016 Unsung Heroes* Award Winner

CHARLESTON, SC — Communities In Schools of the Charleston Area (CIS) announced today that Precious Oliver Alexander has been named a 2016 Unsung Heroes Awards winner. Alexander is one of three CIS alumni honored by the national Communities In Schools' network as best in class for their hard work and dedication in overcoming barriers and achieving academic success.

"I am truly honored to receive this award," said Alexander. "CIS has had a tremendous impact on my life and I am thankful for my site coordinator who believed in me and helped me realize my potential."

Alexander was first identified for CIS case management in 6th grade and continued with the program until she graduated from St. John's High School in 2009. During this period, she received group and individual counseling as well as academic assistance. Additionally, she was able to form a one-on-one caring relationship with the CIS Site Coordinator at St. John's High School. After serving two tours of duty in Afghanistan, Alexander, now married, is currently pursuing a degree in Cyber Security.

"Our CIS alumni heroes are the epitome of grit and determination. They are resilient leaders who have demonstrated great strength in overcoming personal and educational challenges in their pursuit of a high school diploma, said Gary Chapman, national network executive vice president. "We are thrilled to honor these amazing individuals for their hard work and dedication."

The Unsung Heroes Awards were created in 2007 to give national recognition to local schools, communities and Communities In Schools' site coordinators for changing the picture of education in America. This year, the alumni category was added to highlight the outstanding accomplishments of students who have overcome incredible odds to graduate from high school.

The 2016 honorees were recognized at the Communities In Schools' Leadership Town Hall, held in Fort Worth, TX on Thursday, Jan. 21.

The complete list of 2016 honorees, with links full profiles of each, can be found [here](#).

#

Communities In Schools of the Charleston Area

Communities In Schools of the Charleston Area is part of the national Communities In Schools' network, which operates in more than 2,200 schools in the most challenged communities of 25 states and the District of Columbia. Working closely with school districts and partner organizations, Communities In Schools serves nearly 1.5 million young people and their families each year. Based directly inside schools throughout the country, Communities In Schools connects students and their families to basic and critical educational and community-based resources, tailored to each student's specific needs. Partnering with both the Charleston County School District and the Berkeley County School District, CIS of Charleston serves nearly 12,000 students in twenty-five area schools. During the 2014-2015 school year, 96% of CIS case-managed students were promoted to the next grade level and 98% of CIS case-managed seniors graduated from high school. Learn more about Communities In Schools of the Charleston Area, visit www.cischarleston.org.