



Communities
In Schools

Bill Milliken: A 50-Year Commitment to Children

Bill Milliken, founder and vice chairman of Communities In Schools, is one of the nation's pioneers in the movement to give young people the help they need to achieve in school, graduate and go on to rewarding lives.

Milliken and the other founders of Communities In Schools came up with the idea of delivering needed community resources and services directly into public schools where children spend their days. This grassroots, personalized approach embodies Milliken's long-held philosophy that "It is relationships, not programs, that change children."

The year 2010 marked the 50th anniversary of Milliken's commitment to children. He has been honored with numerous awards through the years including a 2009 National Jefferson Award for Public Service from the American Institute for Public Service. He received the Temple Award for Creative Altruism, given by the Institute of Noetic Sciences, which honors individuals "whose lives and work demonstrate the transformative power of caring coupled with imagination and enterprise. In 1994, Milliken received the National Caring Award as one of the "10 Most Caring People in America." Milliken has also received the Edward A. Smith Award for Excellence in Education for Nonprofit Leadership, which honors one executive each year who exemplifies "extraordinary leadership" over a lifetime of service, and the Champion for Children Award from the American Association of School Administrators, which honors a nationally known non-educator whose contributions have significantly and positively influenced the lives of children.

Milliken's activism began in 1960 when he joined Young Life, an ecumenical youth organization. He helped initiate "street academies" for young people who had dropped out of school and wanted a chance to resume their education, as well as live-in programs for substance abusers

and youth in need of shelter and support. Milliken's experiences led him to search for a comprehensive approach to helping young people. This search culminated in the 1970s with the development of a model organization that repositioned existing community resources into schools – the Communities In Schools network, which Milliken led as president until 2004.

Milliken has served three United States presidents. During the Carter Administration, he was the White House Advisor on Youth Issues. In 1989, Milliken advised President George Bush for the Education Summit with the nation's governors. He was also involved in planning The President's Summit for America's Future, held in January 1997.

Milliken serves on the Jefferson Awards and Leadership Foundation boards of directors. He is the author of four books, *So Long, Sweet Jesus; Tough Love, The Last Dropout: Stop the Epidemic*, and *From the Rearview Mirror: Reflecting on Connecting the Dots*.

Communities In Schools surrounds students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. Through a school-based coordinator, Communities In Schools connects students and their families to critical community resources tailored to local needs. Working in nearly 2,700 in the most challenged communities, in 24 states and the District of Columbia, Communities In Schools serves nearly 1.26 million young people and their families. It has become the nation's leading dropout prevention organization, and the only one proven to increase graduation rates and decrease dropout rates.