

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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CONTACT:

Katie Vogler, Director of Programs
Communities in Schools of Orange
County
(M) 919-967-6677; (C) 919-225-2810
Email: cisoc@bellsouth.net
Website: www.cisoc-nc.org

**Communities in Schools of Orange County receives
donation from Strowd Roses, Inc.**

CHAPEL HILL - Communities in Schools of Orange County (CISOC) recently received a funding donation of **\$10,000** from **Strowd Roses, Inc.**

The funding will provide the means to fill the position of program support coordinator for CISOC's newest program, *Project SMITH*. *Project SMITH* is an after-school program at R.D. and Euzelle P. Smith Middle School that works specifically with Latino students in need of academic services and support. The students will receive tutorial one-on-one support from community mentors throughout the academic year up to three times a week for an hour. The mentors will aid the students in their academic work and make appropriate referrals to outside agencies if necessary.

One of CISOC's goals is to help every student succeed. It approaches this goal by addressing schools' specific needs. Smith Middle School personnel contacted CISOC at the end of the 2002-2003 school year regarding a number of Latino students who were in need of academic aid and support. *Project SMITH* was designed specifically to target these students' needs. By having a small concentrated group, CISOC is able to provide these students necessary individualized academic assistance and support.

Realizing that middle school is a valuable precursor for students' success in their academic career, *Project SMITH* hopes to motivate these students toward academic achievement and accomplishments now and in the future. The success of the students participating in the program will be tracked throughout the semester, as well as assessed after they take the statewide End-of-Grade tests. Their new scores will be compared with those from the previous spring to evaluate their academic improvement.

Communities in Schools of Orange County is a community based collaborative organization that identifies school age children not performing to their potential and works to link these students and their families with the necessary resources for success. Its mission is to champion the connection of needed community resources with schools to help young people successfully learn, stay in school and prepare for life.

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