

# CIS of Tacoma Newsletter



## BEING PRESENT MATTERS

"November has been a challenging month for many of us at CIS of Tacoma. For the first time in my professional career, I find myself without clear solutions or answers about what lies ahead. Even more difficult, our Site Coordinators face the same uncertainty when students ask about their own or their families' futures. It's a lot to process, and leading through such times is no easy task, especially when the impact touches all of us in deeply personal ways.

What inspires me most about this team is the safe space we've created together—a space where we can share openly, voice concerns, ask for help, and trust one another. That sense of community and support is what keeps us moving forward, even in the hardest moments."

~ Emily (executive director)



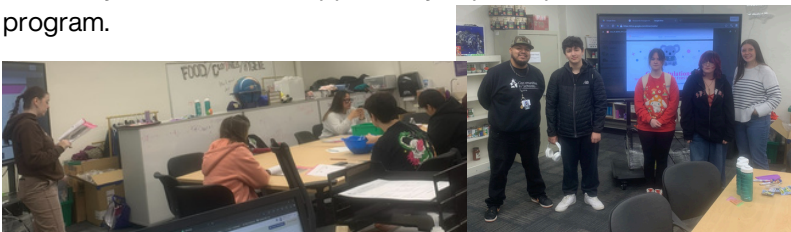
*Sometimes you just have to smile and break some bread.*

*Missing a few key players - Lin, Natia, Joshua, and Adan!*

## Teen Mental Health First Aid

In partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs of South Puget Sound (BGCSPS), eight students from Oakland High School successfully completed the Teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA) program. The training was led by Kelsey, BGCSPS Behavioral Support Specialist, with support from Christian, Site Coordinator.

Additionally, two staff members, Vince (Program Director) and Adan (FREE253 Program Manager), earned their certification to train students in tMHFA. Together with BGCSPS, our goal is to ensure that every student has the opportunity to participate in this vital program.



Arlington Elementary School  
Fern Hill Elementary School  
Gray Middle School  
Stewart Middle School  
Lincoln High School  
Mt Tahoma High School  
Oakland High School

*"Programs don't change people, relationships do."*

Bill Milliken

## Upcoming Events

**November 1 - December 5, 2024**  
Winter Wish Coat Drive

**April 25, 2025**  
Annual ALL IN FOR KIDS Luncheon  
Save the Date

Volunteer Opportunities

**DONATE TODAY**



So many things happening, we added another page!

# Gray Thrift a SUCCESS!



35 families served  
452 clothing items  
447 hygiene products  
\$3,817.50 worth of products distributed

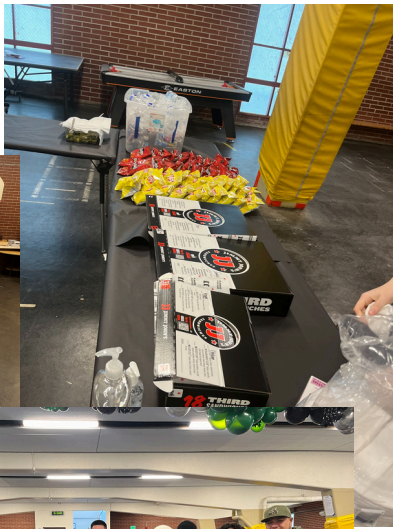
“This event was truly a labor of love for me. Thank you so much to everyone for the continuous support of Communities In Schools of Tacoma and myself. I have been at Gray for the past 4 school years and every year we face new challenges and try to come up with new and improved ways of giving back to our community as a whole. This event brought so many families back to Gray, it brought staff and community members together to tackle an ongoing issue in this community and it influenced our students to provide service. I had students folding clothes, organizing and assisting families with their shopping. It was a proud moment. This would not have been possible without all of you and for that I am forever grateful. AND there are so many more items left to give away!!” ~ Natia



## Thanksgiving at Oakland High School



Mt. Tahoma High School Friendsgiving celebration!



Popcorn Friday for all students & Session 1 All-Star Readers @ Fern Hill Elementary



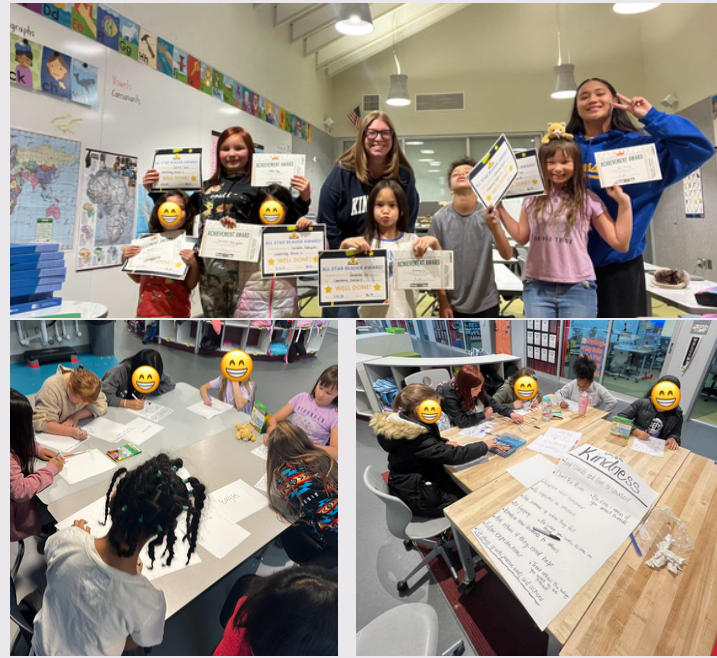
## Arlington Elementary w/ Ms. M

Ms. M, the dedicated Site Coordinator at Arlington Elementary, is spearheading two impactful initiatives to support students' growth both academically and socially.

Through her efforts to ensure students are reading at grade level, Ms. M collaborates with teachers and families to provide targeted reading interventions and celebrations of literacy milestones through the **All-Star Readers initiative**. Her focus on tailored support helps students develop confidence in their reading abilities, setting a strong foundation for academic success.

Separately, on **Kindness Day**, Ms. M led a school-wide initiative to teach and celebrate the power of empathy and compassion. Through group discussions, and activities centered on kindness, she fosters a positive school culture where students learn to value and practice kindness in their daily lives.

## BEING PRESENT MATTERS



FREE YA MIND students at Gray



FREE YA MIND students at Lincoln

## FREE253 Update

As part of our **FREE253 Initiative**, the **FREE YA MIND** leadership group for young men has officially launched at Gray Middle School and Lincoln High School. This dynamic program is designed to empower young men to grow as leaders by focusing on personal development, emotional intelligence, and actionable life skills.

Each session begins with an intentional focus on an Action or Word of the Day, which serves as the foundation for meaningful discussions and activities. On Wednesdays, the group takes a deeper dive into exploring impactful action words such as self-control, accountability, integrity, and forgiveness. Through guided discussions, participants reflect on their personal definitions of these values, share strategies for practicing them in their daily lives, and critically examine the consequences of neglecting them.

December 2024

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