

Non Profit	
Nominee	
Name:	Neil Shorthouse
Title:	President and Co-Founder
Organization:	Communities in Schools
Nominator	
Name:	Bob Littell
Organization:	Chief NetWeaver

Give up to three examples of how this person demonstrates Integrity:

Neil, along with Bill Milliken and Dave Lewis, founded Communities In Schools in 1977 and their mission has always been all about saving kids from dropping out of school and helping them lead meaningful lives. Every single person with whom I have spoken about Neil almost laughs when I ask for a story or example of how Neil demonstrates 'integrity' because they say that's what his life has been all about. According to Bill Milliken, "Neil is so smart; he could have done anything he ever wanted to do or become. He went to school on a full golf scholarship to Pitt and could have gone onto the Pro Golf Tour. And he gave up going to Law School and chose instead to become a Young Life Leader."

When their fledgling 'demonstration' model organization which President Carter had helped fund, ran out of money in the middle of their PERT chart, Bill can remember Neil looking up at their office and saying, "Well the lights are still on so I guess we're still in business".

Everyone also consistently refers to Neil's incredible ability to do what's right in the face of adversity and his indomitable spirit to succeed in the face of overwhelming odds against CIS making it. As Senator Johnny Isakson said in a testimonial letter he wrote and which is forwarded with the application: "I wholeheartedly support his nomination for the Turknett Leadership Award. He is a great asset to our state, and this recognition is a testament to his commitment to the education and business community of our state. He is a visionary who excels at getting things done and would be a worthy recipient of this award."

According to David Martin, PhD, Executive Director at the Georgia Council on Economic Education and someone who knows Neil well: "When John and Sue Wieland received the Philanthropists of the Year Award several years ago, Sue quoted an etching on the wall of one of the buildings at her college that reads, "*What you keep you lose - what you give away, you keep forever.*" David Martin sincerely believes that Neil has always been willing to give away everything to help the least of those among us. As an aside, when a fire nearly completely

destroyed Neil's home a couple years ago, the Wielands took over the rebuilding and renovation of the house.

Give up to three examples of how this person demonstrates Respect:

David Martin points out that, *"Over the years, Neil has worked with political and educational leaders who are often at odds with one another. The amazing thing is that in the midst of their disagreeing, they can all agree on their respect for Neil and Communities In Schools and the mission to which he has dedicated his life."*

Steve Dolinger, President, Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education said, *"Neil is a leader who has gained - really earned - the respect of other leaders across this state. At meetings and conferences he is always a 'front row person'. And, he is always there, out in front for kids. He asks those tough questions that many others in the audience would like to ask but don't, or at least are interested in the answer."*

Steve went on to say, *"Neil has such respect from others that he is never considered offensive or confrontational – merely on top of the issues as well as the intricacies and the challenges. He certainly is passionate and carries the flag for support of kids. And by the way, he always gets an answer."*

Give up to three examples of how this person demonstrates Responsibility:

David Martin recounted a story about Neil from a few years ago when he was arrested for going the wrong way on a one way street in a small town somewhere in Henry County. His major concern was not being arrested, but that he had a couple of his grandchildren with him - and what would happen to them until someone from the family arrived. Then, while he was waiting to post bond, he was witnessing to the others in the holding cell. All in all, David thinks Neil viewed it as a positive experience! David added, *"Neil's life is a witness to patience and persistence and resiliency."*

Bill Milliken was adamant in saying that had it not been for Neil's persistence and perseverance, CIS would never have made it.

As an example of that, David Martin has served as Treasurer of Communities In Schools in Georgia – the CIS state office - since it was created in the late '80's. *"Every year, we propose a budget that includes a sizeable 'deficit' (or what Mike Worley at Georgia Power has called our 'sales goal'). And every year, we balance the budget or produce a small surplus by a combination of cutting expenses or raising more money. Neil really does 'live by faith' that the needs of CIS will be met. Back in 1972, who would have thought the 'faith' of Neil Shorthouse, Dave Lewis (deceased) and Bill Milliken, in the creation of 'Exodus' in Atlanta, Georgia, would*

turn into Communities In Schools with operations in 25 states serving 1.2 million students every year.”

And in terms of ‘accountability’, Steve Dolinger had this to say, “Creating an organization is a huge success, but building it and sustaining it over the years is truly remarkable. Part of his success is that he really understands the need to demonstrate and document the organization’s success. He knows that results matter. He is a master at relaying the qualitative results – having kids and their families tell their stories about how Communities In Schools turned their lives around. However, he is just as good at reporting the quantitative successes of CIS, sharing the results that school system leaders, business leaders and funders demand to review. That is just one of the ways he has built and sustained such a successful organization. And the real bottom-line is that many, many kids are doing a lot better because of his leadership.”

Please relate an incident or tell a story that shows how this person demonstrates Leadership Character. Examples may include professional or community involvement:

Leaders within communities have to be good jugglers. They have many audiences to please and appease. Communities In Schools is a community-based organization and through Neil's vision, is a holistic investment of resources dedicated to student success. With this mission in mind, Neil has been able to recruit and elicit the support of some of the largest businesses and private foundations in the U.S. to invest in local ideas and solutions. Through Neil's leadership, Communities In Schools retains its grassroots approach while producing a replicable, sustainable model for student success.

And all the while when Neil is serving in his capacity with CIS, he still makes time to be involved in other community and business organizations. He serves on numerous boards of directors, including the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, the Georgia Charter Schools Association, and the Rotary Club of Atlanta West End. He also serves as a consultant to numerous organizations and assists the Georgia Department of Education in its work with the state's children.

Neil Shorthouse and Patty Pflum, his wife of 37 years, live in Grant park section of Atlanta. They have four children and six grandchildren; they attend St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in downtown Atlanta.

Neil Shorthouse would make an exemplary winner of the Turknett Leadership Award for Non-Profits.