



AFTERSCHOOL ADVOCACY NEEDED AS STUDENTS RETURN TO SCHOOL

With children returning to classrooms across the nation, afterschool programs are gearing up as well. But recession-driven funding cutbacks have forced many programs to reduce services, shorten hours, lay off staff and, in some cases, close sites altogether.

“These are extremely challenging times for afterschool providers, and for the children and families who count on them,” Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant said. “Like the families they serve, afterschool programs are struggling. But program directors are working tirelessly to keep the doors open, so children will have a safe place to go with enriching activities after the school day ends.”

Uncertain Times

Research earlier this year by the Afterschool Alliance documented the economic struggles facing afterschool programs. The *Uncertain Times 2009* report, relying on data from a web-based survey of afterschool providers, found that three in five afterschool program leaders said funding for their programs is down, and more than one-third said it is down a lot. Fully seven in ten respondents said that their funding was less than secure for the next one to two years, and 83 percent said it is not secure for the next three to five years.

In the months since, there have been reports of afterschool cutbacks from coast to coast. A recent story in the *Wall Street Journal* discussed the impact on families and programs: a New York City mom scrambling

for child care for her six-year-old, after his afterschool program was forced to reduce the number of children it could serve; a Tucson, Arizona mother forced to cut back on her work hours so she can meet her children at the bus every afternoon because the afterschool program was forced to raise fees beyond the family’s reach; long-established programs in Los Angeles and Iowa shutting down sites in the face of severe budget cuts, leaving few options for the families that rely on them.

At the same time, a number of state and local jurisdictions are struggling mightily to spare afterschool from the budget knife, and program providers are cobbling together funding and in-kind donations to keep programs running.

“It’s heroic what some afterschool providers are doing to keep their doors open,” Grant added, “but programs need more – and *Advocacy continued on page ten...*”

TRIBUTE

“Our nation lost a powerful and tireless advocate for children and families last week when Senator Edward M. Kennedy succumbed to cancer. Senator Kennedy was a champion for afterschool programs, joining the Senate Afterschool Caucus early on and supporting every major effort to increase federal support for afterschool programs over the last decade. Senator Kennedy also pressed for full funding of the *No Child Left Behind Act*, which he helped write, and worked hard to ensure that the lessons learned in afterschool programs are incorporated into extended day programs. We are deeply grateful for his friendship and support. Like the rest of the nation, we will miss him terribly.”

-- Jodi Grant, Executive Director, Afterschool Alliance

OUTREACH

Jumpstarting Fall Outreach

With the lazy days of summer soon to become a distant memory, advocates can begin planning fall outreach. There are many creative ways to spread the word about afterschool! A sample outreach plan is included below, along with a back-to-school letter-to-the-editor. Be sure to email it to your local paper, so you can inform others about how your program keeps kids safe, inspires them to learn, and helps families.

September

- Send “Back-to-School” letter-to-the-editor to the local paper, highlighting the need for afterschool programs.
- Organize a *Lights On Afterschool* planning committee, including input from program youth, to begin planning event.
- Contact local businesses and community leaders to secure their involvement in *Lights On Afterschool*.
- Organize a service event with your afterschool program, cleaning up fall leaves for the elderly, or a clothing/jacket drive for the upcoming cool weather, and be sure to tell the newspaper and radio about it.

October

- Finalize *Lights On Afterschool* planning. *For best results check out the Lights On Afterschool Event Planning Kit at <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loaEventKit.cfm>.*
- Be sure to invite local media to your *Lights On Afterschool* event on October 22!
- Submit a letter-to-the-editor after your event, discussing the need for more afterschool.
- Create a “Top Ten Scariest” list of things that could happen in your community to children who don’t have access to afterschool programs. Submit it to your local paper in time for Halloween, or have your students create video reenactments for your program’s website or television station’s community news website.

November

- Organize a service event with your afterschool program with a Thanksgiving theme: a canned food collection; a meal preparation at a church or homeless shelter; a community open house at the program, with each child preparing a nutritious dish. Be sure to invite the media.
- Contact your Representative and Senators offices and see when they might be back in town. Extend an invitation for them to visit your program.

December

- Create an “Afterschool Holiday Wish-List” for the children in your community that have no access to afterschool programs, and submit it to the local paper.
- Organize a service event with your afterschool program with a holiday theme: host a toy collection drive; teach students to knit scarves for the less fortunate; bring a holiday meal to shut-ins; organize a holiday pageant at a local children’s hospital or nursing home. Be sure to invite the media.

“Back-to-School” Letter-to-the-Editor

Below is a sample letter. Be sure to localize it, so that it makes sense for your community. Once you’ve personalized it, go to your local newspaper’s website, or find information on its opinion page, on how to submit this letter. Good luck!

To the Editor:

As students head back to school this fall, families here and around the nation are in for an unpleasant surprise: Many of the afterschool programs they’ve come to rely upon are being hit hard by recession-driven budget cuts, and have been forced to cut back their programs or close their doors.

Late this spring, the Afterschool Alliance surveyed afterschool providers across the nation, and warned of the coming challenges. Three in five afterschool programs said that funding for their programs is down, and more than one-third said it is down a lot. Faced with no good alternatives, programs are cutting back on activities, staff, hours, and the number of children they serve. (The report on the survey, *Uncertain Times 2009*, is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.)

Programs in [name of community] are no exception. [Insert a sentence about local cutbacks or challenges to the stability of funding, and what that means for children and families.]

With the recession still hitting hard on Main Street, and families under stress, parents and children need their afterschool programs now more than ever.

Sincerely,

[your name and affiliation]

[work phone and home phone, not for publication]

AFTERSCHOOL FOR ALL**Take Small Steps to Make a Big Difference for Afterschool**

Currently, the *Afterschool for All* campaign totals more than 24,000 partners. As we continue to build the *Afterschool for All* movement, and strengthen our call for more investments in afterschool programs, partners can take small steps to make a big difference for youth and families everywhere. Here are a few ways to incorporate *Afterschool for All* in the work that you do every day to help make afterschool a priority:

- Tag a “Join Afterschool for All” link to your email signature. *Find the link at <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/a4aJoin.cfm>.*
- Include the Proud Partner of Afterschool for All web banner on your website. *Find the web banner at <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/a4aPartnerBanners.cfm>.*
- Use this sample newsletter article in your website newsletter, email outreach, magazines and other materials. *The article is available at <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/a4aPartnerInsertPubs.cfm>.*

Thank you for your continued support for *Afterschool for All*. If you have questions or comments, please contact Marie Coichy-Dauphin at mdauphin@afterschoolalliance.org or at 646-943-8662. Visit the Afterschool for All campaign online at www.afterschoolalliance.org/a4a.cfm.



FUNDING NEWS

The Afterschool Alliance's website has resources for afterschool providers, including tips for initiating relationships with funders and businesses, and for identifying funding opportunities. *To learn more, visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/funding.cfm>. Remember to check here, <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyEconRecovery.cfm>, to find out how afterschool programs might tap into economic recovery funds.*

GRANTS/AWARDS AVAILABLE

Grants for Hydroponic Gardening Projects

The National Gardening Association is sponsoring award packages of gardening materials for schools that grow plants hydroponically (without soil). Elementary, middle and high schools with projects that engage at least 15 students during the 2010 school year are eligible to apply. The deadline is September 18. *For more information, visit <http://kidsgardening.com/grants/HOH.asp>.*

Grants for Public Skate Parks

The Tony Hawk Foundation is sponsoring grants of up to \$25,000 to fund the construction of public skate parks in low-income neighborhoods or communities of at-risk youth. Parks must be built by experienced contractors and involve a grassroots community effort in design and construction, and should be open year-round with no entry fee or required supervision. Tax-exempt organizations, and state and local agencies, are eligible to apply. The deadline is October 1. *For more information, visit http://www.tonyhawkfoundation.org/grant_application.asp.*

Grants for Native American Programs

The Endangered Language Fund and the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council are sponsoring grants of up to \$10,000 for education and research projects that support the preservation of the aboriginal languages of American Indian tribes that came into contact with the Lewis and Clark expedition. Tribal members and tribal-language programs or schools are eligible to apply. The deadline is October 15. *To see a list of eligible tribes, and for more information, visit http://www.endangeredlanguagefund.org/native_voices.html.*

Grants for Football Field Development

The National Football League Youth Football Fund is sponsoring grants for low- to moderate-income neighborhoods to build safe and accessible football fields for youth. Varying amounts are available for resurfacing an existing sports field, creating a new field, or for features other than the actual field. Middle schools, high schools and tax-exempt organizations within an NFL "target market" are eligible to apply. The deadline is October 30. *To find out if your community is in an NFL "target market," and for more information, visit <http://www.lisc.org/section/goals/healthy/youth/request>.*



INNOVATIVE URBAN GARDENING PROGRAM RECEIVES WILLIAM S. WHITE AWARD

The tough streets of Baltimore's east side are not well-known for locally grown organic produce, talented music and dance ensembles, and high academic achievement. But this year's winner of the William S. White 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Program of Distinction Award is changing all that.

Baltimore Urban Gardening with Students (BUGS) has become a powerful presence in the inner city community, providing social and academic support to area youth. A 21st CCLC funded program since 2003, BUGS utilizes urban gardening in afterschool and summer programs to teach hands-on activities and service-learning to children in third through eighth grades. The goal is to make classroom lessons more relevant and expand students' social awareness and sense of community.

BUGS students learn math, science, environmentalism, nutrition, ecology, culinary skills, art, dance, music, social skills and more, and put those skills into use at a BUGS farmers market where the children sell their own produce. "The kids are incredibly enthusiastic about the different activities, many of which they might otherwise never experience," says Heather Rebstad, program director for BUGS. "As they begin to connect that enthusiasm with the process of learning, they become equally excited about succeeding in other settings, including school and the community."

A small student-to-staff ratio and low staff turnover help create the nurturing environment that is key to BUGS' success. Students in the high quality program show improved school attendance and improved grades and state assessment scores. Family involvement and strong community

partnerships are also essential. Because of its success, the BUGS program is being replicated in Washington, D.C..

BUGS received the William S. White 21st CCLC Program of Distinction Award at the annual 21st CCLC Summer Institute, which was held in Nashville, Tennessee in July. The William S. White Award is named after the president of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, who partnered with the U.S. Department of Education on the 21st CCLC Initiative, the principal federal funding stream for afterschool. Since 2005, the William S. White Award has been honoring individuals for their lifetime achievement and exceptional afterschool programs across the country.

For more information on BUGS, visit <http://www.bugsprogram.org/index.php>.

NEW ON AFTERSCHOOL RADIO!

Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant discusses art, afterschool, community partnerships, and more with Afterschool Alliance Board member and Torani and R. Torre & Company Principal Lisa Lucheta on this month's Afterschool Radio.

For several years, Torani, the maker of flavored syrups for coffee and seltzer, has sponsored a unique art contest for afterschool program students. Each year, the company selects artwork created by children to feature on special edition bottles of Torani flavored syrups. Torani also supports afterschool programs in its community, the Bay Area. Lisa Lucheta talks about how and why Torani supports afterschool programs and how programs can best work with corporate sponsors.

ASA Radio is produced in conjunction with the BAM Radio Network. *To listen, visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/afterschoolRadio.cfm>.*

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS PROMOTE GRADUATION

The Afterschool Alliance has issued two new Issue Briefs that explore the ways afterschool programs are securing the path to graduation for older youth through dropout prevention and credit attainment and recovery.

“Afterschool: A High School Dropout Prevention Tool,” co-produced by the Afterschool Alliance and MetLife Foundation, explores how afterschool programs address risk factors and problems for high school dropouts. The new brief finds that afterschool programs that provide mentoring and tutoring, service learning, alternative schooling, experiential learning, community collaborations, or career and technical education help keep students engaged and interested in learning. These programs often also provide an opportunity to earn income, reduce involvement in risky behavior, and foster social and emotional development in a safe and positive setting.

“These programs are especially crucial in reaching young people who are most at risk at turning points as they transition from middle school to high school and are searching for meaningful academic, vocational and recreational activities that keep them invested in their own success. While school districts across the country wrestle with shrinking funds and tightened budgets, afterschool programs provide an ideal platform for the broad variety of curricula and personalized instruction that keep students interested in learning and committed to staying in school,” the Brief says.

Afterschool programs can also help older youth earn academic credit outside of a normal classroom setting or recover credits that have been lost because of failure or drop out. “Afterschool: Providing a Successful Route to Credit Attainment and Recovery” is an issue brief from the Afterschool Alliance and the Nellie Mae Education Foundation. The brief highlights how hands-on approaches

to learning offered in partnership with the community – such as independent study, private instruction, participation in the arts, internships, community service, apprenticeships and online instruction – can help students earn academic credit while better engaging them, and can be personalized to their learning needs.

“Older youth who are struggling in school, especially those who are disengaged, need both support and challenge to reconnect with learning and stay on a path to higher education and meaningful work,” the Brief says. “Afterschool incorporates youth development principles that stress building on individual assets and integrating family, school and community and provides a venue for students to attain and recover credits, allowing them to successfully graduate high school and giving them real options for their future.”

The Issue Briefs offer several examples of afterschool programs that are helping older youth on the road to graduation. *To view the Dropout Prevention Issue Brief, visit http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_38_DropoutPrevention.cfm. To view the Credit Attainment and Recovery Issue Brief, visit http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_39_CreditAttainment.cfm.*



IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

“During the school year, the most dangerous time for teenagers is between 3 and 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. These are the hours when they are most likely to be a victim or perpetrator of a crime. The reason is simple: Many parents work and a lot of teens have no structured place to go once school dismisses... There are now programs available in many communities, but not enough to meet the need... The creation of more and better programs should be a priority, not only for school districts and

communities, but for the president, Congress and Pennsylvania state officials as well. They benefit teenagers and society. With the start of school a month away, now is the time to consider ways to make 3 to 6 p.m. less dangerous.”

-- Editorial, *Patriot-News*, July 23, 2009

“There is another reason to consider new law enforcement strategy: simple dollars and cents, and the principle of diminishing marginal returns. Every state in the union is trying to trim budgets. State and localities are laying off teachers, cutting back on public health, and canceling afterschool programs for our children. But in almost all cases, spending on prisons continues to rise. This is unsustainable economically. Many jurisdictions simply cannot afford the monetary costs of focusing exclusively on incarceration, to say nothing of the social costs associated with high rates of imprisonment... as we work to implement these smarter criminal justice policies, our efforts cannot be exclusively reactive.”

-- U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, addressing the American Bar Association’s House of Delegates, *Federal News Service*, August 3, 2009

Voices from the Afterschool Storybook...

“Ten Sleep is a small rural community where many hardworking parents often commute long distances to get to and from work. The commute is especially hard on single parent families who worry about their kids’ safety when school lets out. Our program also serves a number of families who live far from town, in the country. For many of these families, our afterschool program is the only way their kids can stay connected to their peers and not feel so isolated.”

-- Mitzi Stephenson, Ten Sleep, Wyoming

To read more about Stephenson’s afterschool experience, and read more afterschool voices from across the country, visit

http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/storybook/gallery.cfm?CNT_ID=STRY41345. Share your story at <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/storybook/GALLERY.CFM>.



IN THE NEWS...

California – Lessons in physics, biology and chemistry were cleverly disguised as model rockets and mousetrap cars at the second annual Dr. Ronald McNair Math and Science Academy in Modesto. The week-long program is part of Project Uplift, an afterschool mentoring program for at-risk and minority youth. Students completed more than 20 hands-on science projects with instruction from Dave Menshew, a teacher at Modesto City Schools and the 2009 National Biotechnology Teacher of the Year and California Ag in the Classroom Teacher of the Year. The Academy concluded with science-focused field trips to the Monterey Bay Aquarium and Yosemite National Park.

Illinois – It’s not just teenagers in Chicago who are learning how to make positive changes in their community this summer – two teens from Rwanda are joining them. Joselyne Umubyeyi and Claudette Niyonshuti flew nearly 8,000 miles to attend the Chicago Freedom School, a leadership institute that promotes social justice and equality, and offers special summer sessions. Over the course of six weeks, students learn how to become activists, organizing and implementing social change movements. Niyonshuti visited the school last summer too, and started the Kigali Freedom School in her hometown, the *Chicago Sun Times* reports. The 50 students there learn about tolerance and work with We-ACTx to help women who were intentionally infected with HIV during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. “We, the young people, are the future of Rwanda and the

world,” Umubyeyi said. “We came here to share our experiences with other youth and to learn from them.” *To learn more about the Chicago Freedom School, visit <http://chicagofreedomschool.org>.*

Massachusetts – Ten years after it started in a three-bedroom apartment, the afterschool program at Allencrest Apartments is moving into a space more suitable for its 60 students. The on-site program, a partnership between the Leominster Housing Authority and Leominster Public Schools, provides academic help for children of all ages who live in the low-income complex. Their new building, the Allencrest Academic Learning Center, will be environmentally-sustainable. Private donations from the community and a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development made the construction possible, and labor is being provided by volunteers from Leominster High School’s Center for Technical Education. The building will serve as a hands-on classroom for vocational students, and will be the hub of activity in Allencrest when it is completed in early 2010.

Missouri – Nick Cloyd and Jon Rhinesmith aren’t just keeping their grades up in their afterschool program – they’re training for a career. The two are cadets at the Ozark Fire Protection District, where they work at least 12 hours a week, working at the station, riding to fires, and even holding the hose line when the captain allows. Letters of recommendation were required when they applied for the program, and they must maintain a 2.5 GPA and obey a curfew, the *Springfield News-Leader* reports. “Education is a big thing we push,” said Andi Mooneyham, coordinator of the cadet program. The teens got to train with the St. Louis cadets earlier this summer, and had to pass tests to earn uniforms and badges. “It’s an honor and a privilege to do this,” Cloyd said.

New Jersey – After learning about the different jobs at The Lamp Post Inn, 13 developmentally disabled guest chefs put their fraction skills and etiquette to work to make and eat their own pizzas. They are part of the six-week Eagle Program at Central Regional Middle School, which aims to keep these students from falling behind over the summer. It is funded by an *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)* grant. The students have also visited parks, a medical center, and a library. “They learned about nature, health, how to play miniature golf and about the jobs at each site,” teacher Christine Johnson told the *Asbury Park Press*. “They got to do things they haven’t had a chance to do before.”

Pennsylvania – Moving to a new place is hard for anybody, but when you’re a teenager and you don’t speak English, it can be especially difficult. That’s what students at the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit’s Migrant Program Summer School conveyed when they read books they had written about their experience, entitled “All About Me.” More than 100 children took part in the program this year, improving their English and making friends. The 30 teenagers especially benefited, using the four-week program to learn math, reading, nutrition and dance, the *Standard-Speaker* reports. Their books will be distributed to libraries and doctor’s offices in the area for others to read, as part of a community service project.

South Carolina – The Spirit of South Carolina, a 140-foot-tall ship, was taken over for a week by teenagers from the Charleston County School District, as part of the 21st Century Spirit Ocean Adventure program. The teens took turns on watch duty 24-hours a day, and played a part in every aspect of the ship’s operation for eight days and seven nights. The summer program for at-risk kids began with five weeks of land-based activity, like visiting museums, tours of college campuses and ice skating. The teens didn’t

just get to try new things, the *Post and Courier* reports, they improved their academic skills: Based on an oral fluency test, their literacy rate increased an average of 14.4 percent. *For more information on the Spirit Ocean Adventure program, visit <http://www.spiritocceanadventure.com>.*

Washington, D.C. – First Lady Michelle Obama invited 25 young musicians from the Sitar Arts Center to participate in The Jazz Studio, part of the White House Music Series that kicked off in June. As part of the program, students got a concert from well-known jazz musician Wynton Marsalis and his sons Branford and Jason. The musicians also led educational workshops and music classes. *To learn more about the Sitar Arts Center, and its afterschool programs, visit <http://www.sitarartscenter.org>.*

Washington, D.C. – Chicago’s First Lady and Afterschool Alliance Leadership Circle Member Maggie Daley made an appearance on Capitol Hill to testify about the importance of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education in afterschool. She told a congressional subcommittee that, working in collaboration with private companies, afterschool programs have helped Chicago’s children become more involved in the sciences and will help America compete in the global economy, according to *WLS-TV*.



SUMMER LEARNING PETITION

BELL, a nonprofit organization that provides summer and afterschool programs across the country, recently launched the Summer Learning Challenge to raise awareness about the importance of keeping kids educated when school is not in session. Parents and educators are encouraged to sign a pledge on BELL’s website to take steps to

keep a child engaged and prevent “summer learning loss.”

Once BELL’s Summer Learning Challenge has reached 10,000 signatures, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt will donate books to the nearly 12,000 children BELL serves.

After you sign the pledge, you can find research on the importance of summer learning, suggestions for keeping kids engaged, and information on volunteer opportunities at one of their 75 sites in Baltimore, Boston, Charlotte, Detroit, Flint, and New York City.

To sign on to the BELL Summer Learning Challenge, visit <http://bellsummerchallenge.org>.



AFTERSCHOOL NEWS NOW

Hungry for the latest news in afterschool? Be sure to check out *Afterschool Snack*, the Afterschool Alliance’s new up to the minute blog on afterschool news, trends and information from across the country. Tune in every Wednesday for a national news round-up, and throughout the week for your daily dose of afterschool.

New topics include:

- After the School Bell Rings Cable Show;
- Survey Explores Afterschool Snacks; and
- Ten Years of *Lights On Afterschool* – October 22, 2009

Check out Afterschool Snack at <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/afterschoolsnack/ASnack.cfm>.



CELEBRATE PLAY

In an effort to keep kids active and healthy, KaBOOM! is helping communities across the country host a Play Day, from September 19 to 27. A Play Day can be any event for the entire family that encourages children to have fun outdoors, such as a barbeque, block party, or service project.

The Play Day website has resources to help plan events, and a forum to share ideas or ask questions. Registering your Play Day on the website will ensure that you receive a free Play Day Kit of games and supplies, and will allow people in your area to find and participate in the event. There is also a chance to win a KaBOOM! playground improvement grant by completing the Play Day Planner and posting pictures after your event.

For more information on Play Day 2009, and to register, visit http://kaboom.org/playday?utm_source=after-schoolalliance&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=playday.



RESOURCE

Improving Academic Achievement

The U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences has released a practice guide with suggestions for how to structure afterschool and other out-of-school time programs to improve students' academic achievement. *Structuring Out-of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement* suggests that afterschool programs align themselves with in-school academics, maximize participation and attendance, adapt to student's specific needs, use appealing and engaging lessons, and evaluate program performance to make necessary improvements. The report also includes research backing each of its five recommendations, suggestions for

implementing them, and ways to address potential problems. To download *Structuring Out-of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement*, visit http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/ost_pg_072109.pdf.



Advocacy continued from page one...

more stable – government, corporate and philanthropic support, to supplement the fees parents are paying. An investment in afterschool is an investment in our children and our future. The funds that support afterschool programs are dollars well-spent.”

Federal Support

Afterschool providers have hope that the federal government will provide at least some additional help. After years of flat funding and small cuts to 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC), the chief federal funding stream for afterschool, the initiative has received small increases in the last two years. As legislators return to Washington this fall, they will have a chance to continue that trend. The House of Representatives has already adopted an FY10 appropriations bill that increases 21st CCLC funding by \$50 million over last year's level.

The Senate is not as far along in its budget process. The Senate Appropriations Committee approved a bill that flat-funded 21st CCLC at last year's level, essentially accepting President Obama's budget request for 21st CCLC. But the full Senate has yet to vote, and amendments proposing increases are likely. Once both chambers have voted, the bill will go to a conference committee to resolve differences.

Over the course of the next several weeks, advocates will have a chance to weigh in with their senators, urging them to increase funding for afterschool – at least to the House-passed level. (Send a message to Congress at <http://capwiz.com/afterschool/home/> and see

the Outreach section of this newsletter for more ideas on how to join the debate.)

Raising Awareness

Several events this fall will help focus attention on the vital role afterschool programs play in our communities, and on the challenges they face. First, on October 6, the Afterschool Alliance will release the findings of its “household survey” of thousands of American households. Sponsored by the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, the 2009 *America After 3 PM* report will offer a detailed look at what America’s children are doing during the after school hours, and the role afterschool programs play in the lives of families and communities. The report will include state-by-state breakdowns. It is a follow-up to the 2004 *America After 3 PM* report, and will be released at an event in Washington, D.C. and in coordinated events around the nation.

Eighteen days later – on October 22 – the Alliance will stage its 10th annual *Lights On Afterschool* day, with more than 7,500 rallies and events across the nation that highlight the contributions afterschool programs make, and the peril facing these programs in these difficult economic times. Events will feature lawmakers from every level of government, business and community leaders, parents, educators and, of course, children. From open houses to carnivals to educational trips to state capitals, *Lights On Afterschool* provides a powerful demonstration of the variety of enrichment opportunities afterschool programs offer. *To learn more about Lights On Afterschool, or to register an event, please visit* <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loa.cfm>.

As part of this year’s *Lights On Afterschool* celebration, Bright House Networks will air a new documentary on the benefits of afterschool, featuring the personal stories of youth and families across the country. Bright House Networks produced the first “After the School Bell Rings” cable special in conjunction with last year’s *Lights*

On Afterschool. To view the 2008 show, visit <http://www.youtube.com/user/afterschool4all>.

Your Help Needed!

The Afterschool Alliance is working to make sure policy makers and the media fully understand the economy’s impact on afterschool programs. With that in mind, the Alliance is gathering stories of programs that have succumbed to the economic downturn, and will be unable to open in the fall. *Advocates can help by sending information on program closures to* advocate@afterschoolalliance.org.

USE A4A FOR DISCOUNT ON SCHOOL SUPPLIES

The Afterschool Alliance partnership with Discount School Supply gives friends of afterschool a ten percent discount on all school supply orders. To receive the discount, put the code A4A (it stands for Afterschool 4 All) in the pink promotional box when ordering supplies at www.discountsschoolsupply.com. Or mention it when you call 1-800-627-2829 to place an order.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

October 22, 2009

The Afterschool Alliance will sponsor the 10th annual *Lights On Afterschool*, raising awareness about the benefits of afterschool in communities across the country. *For more information, visit* <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loa.cfm>.

November 3 - 5, 2009

The California Afterschool Network will host the first annual STEP UP- High School Summit in San Diego, California. Afterschool professionals, staff and high school administrators will gather to discuss ideas and promising practices for high school afterschool programs. *For more information*

*on submitting a proposal, visit
http://www.afterschoolnetwork.org/step_up_rfp. For more information on the summit, visit
www.afterschoolnetwork.org/node/7057.*

 **November 12 - 14, 2009**

The National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts will sponsor the 2009 Conference for Community Arts Education in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The event provides networking opportunities and collaboration among arts education leaders, and will focus on how to grow these programs in tough economic times. Several discounts and cost-saving opportunities are available through the Guild. *For more information, visit
<http://www.communityartsed.org>.*

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org. The Alliance is proud to count among its founding partners the Mott Foundation, U.S. Department of Education, JCPenney Afterschool Fund, Open Society Institute/The After-School Corporation, the Entertainment Industry Foundation and the Creative Artists Agency Foundation.

The *Afterschool Advocate* is produced for the Afterschool Alliance by PR Solutions, Inc., Washington, DC;
Phone: 202/371-1999; Fax: 202/371-9142; E-mail: advocate@afterschoolalliance.org.
