



## NEW YORK CITY AFTERSCHOOL ADVOCATES BLOCK FUNDING CUTS



In a triumph of community activism, afterschool advocates across New York City have defeated proposed budget cuts that would have left more than 25,000 elementary, middle and high school children without afterschool.

The cuts were part of a budget package put forward by New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg that would have eliminated funding for 193 afterschool sites and reduced the city's spending on afterschool programs by \$19 million. The proposal also included massive cuts in city funding for child care programs. But the plan touched off a firestorm of protest from parents, educators, and advocates around the city, galvanizing opposition among the New York City Council. That led to intense negotiations between the mayor and the council, resulting eventually in an 11th-hour budget agreement that not only restored current funding but added a small amount of new funding, as well.

Deepmalya Ghosh, director of youth development programs for the Child Center of New York and an Afterschool Ambassador,

said that the community reaction was unlike anything he'd seen before. "People were just enraged by the potential loss of these programs," he said. "So they mobilized."

### The Campaign for Children

The outpouring was the product of equal parts passion, energy and organizing savvy. While Bloomberg's formal proposal was not made public until early May, its broad outlines—including its funding threat for afterschool—were known well in advance. As early as March, afterschool and child care organizations began banding together into a newly formed [Campaign for Children](#). As Gigi Li, a leader of the campaign and co-director of New York's Neighborhood Family Services Coalition, explained, it was important to bring the child care and afterschool groups together so that they did not end up pitted against each other, competing for shrinking funding.

It worked. "In the course of our first week, we had about 100 organizations sign onto the coalition," Li told the *Afterschool Advocate*. "And it kept growing after that, because we had a clear agenda, and because we were determined to be a unified voice for both causes."

Over the next several weeks, the Campaign and its allied organizations conducted a grassroots, media and social media blitz, elevating the proposed cuts to front page news, and creating a platform for parents and students to express their demand for adequate funding. "We had at least one event every single week of the campaign," Li said. "Whether it was a press conference, the release of a report, neighborhood events, vigils or other events at City Hall, we really *NYC continued on page six...*

## OUTREACH

### Tips for Activists from the New York City Experience

By all accounts, New York City afterschool and child care advocates succeeded in fending off proposed cuts by channeling anger and passion into activism. Some lessons from their campaign:

- ✓ **Forge partnerships.** Afterschool and child care advocates refused to be drawn into a fight with each other over scarce resources. Instead, they worked together to defend the interests of children.
- ✓ **Make noise.** Advocates used all available means to turn up the volume, surrounding policy makers with their message in person, in the media, on social media and online.
- ✓ **Be creative.** Advocates conducted vigils at City Hall, and a Lights *Off* Afterschool rally to make sure their message broke through.
- ✓ **Mobilize parents and students.** Some of the campaign's most effective messengers were the people with the most to lose.
- ✓ **Get social.** Twitter and Facebook were invaluable tools in reaching out to parents, students, the media and policy makers.
- ✓ **Don't overlook traditional media.** Print and broadcast outlets latched onto the story and elevated its prominence.
- ✓ **Tell stories.** Thousands of children and families stood to lose from the proposed cuts; advocates made sure their stories were heard.



## FUNDING NEWS

The Afterschool Alliance's website has numerous resources for afterschool providers looking for new ways to raise money for their programs, including tips for initiating relationships with funders and businesses, and for identifying funding opportunities.

### GRANTS/AWARDS AVAILABLE

#### **American Honda Foundation**

The American Honda Foundation is supporting broad, innovative and forward-thinking projects that meet the needs of youth, especially minority students. The Foundation is awarding grants of \$20,000 to \$75,000 for projects that emphasize youth education, specifically in the areas of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), the environment, job training and literacy. Nonprofit charitable organizations, public school districts and private/public elementary and secondary schools (as listed by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics) are encouraged to apply by the August 1 deadline. More information and guidelines are [online](#).

#### **Mockingbird Foundation's Music Education Grants**

The Mockingbird Foundation provides funding for music education for children through schools, community centers, hospitals, shelters, workshops, camps and scholarship programs in the United States and abroad through a competitive grants process. Preference will be given to applications that recognize the importance of music education **for its own sake**, not music therapy; engage students directly with music; support unconventional forms of instruction, composition, vocalization and improvisation; recognize that outcomes may not be assessable; and engage disadvantaged students under 18. Apply by August 1. More information is [online](#).

#### **Art Works**

Making the arts more widely available, especially in areas where they can strengthen communities or serve populations limited by geography, ethnicity, economics or disability, is a priority for the National Endowment for the Arts. The Endowment will prioritize applicants who emphasize creation, engagement, learning and livability through the arts. School-based projects must be directly connected to the school curriculum and instructional program, and activities may take place in or outside of the school building at any time of the day, including during afterschool and summer enrichment programs formally connected to school curricula. The deadline to apply is August 9. Click [here](#) for additional guidelines and directions on how to apply.

#### **Home Depot Community Impact Grants**

Home Depot is awarding grants up to \$5,000 to registered 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations, public schools or tax-exempt public service agencies that are using the power of volunteers to improve the physical health of communities. Grants will be given in the form of Home Depot gift cards for the purchase of tools, materials or services, and competitive applications will specifically identify projects for veterans and will include housing repairs, modifications or weatherization. The deadline is August 13. Click [here](#) for more information.

#### **Advancing Informal STEM Learning**

The National Science Foundation has released its new *Advancing Informal STEM Learning Program Solicitation*. The solicitation invites proposals that promote ideas, concepts, research, models, programs or other opportunities for innovative and field-advancing informal out-of-school science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) learning and emerging STEM learning environments. Depending on the project type, projects may be funded for up to \$250,000 over two years or up to \$2.5 million over five years. Preliminary proposals (optional) are due August 14, and first-time applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a preliminary proposal. The full proposal deadline is January 14, 2013. Click [here](#) for more information.



## FIRST COHORT OF AFTERSCHOOL LEADERS NAMED

The afterschool community has a new team of supporters who will be helping to advance afterschool and expanded learning over the next year. Fifteen afterschool and expanded learning leaders from across the country have been announced as [White-Riley-Peterson Policy Fellows](#), a partnership between the Riley Institute at Furman University and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

Beginning in October, the Fellows will spend 10 months studying afterschool and expanded learning policies and developing state-level policy plans in partnership with statewide afterschool networks and the Afterschool Alliance.

The 2012-2013 White-Riley-Peterson Policy Fellows are:

- **Paula Adams**, program manager, Fun 5 Program, Kahoomiki (Honolulu, Hawaii)
- **Ken Anthony**, director of professional development, Connecticut Afterschool Network (Branford, Conn.)
- **Monica Armendariz**, director of education, BeHive USA, and president, Central Texas Afterschool Network (Austin, Texas)
- **Eric Billiet**, expanded learning education specialist, Minnesota Department of Education (Roseville, Minn.)
- **Erin Bofenkamp**, director, South Dakota Afterschool Partnership (Sioux Falls, S.D.)
- **Sonja Currie**, program administrator, 21st CCLC and LEAPS Program, Memphis City Schools (Memphis, Tenn.)
- **Blaire Denson**, director, Virginia Partnership for Out-of-School Time (Richmond, Va.)

- **Rebecca Kelley**, executive director of community services, YMCA of Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky (Cincinnati, Ohio)
- **Katie Kross**, project coordinator, Georgia Afterschool Investment Council (Atlanta, Ga.)
- **Cherry Penn**, afterschool/21st CCLC programs supervisor, Baldwin County Public Schools (Loxley, Ala.)
- **Michelle Rich**, senior program manager, State Public Policy Group (Des Moines, Iowa)
- **Amanda Scott Thomas**, education policy director, School's Out Washington (Seattle, Wash.)
- **Nyeema Watson**, administrative director, Center for Children and Childhood Studies at Rutgers University, Camden Campus (Camden, N.J.)
- **Julie Wild-Curry**, program director, 21st CCLC, Community Afterschool Programs (Fairbanks, Alaska)
- **Nicole Wilkins**, senior communications and policy associate, Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership (Boston, Mass.)

The fellowship is named for William S. White, president and CEO of the Mott Foundation; Richard W. Riley, former South Carolina governor and secretary of education under President Clinton; and Dr. Terry Peterson, national board chairman for the Afterschool Alliance and a senior fellow at the College of Charleston.

“Providing more quality afterschool and summer learning opportunities for our young people is one good way to help more of them catch up, keep up and get ahead,” Peterson said. “We need more young leaders at all levels across America to be able to design these policies so that they work well for local children and families.”

Cherry Penn, Fellow and afterschool/21st CCLC programs supervisor for Baldwin County Public Schools in Alabama, said, “I

am thrilled to have been selected as a participant in the inaugural year of the White-Riley-Peterson Policy Fellowship. I am so excited to join a cross-section of national leaders from diverse organizations whose interests intersect in the promotion of afterschool and expanded learning opportunities.”

Each of the 15 Fellows will attend an intensive week-long workshop in October at Furman University in Greenville, S.C. After returning home, the Fellows will create a policy plan that addresses the opportunities and challenges facing their states’ afterschool and expanded learning communities. Fellows will also participate in a series of online sessions and small-group conferences throughout their term before presenting individual policy plans in spring 2013.

Read more about the Fellowship [online](#).



## THROW A SUCCESSFUL *LIGHTS ON* EVENT ON A SHOESTRING BUDGET



In today’s tough economic climate, it is more important than ever to increase awareness

about how important afterschool programs are to children, parents and communities. But with some afterschool program budgets shrinking, providers may have to scramble to plan a successful [Lights On Afterschool](#) event on a shoestring budget. One way to raise awareness and stretch each dollar to the max is to host a *Lights On Afterschool* open house.

This year, more than 1 million people will gather on October 18 at some 7,500 sites across the country and at U.S. military bases

worldwide to rally in support of the afterschool programs that help working families, keep kids safe and inspire them to learn. With nearly three months to plan a *Lights On Afterschool* open house, it’s easy to keep costs down.

An open house is just that—a time for parents, community and business leaders, local dignitaries, policy makers, reporters and others to peek behind the curtain and get a glimpse of the enriching learning opportunities available after the school day ends. Open houses are a great way for guests to see a representation of the fun and educational activities available to children who participate in quality afterschool programs.

- ✓ Consider creating a theme for your open house to best illustrate the engaging learning opportunities available to students. Themes such as “An Afterschool Week in a Day” or “A Day in the Life of an Afterschool Student” allow programs to showcase a wide array of enrichment activities.
- ✓ Instead of expensive printed invitations, consider having youth decorate paper cut-out [light bulbs](#) to invite policy makers, community leaders, parents and school officials to the open house. Or create electronic invitations and distribute them via email using your program’s email system or a free service like Evite.com. More tips on invitations, including sample text, are available [online](#).
- ✓ Serve open house guests a healthy snack—the same one that afterschool program youth eat each afternoon—instead of footing a large catering bill. This way, community members and policy makers get the same experiences as afterschool students.
- ✓ Reach out to local businesses for more than a monetary donation. See if area



businesses are interested in donating their services or products for a raffle or door prize. If economic concerns prevent businesses from donating, see if you can leverage another way for them to be involved. For example, if a local restaurant is unable to donate \$200 to offset food costs, see if they can donate a gift card for a special parent, provide paper products for the event or send staff to volunteer at the program. Many times, businesses want to be involved beyond simple monetary contributions.

- ✓ When guests arrive, make sure they get a chance to interact with afterschool students. Older students should show local dignitaries around and explain program activities. If you are having a prepared program, let an older student be the emcee. Guests are coming to see what youth are busy learning and doing, not to hear adults talk!
- ✓ Make sure the open house is a time for youth to perform. Condense a week's or month's curriculum into an afternoon. Put on a physical fitness challenge, robotics display, poetry slam, art show of student's paintings or drawings of what afterschool means to them, or a showcase of musical numbers and dance routines. The open house should illustrate the educational and fun afterschool activities youth participate in each day.
- ✓ Don't forget to let passionate youth and parents speak. In the first few weeks of the program, recruit students and parents to speak at the open house. These are afterschool programs' best advocates. Their compelling stories help put a face on the issue and eloquently explain the need for more afterschool opportunities better than any flyer or fact sheet.

Celebrate *Lights On Afterschool* by highlighting what is special about your

afterschool program without breaking the bank. Find more planning tips in the Afterschool Alliance's [Lights On Afterschool Event Planning Kit](#).



*NYC continued from page one...*  
turned up the heat with our outreach.”

Esther Grant-Walker, afterschool program coordinator at the Isaacs Center Afterschool Program and an Afterschool Ambassador, faced the likely closure of two of her four afterschool sites. That served as a powerful motivation for the affected parents in the community, who turned out for a community action night at two Isaacs Center program sites. In addition, Grant-Walker says, “We did an awful lot of letter-writing and petitioning from the community, as well as a neighborhood march and ‘flash mob’ at our state assemblyman’s office with more than 100 people participating.”

Ghosh faced the prospect of having to close three of the Child Center’s longstanding afterschool sites, representing more than 1,000 afterschool slots, by his count. “Our youthful workforce here at the Center—the tutors, the activities specialists, the other young employees—were especially emotional, even tearful, about all the closures,” he said. “Many of them were participants in the programs when they were kids, and they were the greatest voice for us. They mobilized their students, giving them a chance to express themselves, a lot of it using social media.”

Rob Abbot, director of family and youth services at Brooklyn’s Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation, noted that afterschool programs have faced possible budget cuts in the past, and that the pattern over the years has become recognizable: The mayor proposes cuts, the community mobilizes, and the city council restores some of the cuts. Over the last several years, in fact, afterschool programs have lost some \$30 million in city funding. “We’re accustomed

to this budget dance,” Abbot said. “We know that at some point in the spring, we’ll be going to steps of City Hall, with staff and parents for a press conference. That’s part of the dance. This was completely different, and it didn’t feel like the usual thing. So we were down at City Hall multiple times for rallies and press conferences, and we took a day where we were the lead organization at the budget vigil at City Hall.”

In the charged political and media environment of New York City, getting the attention of policy makers and the media is no small task. But the sustained campaign broke through, earning coverage from the major media outlets in the city. Li also says the campaign’s social media efforts were key, as well. Not only were Facebook and Twitter useful tools for mobilizing parents and students, but they also served as a way to communicate directly with reporters and city council members. “We tweeted at press conferences and from City Hall,” Li said. “We even encouraged people to tweet into the mayor’s and deputy mayor’s television programs with questions for them, and had a question asked on the air as a result, forcing them to go on the record.”

### Victory at a Cost

So successful was the campaign that the eventual budget agreement between the mayor and city council restored all the afterschool and child care funds the mayor had proposed cutting, and then added several million additional dollars.

But the victory did not solve all problems. While Ghosh and many other afterschool program directors in the city saw funding for their programs restored, even increased somewhat, allowing them to serve even more children than they did this past year, for Grant-Walker, the post-fight picture is less rosy. Some of her program’s city funding expired this year, having reached the end of the grant cycle. She had expected the grants to be renewed, she says, but in the wake of the budget agreement, new grants are to be

awarded with more emphasis on the strength of the grant proposal than on the experience and track record of the programs. As a result, one of her two endangered sites will be funded, but the other is likely to close.

“We’re constantly getting calls about September,” she says. “We feel for these parents. They’re working and then running to pick up their children on time. Many are parents who don’t speak English or don’t have a formal education, and their kids really need the help we can provide. So the loss of our East Harlem elementary school program means a lot of these kids won’t get help with their homework.”

Still, the overwhelming emotions in the afterschool community are relief and triumph. “Everybody feels validated,” Ghosh says. “It wasn’t hard for people to take to the streets, because they knew they were protecting resources for the poorest in our communities. So there was a sense of fighting for what they knew was right. The process actually worked.”



## IN THE NEWS

**FLORIDA**—The best afterschool students from Miami’s choral academy—a free afterschool program serving low-income families—were selected to participate in a summer camp and to serve as honors chamber choir members. Grammy-nominated performers coached the summer camp students not only in singing, but also in “reading, writing and improvising music,” the *Miami Herald* reports. The students showcased their vocal skills at a free recital earlier this month.

**MASSACHUSETTS**—An alternative summer school program in Boston has seen participation balloon from 232 students in 2010 to more than 1,600 students at 40 program sites this year. Boston’s Afterschool and Beyond program was started to stem

summer learning loss. Organizers attribute its growth and success to \$2 million in funding from the Boston Opportunity Agenda and the Wallace Foundation. For five weeks, students in sixth, seventh and eighth grades attend morning math, science and English classes, often geared toward practical applications like creating a budget or writing a commercial script, and choose a fine or applied art club, like glassblowing, hip-hop dance or Web design, in the afternoons.

**MICHIGAN**—After the state Department of Education notified the Grand Rapids school district that it had lost its 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers grants for nine of its 35 LOOP summer and afterschool programs, the state awarded more than \$300,000 on July 19 to Grand Rapids Public Schools to fund four afterschool sites that were in danger of shutting down. Five other program sites are still in jeopardy. The school district is “working on a creative solution” to figure out how to continue the program, MLive.com reports.

**NEW YORK**—A group of afterschool students in the Bronx has successfully petitioned New York City Mayor Bloomberg’s administration to curb speeding and establish a “slow zone” in their Mount Eden neighborhood, the *Daily News* reports. The Bronx Helpers, a group of students in an afterschool program run by New Settlement Apartments, have been reaching out to city officials since 2009. The group decided to focus on pedestrian safety after a handful of accidents on a local route that encompasses two schools and multiple subway stops.

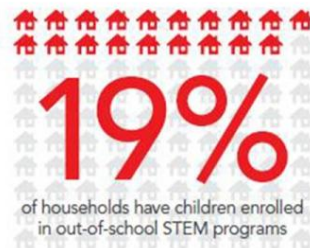
**RHODE ISLAND**—For the first time, the state has allocated funding to support summer learning programs. The \$250,000 allotment is Rhode Island’s first source of state funding to directly support out-of-school-time programs. The Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance will have a significant voice in how the funding is distributed.

**TENNESSEE**—Afterschool students from Whitwell Middle School spend one afternoon each week designing and creating stained glass windows depicting images of local landmarks, like Ketner’s Mill, a coal mine, the county courthouse and Chattanooga’s original high school. Whitwell Middle School’s principal started the afterschool program with funds from the Tennessee Arts Commission. The final windows will be themed after and installed above the school’s Children’s Holocaust Memorial, the *Chattanooga Times Free Press* reports.

**WISCONSIN**—Fifty volunteers from Liberty Mutual Insurance spent two days last month making over the Boys & Girls Club of the Wausau Area. “Kim Larsen, development coordinator at the club, said the updates to the building—even as simple as paint—will help the children respond better to the club’s overall goal of helping kids succeed in the community,” the *Wausau Daily Herald* reports. Liberty Mutual also paid for the supplies needed for the updates.



## 1 IN 5 KIDS PARTICIPATES IN AFTERSCHOOL STEM



A new survey from Change the Equation finds that only one in five United States

households with children in K-12 have any children enrolled in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) afterschool programs. It also found that in U.S. rural areas, students in K-12 receive few out-of-school-time opportunities to study and apply science.



STEM afterschool participation is especially low among elementary and high school students. The brief notes, “This finding should trouble us. Early exposure to STEM is critically important, especially given the dwindling time elementary schools have been devoting to science over the past two decades. Participation in high school is no less important in light of the evidence that out-of-school programs can combat the widespread disengagement from school that fuels high dropout rates.”

[Lost Opportunity](#) affirms many of the afterschool participation trends the Afterschool Alliance found in its [America After 3PM](#) research. For instance, both surveys find:

- Urban students are more likely to attend an afterschool program than rural students.
- African-American and Asian youth are more likely to participate in afterschool compared to youth from other ethnic backgrounds.
- Lower-income youth are more likely to attend an afterschool program than higher-income youth.

Jen Rinehart, Afterschool Alliance vice president, research and policy, [wrote in the Afterschool Snack](#), “The report raises two overall questions—how good are programs and why is participation low? Obviously there is more work to be done to ensure that all programs are of high quality, but there’s lots of evidence that shows [STEM afterschool programs are effective](#). And, it’s clear that we need heightened advocacy to ensure that more kids have opportunities to participate.”

Change the Equation, with the pro bono support of Nielsen, surveyed more than 17,000 U.S. households with children in K-12 to find how many children and teens in the U.S. participate in STEM programs outside of the school day. The online survey was conducted in September and October 2011. Read the brief [online](#).



## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

“We all know about summer learning loss and keeping kids in a kind of structured environment better prepares them for the next school year.... Helping [students] build on their skills over the summer in a more relaxed, fun way really helps them make the connections between what they’ve learned during the school year and what they’re going to learn during the summer. It helps them make friends and a lot of kids live on streets where there aren’t any other kids. So they can make new friends and do fun stuff and stay safe.”

—Afterschool Ambassador Karen Steele, [“Making Sure There’s Something to Do,”](#) *Boston Globe*, June 28, 2012

“After-school programs protect and support the most vulnerable children; they are far from a luxury.... I experienced the life-changing power of effective after-school programs. When I was 10, my mother was killed. Shortly thereafter, my father abandoned my family. My grandmother took me in and put me in after-school programs run by the Boys & Girls Club of Newark, where I received academic, social and emotional support that she could not provide by herself. These programs helped change my life and put me on a path where, as a taxpayer, law teacher, elected official and former senior executive in the state Attorney General’s Office, I am blessed to contribute to the vitality of our state. You don’t have to be a rocket scientist to recognize that helping children do better in school and to avoid the pitfalls of pregnancy, drugs and alcohol, and helping their parents work longer at increasingly skilled jobs, is good for all of us. Finding a way to provide a structured environment, educational enrichment and meaningful mentoring in the after-school hours should be one of our top priorities—

even in these tough economic times. I know it works. It worked for me.”

—Shavar Jeffries, “[After-School Programs Save Kids, Including Me](#),” *Newark Star-Ledger*, July 8, 2012



## RESOURCES

### Age-Appropriate Financial Lessons

Interactive financial literacy site

[www.themint.org](http://www.themint.org) provides age-appropriate financial lessons on the basics of earning, saving, spending and giving for kids, tweens, parents and educators. Themint.org features a series of articles and how-to advice for parents and educators on talking to youth about money. For educators, the site offers resources for the classroom and a variety of materials for lesson plans. The site has been endorsed by the American Library Association as a “Great Web Site for Kids.”

### OST Programs with Positive Impacts

Child Trends’ latest brief, [Improving the Lives of Adolescents and Young Adults: Out-of-School Time Programs That Have Significant Positive Impacts](#), identifies 43 programs that have positive impacts on youth outcomes such as behavior problems, physical health, and education. While somewhat technical, the research brief is useful for those interested in selecting or funding programs based on the magnitude of their impacts. As thousands of out-of-school-time (OST) programs seek to improve the lives of children and youth, decision-makers and funders are faced with the question of how to use limited resources most effectively. The brief uses Child Trends’ online database of experimentally evaluated social interventions for children and youth, Lifecourse Interventions to Nurture Kids Successfully (LINKS). LINKS identifies programs that have positive impacts on a range of outcomes.



## FILL UP ON NEWS AT AFTERSCHOOL SNACK!

How successful is afterschool in engaging youth in STEM activities? How can afterschool programs access funding to provide meals? What is the latest news on the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*? Find out all this and more in recent *Afterschool Snack* posts, including:

- [House LHHS Subcommittee Passes FY13 Spending Bill, 21st CCLC Protected](#)
- [Making the Case for “Deeper Learning”](#)
- [The Power of Positive Learning Environments](#)
- [What is Finland Really Doing Right?](#)

And be sure to tune in every Wednesday for a national news round-up, and throughout the week for your daily dose of afterschool. Check out *Afterschool Snack* [here](#).



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

### September 13-14, 2012

The Arts Education Partnership’s Fall 2012 National Forum will explore: what happens when educators break down silos that disconnect arts learning from learning in other subject areas; what happens when you blur the boundaries that separate arts learning in and out of school; and what happens when the arts are engaged to help ensure that all students leave high school ready for college and careers. The forum, *Arts Learning Without Borders*, will be held in Chattanooga, Tenn. Go [online](#) to learn more about the forum and how the sectors of arts, education, business, culture, government and philanthropy can join forces to find arts-

centered solutions that help students and communities thrive.

 **September 17-19, 2012**

The National College Access Network (NCAN) is hosting its 17th National Conference, *Changing the Odds: College Success for All*, in Las Vegas at the Flamingo Hotel. Professional development and networking opportunities will help conference participants serve more students, improve the quality and diversity of services that programs provide, and increase college attendance and graduation rates in your community. Participants can choose from 50 workshop sessions that address critical topics such as college access/success, networks and partnerships, equity, policy, financial aid and more! Click [here](#) for more information.

 **October 18, 2012**

The Afterschool Alliance will sponsor the 13th annual *Lights On Afterschool*, raising awareness about the benefits that afterschool programs offer to families and communities across the country. *Lights On Afterschool* is the only national rally for afterschool programs, and in recent years it has included some 7,500 events throughout the United States and at U.S. military bases worldwide. Be a part of it! For more information, to plan a *Lights On Afterschool* event or share your plans, and to sign up for free materials, click [here](#).

 **October 22-24, 2012**

The National Summer Learning Association is hosting its 2012 *Summer Changes Everything* national conference in Pittsburgh at the Westin Convention Center. It is the only national conference devoted entirely to summer learning programs. At nearly 60 workshop sessions, the conference will cover a variety of current topics, from health and nutrition to engaging middle school youth to policy trends. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

---

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](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).

The Alliance is proud to count among its founding partners the Mott Foundation, U.S. Department of Education, jcpenny 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](mailto:advocate@afterschoolalliance.org).

---