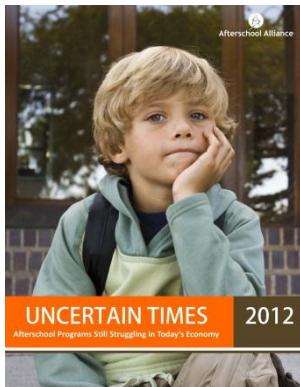




UNCERTAIN TIMES: AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS STRUGGLE IN AFTERMATH OF RECESSION



As the nation's children head back to school, a [new survey](#) by the Afterschool Alliance finds that, amid a rocky economic climate and budget-tightening at the local, state and federal levels, many

afterschool programs face shrinking resources and uncertain prospects even as they struggle to meet the needs of children and families in their communities. Programs that principally serve minority and high-poverty communities have been especially hard hit.

Nearly two in five afterschool programs (39 percent) report that their budgets are in worse shape today than at the height of the recession in 2008, and more than three in five (62 percent) report that their funding is down "a little or a lot" from three years ago. That leaves many afterschool programs—which provide children with a safe and supervised space, hands-on educational opportunities, and access to homework help, mentors and other caring adults—unable to fully support the children in their communities who are most in need of afterschool now, and without the financial security to do so in the future.

The situation is even more grim for afterschool programs serving predominantly African-American and Latino children.

Uncertain continued on page five...

L.A. ADVOCATES FIGHT OFF BUDGET CUTS TO AFTERSCHOOL

Afterschool advocates in Los Angeles scored a last-minute victory in June, pressuring the superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to withdraw a proposal to slash \$7 million in funding for a widely acclaimed afterschool program, a move that would have left tens of thousands of children without a safe place to go at the end of the school day.

The restoration of funding came just days after a [similar victory won by advocates in New York City](#).

The LAUSD's Beyond the Bell program provides free afterschool to more than 40,000 children in the district, operating at more than 550 elementary and middle schools. LAUSD Superintendent John Deasy acknowledged the program's value, but facing a budget crunch, wrote in a February letter to parents that "I am left with no choice."

Some schools in the district have other afterschool programs, often with funding from the state. But those programs have restrictions on which and how many children they can serve. Beyond the Bell is open to all.

Fighting Back

Opposition to the proposed cuts among parents and afterschool leaders had mounted since Deasy's first announcement of the proposal. Among the critics was Carla Sanger, president and chief executive officer of the well-respected L.A.'s BEST After School Enrichment program, which receives *LA continued on page eight...*

OUTREACH

Use Data to Make a Point

The Afterschool Alliance released the latest version of its [Uncertain Times](#) survey earlier this month, making a powerful case that afterschool programs are still struggling in the aftermath of the recession. When talking to policy makers, media, funders or potential funders about how local afterschool programs are faring, share this data to provide context and perspective. The Afterschool Alliance's new report has the information you need.

Below are some messages and data from *Uncertain Times: Afterschool Programs Still Struggling in Today's Economy*. Consider using this information in your outreach and look for outreach tools coming in the next issue of the *Afterschool Advocate*.

Afterschool program budgets continue to shrink.

- Close to two in five programs (39 percent) report that their budgets are in worse shape today than at the height of the recession in 2008.
- More than three in five programs (62 percent) report that their funding is down “a little or a lot” from three years ago.

Programs are struggling to meet the needs of children in their communities.

- Almost nine in ten programs (88 percent) say children in their communities need afterschool care but are unable to access it.
- More than half of programs (57 percent) report that their budgets are inadequate to meet community needs.
- Nearly one in four programs (24 percent) say they would need to at least double capacity to meet the demand for services.
- Close to one in five programs (16 percent) report that a loss of funding caused major cutbacks or shut down sites.

Majority African-American and Latino afterschool programs face more severe financial strain and high demand.

- Close to seven in ten African-American majority programs (68 percent) and 65 percent of Latino majority programs report that their funding is down from three years ago.
- Seventy percent of African-American majority programs say that their current budgets cannot meet the needs of students and families in their communities.
- More than six in ten Latino majority programs (62 percent) say that their current budgets cannot meet the needs of students and families in their communities, and 92 percent report that children in their communities need afterschool care but are unable to access it.

The children served by afterschool programs are primarily from economically disadvantaged households.

- On average, 68 percent of youth participating in afterschool programs qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, 16 percent have special needs or a learning difference, and 14 percent are Limited English Proficient (LEP).
- On average, close to nine in ten kids (88 percent) at majority African-American programs and 86 percent of kids at majority Latino programs qualify for the federal free or reduced-

price lunch program. More than one-third of program participants (35 percent) at majority Latino programs are LEP.

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grant-funded programs face severe financial strain and high demand while operating in communities deeply affected by the recession.

- 21st CCLC-funded programs are more likely than non-21st CCLC-funded programs to say the economy is “very much” affecting their communities (71 percent vs. 59 percent).
- 21st CCLC-funded programs are more likely to report that their current budgets are in worse shape than at the height of the recession (41 percent vs. 38 percent) and more likely to operate at or above maximum capacity than non-21st CCLC-funded programs (67 percent vs. 52 percent).

Afterschool program leaders expect the economic strain to continue.

- More than eight in ten programs (85 percent) anticipate that the challenging economic climate will affect their programs during the 2012-2013 school year.
- More than half of programs (55 percent) report that their communities are showing very few signs of recovering from the recession.



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

Youth Service Improvement

The William T. Grant Foundation is accepting applications for its Youth Service Improvement Grants. Awards of up to \$25,000 will go to small to medium-size organizations that have already had some success but lack the funds to make needed improvements. Community-based organizations in the five boroughs of New York City that want to improve the quality of the services they offer to young people ages 8 to 25 are eligible to apply. The deadline is September 12. More information is available [online](#).

Connecting Youth to the Outdoors

The National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) is launching a grant program to increase the number of youth who build a connection with public lands as places for recreating, learning and volunteering. Prospective applicants must be a Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management unit or a nonprofit organization, academic institution, tribal group, or local or state government entity that partners with the Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management. Proposals for America’s Great Outdoors: Connecting Youth to the Outdoors 2012 grants should maximize hands-on outdoor engagement opportunities on public lands, focusing on education, recreation and environmental stewardship. Grants will range from \$2,500 to \$20,000. The deadline to apply is September 19. Find more information [online](#).

GreenWorks! Grants

Do you have an idea for a school/community native plant garden, a forest improvement project, a streamside restoration plan, a recycling program or energy conservation project for your afterschool students? Project Learning Tree GreenWorks! grants are available at two levels: a maximum of \$1,000, and \$3,000 (for registered Project Learning Tree GreenSchools). Free registration and more information is [online](#). The deadline is September 30.

CVS Caremark Community Grants

CVS Caremark is awarding community grants of up to \$5,000 to inclusive programs for youth under age 21 with disabilities; academic and enrichment programs at public schools; and programs that provide access to quality health care services and health education for at-risk and underserved populations. Organizations must serve communities where CVS Caremark operates; this includes organizations in the U.S. and Puerto Rico with the exception of Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington and Wyoming. The deadline to apply for the grants is October 31. More details are [online](#).



AFTERSCHOOL: AN ALLY IN PROMOTING MIDDLE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The Afterschool Alliance released a new MetLife Foundation Issue Brief highlighting the many ways afterschool programs can support school improvement efforts within struggling middle schools.

According to the United States Department of Education, there are 5,000 chronically underperforming schools—roughly 5 percent of all schools—in the U.S. Though high schools receive much of the blame for high dropout rates, the middle school years can often be the first step for students falling off the track of graduating from high school on time. Across the country, afterschool programs are working with community partners, complementing the learning that takes place during the school day and bringing new teachers and mentors to the school improvement table to help better engage middle school students.

“[Afterschool: An Ally in Promoting Middle School Improvement](#)” says: “Most notably, afterschool programs can offer an environment that reinforces the new atmosphere developed in an improvement school and provide new opportunities for children in need of innovative, active learning experiences. Afterschool programs also present an avenue for community involvement in school improvement efforts and have been proven to increase academic achievement, improve students’ attitudes toward school and reduce antisocial behaviors, all of which are keys to successful school turnaround.”

The Issue Brief highlights research demonstrating the effectiveness of incorporating afterschool programs into models for middle school development and broader school improvement efforts. It also features examples of afterschool programs successfully partnering with schools to offer engaging activities that promote a school’s new vision and academic achievement.

It is the latest in a series of Issue Briefs examining the vital contributions of afterschool programs. The MetLife Foundation provides generous support for the series. “[Afterschool: An Ally in Promoting Middle School Improvement](#)” was released at the [21st Century Community Learning Centers Summer Institute](#) in New Orleans last month. It is the first of four briefs focusing on critical issues facing middle school youth and how afterschool programs can address these issues. The remaining middle school briefs will address: digital learning opportunities; family engagement; and arts enrichment.

Read the new Issue Brief on middle school improvement [here](#).



Uncertain continued from page one...

Close to nine in ten of the children in these programs qualify for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program. In these high-poverty environments, 68 percent of majority African-American programs and 65 percent of majority Latino programs report that their funding is down from three years ago. Even in communities where local economies and program funding are faring better, program leaders express significant concern about their financial outlook and their inability to reach all children who need afterschool.

The results are part of the Afterschool Alliance’s [Uncertain Times](#) survey project, the only research effort to examine how the economy affects afterschool programs. The new data provide [state-specific findings](#) for Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Texas. The Afterschool Alliance previously conducted *Uncertain Times* surveys in 2006 and 2009.

“The latest *Uncertain Times* results are a painful reminder that the nation’s slow road to economic recovery is a particularly rough journey for the afterschool programs that children, families and educators rely on,” said Jodi Grant, executive director of the Afterschool Alliance. “These programs are

not a luxury; they're vital to a bright future for children all across the country. What's particularly discouraging is that programs most in need—those serving minority and high-poverty communities—are hurting the most. That means the students they serve are at risk of being denied access to afterschool programs, which keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families.”

Among other key findings of the new *Uncertain Times* survey:

- Nearly nine in ten programs (88 percent) report that children in their communities need afterschool care but are unable to access it.
- More than half of programs (57 percent) report that their budgets are inadequate to meet the needs of their communities, close to a 10-point increase from 2009.
- Nearly one in four programs (24 percent) report that they would need to at least double capacity to meet the needs of all the kids in their communities.
- Sixteen percent of programs report that a loss of funding caused major cutbacks or shut down sites, up from 14 percent in 2009.
- More than eight in ten programs (85 percent) anticipate that the challenging economic climate will affect their programs during the 2012-2013 school year.

“In the midst of these harsh economic realities, afterschool program leaders are being forced to make painful decisions,” Grant added. “Many must eliminate staff positions and reduce the variety of activities offered, just to reach more kids or to simply keep the lights on and doors open. But shrinking their offerings inevitably harms the students who count on these programs the most. Afterschool providers need enough

resources to help all the students and families who need them. We are far from that funding level today.”

The report offers policy recommendations to help speed up recovery for afterschool programs. They include: increasing support for 21st Century Community Learning Centers, the only federal funding stream dedicated to before-school, afterschool and summer learning programs; increasing funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant to provide child care vouchers to more eligible families; allowing existing federal funding streams—such as those for STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) skill-building and youth health initiatives—to help support afterschool programs; and including language in the *Workforce Reinvestment Act* and the *Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act* to help before-school, afterschool and summer programs reach middle school and high school students.

The report says, “Implementing the policy recommendations outlined above can help support children, families and communities as they continue to struggle in today’s economy.”

Uncertain Times: Afterschool Programs Still Struggling in Today’s Economy used Web-based survey software to poll more than 26,000 contacts between April 25 and June 8, 2012. Results are based on 1,012 survey responses, representing 4,947 afterschool sites serving more than 567,470 children in urban (45 percent), suburban (30 percent) and rural (31 percent) communities across the United States. Read the full 2012 survey [online](#).



UTILIZE SOCIAL MEDIA FOR LIGHTS ON 2012

On October 18, more than 1 million people will gather 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 students to learn.

For afterschool programs on a tight budget, social networking ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), [Flickr](#)) is a great way to enhance your outreach for [Lights On Afterschool](#) and get your message out without spending any money. Here are a few ways to incorporate social media into your event. Anyone with a Twitter or Facebook account can join the conversation and send public messages of support for afterschool programs!

NOTE: In all social media outreach, make sure you have proper authorization to use any names, pictures or videos of children.

Twitter

Twitter is an online, informal method of communication that uses micro-updates. If you haven't already, sign up for a free [Twitter account](#) for your program. Remember, keep your tweets short, no more than 140 characters.

- A week before *Lights On Afterschool*
 - Coordinate with your partners and event sponsors. Make sure you know their Twitter handles so you can mention them in tweets.
 - Try and generate some buzz for your event. Encourage your followers to re-tweet the date and time of your event or supportive messages about afterschool to help spread the word.
 - Be sure to include a hashtag – like [#LightsOn2012](#) – so your events can be linked to the national online efforts.
- A few days before *Lights On Afterschool*
 - Tweet the participation of special guests or local dignitaries.
 - Tweet at reporters who cover education or the city desk, for example, to try and get them to attend your event. For example: [@EdReporterX Be sure to stop by Elm Middle School on 10/18 @ 5:30 to see #afterschool in action!](#)
- Day of *Lights On Afterschool*
 - Get people at the event to live-tweet what's happening. For example: [#Afterschool dancers at Elm Middle School are taking the stage! #LightsOn2012](#)
 - Encourage parents or program participants to re-tweet your updates.
 - Quote speakers. For example: [Heard at #LightsOn2012 @CongRivera said "Afterschool is the best investment in our youth."](#)
 - If your technical capacity allows, project a live-stream of tweets about your event!
- One to two days after *Lights On Afterschool*
 - Keep the conversation going by thanking your speakers and honored guests.
 - Share pictures of your event. If you are sharing pictures of children in your program, make sure you have all the appropriate permissions!
 - Do a #FF (Follow Friday) list of community leaders who participated in your event.
 - Create a timeline with [storify.com](#) to keep all of your tweets from *Lights On Afterschool* in one place.

Facebook

[Facebook](#) is a social networking service and website where individuals and organizations reach out to others, share

information and keep in touch. If you don't have a Facebook page dedicated to your afterschool program, create one today and invite area stakeholders, local community and business leaders, parents and school officials to "like" your program. Once your program has a Facebook page and generates some fans, create an event page for your *Lights On Afterschool* event and encourage your followers to RSVP. Click [here](#) for more tips on how to set up an event page.

- On your *Lights On* event page, be sure to clearly state the location, date, and start and end times for your event. Be careful about updating the page; even the smallest changes can send out a notification to your fans.
- Encourage friends who have liked your page to leave comments. Be sure to thank commenters, respond to questions and encourage dialogue.
- Consider posting status updates counting down the days/weeks leading up to *Lights On Afterschool*. For example: **Only one week till our middle school students showcase their new STEM robots at *Lights On Afterschool*. Hope to see you there!**
- Cross-promote the event using other social media outlets, like Twitter and Flickr.
- Be sure to continue to promote *Lights On Afterschool* after your event and share pictures and stories. For example: **Check out City Council Member Jones talking to parents at last week's *Lights On Afterschool*. Thank you, Council Member Jones, for your support of afterschool.**

YouTube

If you have the technical capacity to upload video (i.e., a computer with Internet access and a device that records video), sign up for a free [YouTube](#) channel for your program. YouTube is a website where people can discover, watch and share videos.

- Consider uploading videos of youth practicing their *Lights On Afterschool* performance in advance of the big event, parent testimonials or youth talking about what they like about afterschool.
- After uploading the video to YouTube, email the link to parents, allies and key community leaders.
- If your program also has a Facebook page or Twitter account, consider linking the accounts so that when you upload a new video, it will send a tweet to your followers and alert your Facebook friends.

Flickr

[Flickr](#) is a photo-sharing website. If you don't already have a Flickr account, it's free to set one up, or you can log in with a Google or Facebook account. Set up a Flickr page dedicated to your program or *Lights On Afterschool*.

- Upload pictures of your *Lights On Afterschool* event in action! Make sure to capture students as they complete a science experiment, volunteers setting up for the event, and the faces of parents and community leaders watching youth perform.
- Create a visual storybook of your event and use it throughout the year in your outreach.
- Consider linking your Flickr account to other social media platforms – like Facebook, Twitter, blogs and more.

Don't forget to [register](#) your *Lights On Afterschool* event, and happy planning!



LA continued from page one...

support from the city of Los Angeles (separate from the school district). Sanger described the Beyond the Bell program as "critical, and badly needed in many communities where kids may not have supervision and would otherwise be on the

streets, and potentially in danger.... We couldn't simply stand by while 40,000 children and their families were put at risk of losing this service."

Sanger says she and her colleagues reached out to other programs and to activists, joining forces with the Afterschool Action Coalition, a new umbrella group formed by local advocates specifically to defeat the proposed budget cut. Most of the coalition's members were leaders of programs in the district that would not have been directly affected by the cutbacks. But they joined in the effort to save Beyond the Bell, nevertheless, Sanger explained, out of a sense of "moral urgency." With leadership from local activists Jose and Lisa Sigala, the coalition spearheaded a [petition drive](#), using an online service called change.org. The petition called on Deasy and school board members to restore funding for Beyond the Bell.

The petition took off quickly, registering about 1,000 signatures in its first week and growing from there, according to Jose Sigala. Each new signature was reported to school board members and the superintendent by email, resulting in a flood of messages.

L.A.'s BEST alerted its 7,000-plus network of contacts to the petition drive in a blast email, bringing in new signers, and other afterschool programs in the district did the same with their networks.

Support from City Council and the School Board

Meanwhile, LAUSD School Board Member Bennett Kayser championed the cause with his fellow board members. "We simply cannot dump 42,000 children onto the city streets and into latchkey status," he said in a statement. "If the safety of our children is the top priority, our budget and the city's must reflect it. This is a disaster that can and must be avoided."

At the height of the battle, Kayser, afterschool leaders and more than 30 children participated in a news conference—with

many of the children wearing latchkeys as a reminder of the stakes. The event was covered by local broadcast media, upping the pressure on Superintendent Deasy and Kayser's school board colleagues.

Kayser and the advocates turned the volume up still louder by appealing to the Los Angeles City Council to adopt a resolution calling on the school board to reject the budget cuts. Jose Sigala drafted the text, and Council President Herb Wesson agreed to introduce it. As it happened, the superintendent was in attendance at the City Council meeting to participate in a ceremony honoring a retiring teacher. "I introduced myself to him," Sigala said, "and he said, 'We're not going to be able to reinstate' the funds for afterschool." Undeterred, Sigala and colleagues successfully pressed the City Council to adopt the resolution that day, just a day before the school board was scheduled to consider the proposed cutbacks.

The drumbeat of pressure took its toll. Victory on the school board would require four votes to reject the budget cut. "When we started, we had only three," Sigala said. But after the City Council resolution and all the other grassroots contact and media exposure, Sigala said advocates counted six votes to reinstate funding. Superintendent Deasy may well have done a similar calculation. Within hours of the City Council vote, he issued a news release saying he had identified money to allow for a restoration of funding for Beyond the Bell.

"Ultimately, everybody came together to make this happen," Sigala said, "from school board members to teachers to parents.... We'll continue with the coalition when school is back in session and continue to advocate and organize. We might have to have this battle again next year, so we're going to try to create a mechanism by which parents, students and community members can come together to say how important these programs are to kids."



IN THE NEWS

CALIFORNIA—JPMorgan Chase donated \$140,000 to L.A.'s BEST to expand its afterschool programs to serve students at three new elementary schools in Los Angeles. With the addition of the new sites, L.A.'s BEST has afterschool programs at 189 sites. "All children deserve to have a safe place to go after school where they can engage in educational activities and connect with the community," Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa said last week at a news conference announcing the donation. "L.A.'s BEST brings that to Los Angeles, and I am proud of their continued progress."

HAWAII—The state's Department of Transportation "deputized" afterschool students in the Kamaaina Kids program so youth would share road safety tips with family members and get them to sign a pledge for Pedestrian Safety Month. The state emphasized the month because of Hawaii's "woeful record on pedestrian deaths," the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* reports. Other awareness-raising events are scheduled to take place throughout August.

IDAHO—The *Spokesman Review* reports that the Boys & Girls Club of Kootenai County made enough money at a fundraising auction in July to complete construction of a new building in Post Falls and put away extra money for future programs. The new Club site is expected to open in December 2012 and will offer afterschool programs to nearly 700 children and teens in Kootenai County. The new building will house a gymnasium, arts and crafts space, learning center for homework help, computer lab, teen area and cafeteria.

ILLINOIS—The Jefferson County YMCA Festival Run raised money for afterschool programs and scholarships earlier this month. The YMCA hosted the 5K walk/run and 10K run to incorporate youth development, healthy

living and social responsibility in a fun activity. YMCA Program Director Matt Greene told the *Mt. Vernon Register-News*, "When people are running today, they can think about the kid they are helping in the after school program."

MINNESOTA—Students enrolled in the Healthy Active Willmar Kids (HAWK) summer program played an important role in feeding families and kids in need this summer by delivering backpacks of food and a book each Friday. Five Willmar programs are working together to supplement weekend groceries for low-income families. HAWK organizers say the backpack program and park activities aim to help keep students healthy and active throughout the summer, the *West Central Tribune* reports.

NEW JERSEY—The Cliffside Park Free Public Library hosted a "Packets and Pizza" summer program to help elementary and middle school students blend socializing with tutoring. The summer program also provided academic support and fostered strong reading skills, the *Cliffside Park Citizen* reports. The free drop-in program encouraged students to complete their summer reading assignments alongside library workers who could provide academic assistance when needed. Program organizers say the tutoring program helps offset the effects of summer learning loss.

TEXAS—Councilman C.O. Bradford made headlines earlier this month when he told the *Houston Chronicle* that he proposes hiring 20 fewer police officers in the coming year and using the savings to put nearly 2,000 more children into homework clubs, sports, scholarship coaching and museum tours. Houston's former police chief said having 10 fewer cadets in two of the classes could save the city \$1.6 million, enough to put an entire large middle school's worth of children into activities each weekday afternoon. Bradford plans to pitch his plan to Mayor Annise Parker, but a spokesperson for the mayor said

she's not ready to expand the afterschool program at the expense of the cadet classes.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

“Having an education-focused after-school program where parents can be assured their children are both safe and learning would be a significant benefit for many families. In the end, it is the students who will reap the rewards. Although programs like this should primarily be paid for by those who use it, a dedicated funding source is needed to establish any after-school program. Parents must do their part, but school districts and the government agencies that fund them must rethink how they view school's role. Educating children doesn't start and stop when the school bell rings.”

—“[After-School Programs Key to Education](#),” *Ironton (Ohio) Tribune* editorial, July 29, 2012

“Children who don't have stimulating summer experiences forget more of the math and reading skills they need to do well in school. By the time summer ends, the achievement gap between rich and poor is actually wider than it was in June. So, is summer school the answer? ...At a time when 20 percent of districts across the country have eliminated summer school, Providence has redirected its summer remediation funds and is trying something different. Sixth, seventh and eighth graders spend two mornings a week in the field with an instructor from a local organization like Save the Bay and a teacher from the district who ensures that students are practicing skills they struggled with during the year and will need in the fall. In the afternoons, it's back to the classroom.... Students worked collaboratively in the field and then applied what they learn back in the classroom to solve complex problems. This is what educators call deeper learning. The Summer Scholars program is a partnership

between the school district and 30 local organizations like the zoo, the YMCA and the Audubon Society. Public schools often work alone, but Providence has been building these relationships for years.... The obvious goal of the Summer Scholars is to curb summer learning loss. But this way of teaching might change the way Providence schools approach teaching and learning all year long.”

— Correspondent John Merrow, “[Providence Summer Scholars](#),” *PBS NewsHour*, August 20, 2012



ICYMI: COLLEGE ACCESS WEBINAR

The Afterschool Alliance's first webinar, “[College Access 101: How Afterschool Can Bridge the Gap](#),” is now available online. It addresses the significant role afterschool programs can play in helping students prepare for college, as well as understand the sometimes challenging admissions process. Through strategic relationships with parents, high school staff, universities and peer mentors, afterschool programs offer unparalleled support for youth who are most at-risk of not pursuing higher education.

In the webinar, hear from Amy Smitter from Campus Compact and Jason Hamilton from Arkansas Commitment, representatives of two highly successful programs that have helped students transition from high school to college by leveraging relationships with community partners, mentors, parents, school staff and universities.

Be sure to check out the [website](#) to watch the webinar and stay tuned for news about the next Afterschool Alliance webinar, coming soon!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

September 9, 2012

Imagine if millions of older adults used their voices to advocate on behalf of America's future: our children and youth. On Grandparents Day, September 9, Generations United is launching Do Something Grand, a call to action and a full week of intergenerational activism. Find resources, ideas and information on ways to get involved at www.grandparentsday.org.

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 15, 2012

Early bird registration for *Beyond School Hours XVI* will close on October 15. The conference will be held February 20-23 at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront in Florida. Participants will learn how to successfully engage older youth, see best practices in action and connect with education leaders. Ron Clark, the 2000 Disney American Teacher of the Year and two-time *New York Times* bestselling author, will be the conference's keynote speaker. More information is available [online](#).

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 will host 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.

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.
