

Afterschool Advocate

A media outreach newsletter published by the Afterschool Alliance

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LIGHTS ON SHINES FROM COAST TO COAST

“Afterschool is key to kids’ success” was the rallying cry from Fairbanks to Fort Lauderdale on October 14 as hundreds of thousands of students, parents, educators, lawmakers, business and community leaders joined the fifth annual *Lights On Afterschool*. It was the largest *Lights On* event ever, with more than 7,000 rallies in all 50 states and at 59 military installations around the world, including the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea and Guam. *Lights On* this year featured more governors, senators, Members of Congress and state lawmakers than ever before.

“It was so exciting to see hundreds of thousands of people come out to urge policy makers to put children first and provide more afterschool programs,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Judy Y. Samelson, who attended rallies in California, New Hampshire and New Mexico. “With support like this, we will surely meet our goal to make afterschool programs available to all by the year 2010.”

The 2004 National Presenting Sponsor of *Lights On Afterschool* was the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the JCPenney Afterschool Fund was a National Sponsor of the event. The David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the Open Society Institute provided additional support.

“When you see the eyes of a child light up because of their experience in an afterschool program, you see their future brighten because of the added opportunity they have had to learn and grow,” said Vanessa Castagna, Chairman and CEO of JCPenney

Stores, Catalog and Internet. “Afterschool programs like those offered by the YMCA of the USA, Junior Achievement, Boys & Girls Clubs of America and 4-H Afterschool open a world of opportunity for millions of children each year ... At JCPenney, we are proud to support organizations that help our country's youth, and our efforts to increase the availability of afterschool opportunities will continue.”

California Kick-Off

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger kicked-off *Lights On Afterschool 2004* at an event Sunday, October 3, in Los Angeles. Schwarzenegger, who is National Chair again this year, called *Lights On* an “extraordinary event.” The kick-off rally for some 4,000 afterschool students featured relay races, dance, rock-climbing, art and music activities. It was organized by the Los Angeles Unified School District’s (LAUSD) Beyond the Bell Branch.

Governor Schwarzenegger told the children, “Every single day, you’re making the right decision by joining an afterschool program. Say yes to education, yes to sports, yes to life and yes to hope. Come to afterschool programs every day to get fit mentally and physically.”

“I will always support afterschool programs,” he promised.

Actress and longtime afterschool supporter Rhea Perlman served as a national spokesperson for *Lights On Afterschool* this year, conducting a satellite media tour and giving interviews about the importance of afterschool programs to television stations all across the country.

Continued on Page Three...

MEDIA OUTREACH

Below is a sample letter-to-the-editor that can be used to follow-up your local coverage of Lights On Afterschool. It can be personalized or localized, and submitted to local newspapers. Most newspapers accept letters by email or Internet, in addition to postal mail. To figure out what your newspaper takes, look in the letters-to-the-editor section of the paper, check the web site's letters section (or sometimes the contact section), or just call the paper and ask. Be sure to sign the letter-to-the-editor and include an address and a phone number so that, if your letter is selected for publication, the newspaper staff can confirm that the letter is indeed from you. The newspaper will not print your contact information.

[Date]

Letters to the Editor

[your newspaper]

[street address]

[city, state, zip]

To the Editor:

This month, in [your city] and at more than 7,000 sites across the nation, Americans rallied for more funding for afterschool programs as part of the fifth annual *Lights On Afterschool*. Here in [your city], [insert a description of your *Lights On* event including how many rallies you held, how many people participated, and what activities they joined]. The strong support is no surprise, since Americans recognize that afterschool programs keep children safe, inspire them to learn and help working families.

But there aren't nearly enough afterschool programs in this city or in our country. According to a household survey issued this spring by the Afterschool Alliance, with support from the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, more than 14 million children take care of themselves after the school day ends.

It should be a high priority for lawmakers, foundation and corporations to make afterschool available to all families. All children deserve afterschool programs that will give them a chance to grow and learn.

Sincerely,

[your name]

[your title and affiliation]

[your daytime phone]

[your evening phone]

Continued from Page One...

Congressional Resolutions

To raise awareness about the need for more afterschool programs and advance funding for quality afterschool care, both houses of Congress passed resolutions supporting the goals and ideals of *Lights On Afterschool*. This was the first time Congress has passed resolutions in support of the event.

In the resolutions, Congress declared October 14, 2004 *Lights On Afterschool Day*.

Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Christopher Dodd (D-CT), Olympia Snowe (R-ME), Arlen Specter (R-PA) and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Representatives Dale Kildee (D-MI) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) led the efforts to pass them.

Generous Support, Broad Based Participation

“We are grateful to the Mott Foundation for its support, and to the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, which has supported this event for five years and encouraged hundreds of JCPenney stores to participate,” Samelson said. “And Lights On would not be nearly as successful without the support of our many dedicated and energetic partners.”

A diverse group of more than 150 education, civic, arts, government and other groups supported *Lights On Afterschool* this year. Among them are the nation’s leading afterschool providers – After-School All-Stars, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, 4-H Afterschool, Junior Achievement, and YMCA of the USA.

In addition, such groups as the Association of Children's Museums, General Federation of Women's Clubs, Medallion School Partnerships, National Council of La Raza, National Inventors Hall of Fame, National League of Cities’ Institute for Youth, Education and Families and National Parent Teacher Association supported Lights On this year.

Speakers and participants at *Lights On Afterschool* events included Elizabeth

Edwards, the wife of vice presidential candidate and U.S. Senator John Edwards, as well as dozens of Members of Congress, governors, mayors, city council members and state legislators. The San Francisco 49er football players joined a Lights On event in San Jose, and the National Basketball Association’s Atlanta Hawks and Minnesota Timberwolves celebrated Lights On at a pre-season game in Birmingham, Alabama.

Junior Achievement Poll

In conjunction with *Lights On Afterschool*, Junior Achievement (JA) and Harris Interactive released a new poll of 1,142 youths between the ages of eight and 18. The poll found that only 14 percent of these youth said they participate in organized afterschool programs. The afterschool activities that interested young people included sports, art or music, working with computers, learning how to run a business, spending time with mentors, and learning about various careers.

“We believe the poll findings indicate young people are seeking a greater variety of after-school experiences,” said Dr. Darrell Luzzo, Senior Vice President of Education for JA Worldwide. “By bringing JA’s extensively researched curricula into more afterschool settings through partner organizations, such as the YMCA, we can help broaden and enrich the afterschool experience for millions of American youth.”

Poll information is available at www.ja.org/about/about_newsitem.asp?StoryID=224.

For a photo gallery and more information about Lights On events, visit www.afterschoolalliance.org/loa_2004/event_photos.cfm



DON'T BE AN AMERICAN IDLE!

Learn more about the Afterschool Alliance's *Don't Be An American Idle* contest, which rewards youth who develop powerful Public Service Announcements that encourage their peers to check out afterschool programs. Prizes include a new digital camcorder, and judges include actors Danny DeVito and Rhea Perlman, as well as television's Judge Glenda Hatchett.

More information is available at www.afterschoolscene.com/flashyes.html.

**IN THE NEWS...**

National – The National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, a non-partisan coalition of 40 national Hispanic organizations representing more than 25 million Hispanics in the U.S., has called on lawmakers to support afterschool programs. In its recently issued “Hispanic Policy Agenda 2004-2008,” directed at the next Administration as well as officials currently in office, the coalition appeals for adequate funding for afterschool and other programs under the No Child Left Behind Act.

National – Best-selling authors Dave Barry, Amy Tan, Frank McCourt, Scott Turow, and others will embark this month on the WannaPalooza 2004 Tour, an annual charity rock tour to support America SCORES, a nationwide afterschool program. Touring as the Rock Bottom Remainers, led by The Byrd's co-founder Roger McGuinn, the writers will perform in St. Louis, Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago in late October. Over the

past five years, the event has raised more than \$500,000 for the afterschool program, which promotes literacy, civic responsibility and healthy lifestyles among urban, public school students. For more information, visit www.rockbottomremainders.com.

California – Los Angeles Mayor James K. Hahn recently announced the expansion of the LA's BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow) afterschool program into seven additional schools, reaching 1,000 new students. The program, a unique public-private partnership including the Office of the Mayor, the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Unified School District and the private sector, serves thousands of children at 130 elementary schools throughout Los Angeles at no cost to parents. Hahn's announcement coincided with the program's 16th anniversary celebrations, which also featured the donation of more than \$1.4 million from the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, The Broad Foundation, Stuart Foundation, William Randolph Hearst Foundation, Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, Pan American Underwriters Inc., Mark Hughes Foundation, Target Stores and others.

California – A group of afterschool programs at Muir High School in Pasadena has received a \$1.2 million grant to continue providing its services to teenagers in Northwest Pasadena, reports the *Pasadena Star-News*. The “Mustangs on the Move,” program is a collaboration of students, community members and more than a dozen area organizations. It was one of ten afterschool programs selected by the state Department of Education for a five-year grant offered through the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative.

Indiana – Afterschool programs in Michigan City funded by the 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative received high marks in their first year evaluation. The evaluation looked at attendance, supervision,

participation and educational achievement. The Safe Harbor program reports that during the 2003-2004 school year, its students showed a substantial increase in Grade Point Averages, specifically in English, mathematics and science. According to the findings, improvement in English and mathematics grades showed a positive correlation with more frequent attendance at Safe Harbor programs.

Kansas – The Kansas Children’s Campaign and the Kansas Enrichment Network have released a report calling on the U.S. Department of Education to increase funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative, reports the *Topeka Capital-Journal*. According to *A Call for Quality Afterschool Programs in Kansas*, grant applications in 48 Kansas communities were rejected in 2001, effectively denying more than 67,000 children participation in afterschool programs. The Kansas Children’s Campaign is also calling for more state funding for afterschool programs and the creation of statewide training standards for afterschool workers.

Mississippi – The Oprah Winfrey Foundation has donated approximately \$4 million for the construction of a state-of-the-art Boys & Girls Club in Kosciusko, which is Winfrey’s hometown. The 30,000-square foot facility will house an afterschool program, gymnasium, computer lab and an onsite garden where children can grow their own food and learn how to prepare it. Construction is expected to take 15 months; the projected dedication is set for December 2005.

Ohio – Seattle Seahawks running back Shaun Alexander has purchased the Boone County Community and Recreation Center in Florence for \$1.8 million with the intention of refurbishing and expanding the facility, reports the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. Alexander, who grew up as a latchkey kid in a single-

parent home, hopes to expand youth and teen programs and start an afterschool program. Founded in 2000, the Shaun Alexander Family Foundation has teamed up with numerous private donors in recent years to give hundreds of kids and their families food, Christmas gifts, scholarships and other financial support.

Pennsylvania – The United Way of Allegheny County and North Atlantic Retirement Services will launch a new program called Pittsburgh Kids Matter. Through the initiative, North Atlantic will make contributions to United Way on behalf of area school teachers and staff, donating five percent of gross revenues to support quality child care and afterschool programs and help fight child abuse and neglect. The program hopes to raise \$300,000.

South Carolina – West Ashley High School and Drayton Elementary School afterschool students have begun a project to halt disposal of pollutants in storm drains, which empty into local creeks and marshes, reports the *Charleston Post and Courier*. The students will stencil warnings on drains to remind would-be polluters of potential hazards. Inspired to act after learning that waste from their own school may have been emptied into storm drains, students designed the project with help from Earth Force, a nonprofit group that involves local youth in environmental projects.

Texas – Community organizations are urging the city of Fort Worth, including its police department, to devote more crime-fighting dollars to preventing youth crime, which is escalating, the *Fort Worth Star Telegram* reports. Comprised of government, church and nonprofit groups, Community Organizations for Restoration and Empowerment (CORE) is recommending a number of remedies including expanding afterschool programs to reduce youth crime and violence. The group formed in 2003 and

to date has held 19 community forums in Fort Worth to address this issue.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Is there an interesting program in your area? Has a corporation or business in your community become involved in funding or establishing an afterschool program? Please share with us, and other readers, your success stories, comments and suggestions. Contact *Afterschool Advocate* editor Christie Constantine with story ideas or information via email: advocate@afterschoolalliance.org; phone: 202/371-1999; or fax: 202/371-9142.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

“The best way to honor my father’s memory is to build the places he cared about and the places people need, not to perpetuate the ones that meant nothing to him. I can imagine few things that would irritate him more than having a financially strapped urban school board spend \$2 million – money that should go to afterschool programs or books or teachers’ salaries – to preserve a site of misery.”

- Maxwell Kennedy, son of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, on the \$2 million plan to preserve his father’s assassination site as part of a new school construction project, Op-Ed, *Los Angeles Times*, September 23, 2004

“I believe the number one thing we have to do is invest in our kids. That means afterschool programs ... and educating parents. Investing

in kids is the least expensive investment and it has the highest payoff.”

-Gerald E. Connolly, Fairfax County, Virginia, Board of Supervisors Chairman, speaking at an anti-gang summit, Associated Press, October 13, 2004

“It makes little sense to focus on what kids learn during school without paying an equal amount of attention to what happens to them after school. ... No child should be shut out from afterschool care. We must ensure that what happens after school doesn’t undo the gains made during the school day.”

-Editorial, *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 14, 2004

“Research shows that afterschool programs are a wonderful investment. They reduce juvenile crime, teen victimization and teen pregnancy. Students who participate perform better and have greater expectations for the future. When parents know that their children are safe and in a nurturing environment, they can focus on earning an income.”

-Emily Cardenas, Miami Children’s Trust, Op-Ed, *Miami Herald*, October 19, 2004



SUSTAINABILITY PROFILE:

The Chatham Kids Club

Jennifer Yezzi of the Chatham Kids Club in northeastern New York State says the most important thing to remember about sustaining an afterschool program is that you rarely get funding or in-kind support that you don’t ask for. That may be no revelation for seasoned afterschool fundraisers, but for Yezzi it’s a reminder that potential supporters for the program are everywhere around, waiting to be asked for help.

Seven years ago, when her daughter was entering kindergarten, she and other parents in this rural community 25 miles east of Albany and ten miles west of Massachusetts took note that theirs was the only school district in the area without a before- and afterschool program. After a three-year false start in partnership with a community group, the parents took matters into their own hands and formed a nonprofit organization to do the job.

The result is the Chatham Kids Club, now in its third full school year of operation. The program serves 42 students in the town's sole public elementary school, and another 18 in a middle school. Startup funding began with soda can recycling drives, yard sales, and other small-scale ventures. From there, the group began seeking small foundation grants from a regional funder – the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation. It provided, and continues to provide, grants for specific aspects of the program, including for swimming instruction, traditional American Roots instruments (dulcimers and harmonicas, for example), and more.

At the same time, the group has turned to local businesses for help. A bank provided funding for tennis instruction, an insurance agent helped structure an affordable insurance policy, a grocery store provided food for a holiday breakfast celebration, a Wal-Mart donated books as well as direct funding, and a number of individual donors supported other specific initiatives. The \$125,000 budget for the Chatham Kids Club's core program is supported largely by participation fees of \$130/month for the afterschool program, and \$195 for both before- and afterschool. (The program has waived or reduced fees for families unable to pay.) Separate fees cover a summer program.

Yezzi says the steady flow of donations, including in-kind gifts, allows the program to offer the broad range of extras that the fee structure would not otherwise permit. "We've tried to create opportunities for the kids to do things they normally wouldn't get to experience, and those also seem to be

projects we can fundraise around," explains Yezzi. "But I think the real lesson I've learned is that there are a lot of people and organizations – businesses and charitable groups – that want to help, but need to be asked. So we ask, and when they say 'yes,' we put the money to good use, show that to them, and then ask again!"



RESOURCE

Issues and Opportunities in Out-of-School Time Evaluation

The Harvard Family Research Project has released "Parental Involvement in Homework: A Review of Current Research and Its Implications for Teachers, After School Program Staff, and Parent Leaders." The resource explores the reasons parents become involved in their children's homework, the ways they are involved, and how their involvement contributes to student learning. Written by researchers from the Family-School Partnership Lab at Vanderbilt University, this resource is available online at: www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/research/homework.html.



FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Microsoft

The *Chronicle of Philanthropy* reports that the Microsoft Corporation is accepting applications for in-kind support to create community-based technology and learning centers in order to bridge the "digital divide" and eliminate technology illiteracy. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. For more information on guidelines and to download an application, visit www.microsoft.com/mscorp/citizenship/giving/apply/.

Receiving the *Afterschool Advocate* via email

We would prefer to send you the *Afterschool Advocate* via email so that you can receive it in a more timely manner. If you would like to receive the newsletter by email, please contact editor Christie Constantine via email (advocate@afterschoolalliance.org) or fax (202/371-9142). She will need your name, organization, phone and fax number, and email address. Thank you!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

November 4 – 6

The California School-Age Consortium will host its National Middle School Conference, “Take Your Job and Love It!” at the Cathedral Hill Hotel in San Francisco from November 4-6. The conference will provide information, activities and ideas on engaging youth in afterschool programs and empowering staff to plan programs that middle school youth will love. For more information, visit www.calsaconference.org.

November 10 – 13

The National Community Education Association (NCEA) will host its 39th annual conference in San Diego, California, from November 10-13. “Creating a Future Without Boundaries” is the largest national gathering of community educators. The conference is designed to help participants create comprehensive community programs, including community schools, for the 21st Century. It will include information on model programs, best practices, services and products to support participants’ efforts. Join others to learn about community education management and professional development, community education programming and

afterschool programs. On November 9, there is a pre-conference workshop on “Building Your Afterschool Program’s Capacity to Provide Rich Academic Content.” For more information, visit www.ncea.com/conferences or call 703/359-8973.

November 17-19

The National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning will hold the *Mid-South Regional Afterschool Training Roundup: Connection People, Practices, and Places in Afterschool* from November 17-19 in San Antonio, Texas. The training is co-sponsored by the National Center for Community Education Southern Regional Advisory Committee. For more information visit www.sedl.org/afterschool/fallroundup.html.


November 18 – 20

H2ED’s 2nd ANNUAL 2004 SUMMIT: Teaching Tolerance, Health and Academics through Hip-Hop will be held at the Bronx Museum of Arts in New York. H2Ed’s annual two-day Summit offers training sessions, workshops and panel discussions on the best models and practices of using Hip-Hop culture as an educational tool in a variety of settings. Knowledgeable practitioners who use Hip-Hop culture as a learning tool will run workshops, sharing their experiences and recommending best practices. The Afterschool Alliance is proud to co-sponsor the meeting and will be offering a session on marketing programs to funders. Mention the Alliance and receive \$5 off the meeting pass (reg. \$10/wksp or \$25/all workshops). Register at www.hh2ed.net.


February 16 – 19, 2005

FOUNDATIONS, Inc. will host its 2005 *Beyond School Hours VIII*[®] national conference in Atlanta, Georgia, from February 16-19, 2005. *The Power of Partnership* conference will include successful, content-rich, afterschool program models, as well as network opportunities with community, school, university and

government leaders. There will be discussions on current policies and practices that impact programming and school systems and on methods to maximize resources and funding strategies for schools and afterschool programs. The conference is hosted in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education, 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program and is sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Annenberg Foundation. For more information or to register online, visit: www.foundationsinc.org.

 **February 24 – 26, 2005**

The National AfterSchool Association (formerly NSACA) will host its 2005 conference from February 24-26 in San Antonio, Texas. The conference will bring together 2,500 afterschool professionals – the largest conference of the profession – for practical, thought-provoking programs, sessions, and events. For more information, visit www.naaconference.org or call 800/606-0061.

 **April 15 – 17, 2005**

Youth Service America will sponsor its 17th annual National Youth Service Day, a public awareness and education campaign that highlights the contributions young people make to their communities throughout the year, and mobilizes millions of young people to address the needs of their communities. To learn more, visit the organization’s web site at www.ysa.org/nysd/lead_agencies/la_faq_parent.cfm.

CORRECTION

An article on the Santa Ana’s KIDWORKS program (Volume 5, Issue 10) misspelled donor Dan Donahue’s name. The correct spelling is Donahue, not Donoghue.



The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization supported by a group of public, private, and nonprofit entities working to ensure that all children and youth have access to afterschool programs by 2010. 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.

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