

Afterschool Advocate

A media outreach newsletter published by the Afterschool Alliance

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JOIN THE AFTERSCHOOL FOR ALL CHALLENGE

Hundreds of advocates will gather in the nation's capital on May 17 and 18 for the Afterschool Alliance's fourth annual *Afterschool for All Challenge*. Program providers, parents, students, business and religious leaders, and other advocates will meet with their Congressional representatives to thank afterschool supporters and urge lawmakers to provide the resources needed for afterschool programs to thrive.

"The *Challenge* is a tremendous opportunity for advocates to educate Members of Congress about the benefits that afterschool programs provide to children, families and communities," said Afterschool Alliance Interim Executive Director Jen Rinehart. "It is so important that lawmakers hear from constituents in their districts and states who recognize the importance of providing afterschool programs for all children who need them."

The two-day event will begin on Tuesday with workshops and networking sessions, followed by training to prepare activists to meet with Members of Congress and their staff members. Wednesday will kick off with the Alliance's fourth annual "Breakfast of Champions" awards ceremony featuring lawmakers, afterschool providers and students from around the nation.

Following the "Breakfast of Champions," attendees will visit their elected representatives to talk about what afterschool programs mean to their communities.

This year, the Alliance will offer expanded activities for youth advocates who attend the *Challenge*, including workshops on advocacy, and a "youth lounge" where students can socialize, record their impressions on a Web blog at www.afterschoolscene.com, and meet staff who work on Capitol Hill.

The *Challenge* will conclude with "Afterschool Rocks the House," a new event that will showcase several afterschool programs and recognize Representatives who have provided strong support for afterschool.

For more information, including a full schedule of events, travel information, and details on last year's event, or to register for the Afterschool for All Challenge, visit www.afterschoolalliance.org/challenge_2005.cfm. Upon successful registration, you will receive an email confirmation. While there is no cost for this event, attendees are responsible for travel costs and accommodations. Space is limited, so please register today. For additional information, contact the Alliance via email at challenge@afterschoolalliance.org.



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 via email: advocate@afterschoolalliance.org; phone: 202/371-1999; or fax: 202/371-9142.

PHASE III OF MATHEMATICA STUDY RELEASED

On April 19, the third and final phase of Mathematica Policy Research Inc.'s evaluation of the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) afterschool initiative was released. The findings from this phase of the study mirror the findings from the first two phases, and paint a downbeat picture of afterschool programs' effectiveness. Advocates and experts immediately challenged the study.

"Phase Three of the federal evaluation is more of the same – more conclusions from a deeply flawed study of a program that no longer exists," said Afterschool Alliance Interim Executive Director Jen Rinehart. "The final report from this study is of little use to the education community or to afterschool leaders, because all the studied programs were funded before the *No Child Left Behind Act* changed the program dramatically."

This research added an additional year's worth of data on elementary school afterschool programs – the same programs included in the earlier phases of the study.

Experts have raised many methodological concerns about Mathematica's controversial afterschool study. They include, but are not limited to:

- To be included in the study, elementary afterschool programs had to have sizeable waiting lists. Most do not. Thus, participating programs differed significantly from the norm. Indeed, Mathematica acknowledges in today's report that its findings for elementary schools are not representative of 21st CCLC grantees nationwide.
- Middle school "treatment" and "comparison" groups were different in significant ways, because comparison students had higher grades and higher socioeconomic status. Despite attempts to adjust for these differences, contrasts

between the two groups are deeply suspect.

- Middle school comparison students participated in afterschool programs not funded by 21st CCLC grants and significant crossover occurred, again casting great doubt on the study's conclusions.

"Nothing in this new report allays any existing methodological concerns about Mathematica's afterschool study," Rinehart added. "The U.S. Department of Education is working with providers to discover what is working well in afterschool programs, in order to strengthen them. But their benefits are apparent already. We invite lawmakers to work with us to make afterschool available to all, and to close the funding gap between the \$2.25 billion promised in the *No Child Left Behind Act* for fiscal year 2006 and the \$991 million that President Bush proposed. Our nation has no higher priority than to ensure that every child is safe and has adult supervision and opportunities to learn in the afternoons."



IN THE NEWS...

National – The National League of Cities (NLC) has released a new report that profiles successful community initiatives to provide afterschool programs and offers practical advice for mayors, city council members and others who seek to increase availability of afterschool in their locales. Released last month following a 30-month study, *The Afterschool Hours: A New Focus for America's Cities* was sponsored by the NLC and the Institute for Youth, Education, and Families through a grant by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. *The report is available at www.nlc.org.*

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LAWMAKER OUTREACH

With the Mathematica study being distributed to Members of Congress, it is especially important that lawmakers hear from constituents about the many ways afterschool programs benefit their communities. Advocates can make a real difference by urging legislators to fully fund afterschool programs. A sample letter follows. Please tailor it to reflect your experience and perspective. Address letters to Senators to: The Honorable [Name], United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. Address letters to Representatives to: The Honorable [Name], U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear [Senator/Representative Name]:

As an afterschool professional in [Anytown], I ask you to support full funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers afterschool initiative at the authorized level of \$2.25 billion for Fiscal Year 2006.

Afterschool programs make an important difference to the children and families in [Anytown] and across the state. The program I direct at [Calvin Coolidge Middle School] serves [325] children each weekday afternoon. We keep them safe; provide them with tutoring, homework help, and other academic assistance; and engage them in constructive, adult-supervised activities. Our parents know that when their children are with us, they're being helped along the path to success in school and life.

We know our program makes a difference. Recent parent evaluations show [that 93 percent of our parents think their children are doing better during the regular school day because of their participation in our program]. And teachers at [Coolidge] tell us they see a real difference in their students' academic work because of the help we provide.

Unfortunately, federal funding for afterschool programs is now more than \$1 billion behind the authorized level from the *No Child Left Behind Act*. Meanwhile, research by the Afterschool Alliance has shown that just 6.5 million children are in afterschool programs nationwide, while the parents of another 15.3 million children say their children would participate if an afterschool program were available. Need is especially high for middle school children; five times as many middle school students are unsupervised in the afternoon as are in afterschool programs.

Afterschool is such a wise investment in the future that I urge you to support efforts to restore full funding, at the \$2.25 billion authorized level. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Name, Title, Program



ESSAY CONTEST

The Afterschool Alliance and The Advertising Council are sponsoring an essay contest for kids who have discovered a new passion in life through an afterschool program. The *Something Way Better to Do: Finding Inspiration Afterschool* essay contest will award top prizes of \$1,500 in several categories. To enter, students in grades five through 12 should submit an essay of 500 words or less that answers one of the following questions:

- Has an afterschool activity changed your life, and what you want to do when you grow up?
- Has a person you met through an afterschool program made a big difference in your life?
- Do you think your experiences in afterschool programs make you better off?
- What if you had never been in an afterschool program?

Official rules and entry forms are available at www.afterschoolscene.com and www.afterschoolalliance.org. Entries are due June 30, 2005, and can be submitted on either web site.

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National – Elementary school principals are in a key position to define, create and lead early childhood programs, according to a report released in April by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). *Leading Early Childhood Learning Communities: What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do* identifies components of sound preschool programs and outlines the role principals can play in leading and advocating for early learning opportunities. *The report is available at www.naesp.org.*

National – Legendary musicians The Commodores and Fox's American Idol performers Justin Guarini, Diana DeGarmo and John Stevens joined education advocates last month to deliver a petition with more than 30,000 signatures to Members of Congress asking that music education in schools be saved from budget cuts. The musicians' visit to Capitol Hill culminated in an evening

performance for Members of Congress, their staff and families. The initiative was organized by NAMM, the International Music Products Association, its non-profit affiliate the American Music Conference (AMC) and its teen web site, themusicedge.com, along with TEEN PEOPLE magazine.

California – Troubled by urban decay in their neighborhood, afterschool students at the Visalia Boys & Girls Club are lobbying the city to fix a variety of problems as part of the Neighborhood Scan project, reports the *Fresno Bee*. The program received a \$25,000 grant from the Community Technology Foundation for hand-held computers and digital cameras which students used to document problems such as cracked sidewalks, graffiti and unkempt yards. The information will be compiled in a report to be presented to the city of Visalia.

Maine – Afterschool students from Ellsworth High School are learning the sport of dog sledding thanks to funding from the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, according to the *Bangor Daily News*. Project ASPIRE has partnered with Pulling Together, a local youth dog sledding program, to offer at-risk students the chance to improve their team building skills and self-esteem through sledding. In addition to racing, students receive tutoring, build dog sleds, and learn about the heritage of the sport.

Nevada – The non-profit United States Wallyball Association has teamed up with USA Volleyball to launch the "Have Fun, Get Fit, Feel Good High School Wallyball Program," a pilot afterschool program for Washoe School District high school students, particularly those who are obese or do not normally participate in organized physical activities. Wallyball, a variation of volleyball, is played on an enclosed court. Organizers say that because the game is easy to play, they expect it will appeal to youth of diverse skill levels and physical abilities.

Facilities with racquetball courts in the community will be recruited to offer these programs during afterschool hours, on weekends and during the summer. *For more information, visit www.uswallyball.org.*

New York – Young filmmakers at The After-School Corporation’s Community Justice Program at Murray Bergtraum High School in Manhattan have been recognized for their work on a documentary about relations between teenagers and police. “Us & Them, NYC’s Future vs. NYC’s Finest: Trying to Co-Exist” was screened at the Tribeca Film Festival on April 23. The Community Justice Program, which is supported by the New York State Division of Criminal Services, operates in five middle and high schools in New York City. The program’s positive impact is evidenced by a recent survey of participants which found that 60 percent of middle school students felt safer and more comfortable with police officers and 65 percent of high school students said they would approach an officer for help with a problem. Another TASC program operated by Manhattan Youth Recreation Services at IS 89 is also participating in the festival. Its films include “Reeses Peanut Butter Love,” “Sliders” and “Question Mark.”

Rhode Island – More than one hundred people from across the state gathered in Warwick last month for the Arts After School Fair, sponsored by the RI After School Plus Alliance. The event allowed afterschool arts providers to showcase their programs to a diverse audience, and underscored the importance of the arts to children and youth. Students gave music and dance performances and spoke about the positive impact of afterschool arts programs in their lives. Additional partners included the Rhode Island Department of Education, United Way’s Community Schools Rhode Island Initiative, and the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts.

MEET DAVID CHERNOW, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT (JA WORLDWIDE)

The *Afterschool Advocate* recently sat down with David Chernow to learn more about afterschool programs provided by Junior Achievement.

Afterschool Advocate: Can you tell us about the history and mission of Junior Achievement (JA Worldwide)?

David Chernow: Junior Achievement was founded in 1919 by Theodore Vail, president of American Telephone & Telegraph; Horace Moses, president of Strathmore Paper Co.; and Senator Murray Crane of Massachusetts. Its first program, *JA Company Program*, was offered to high school students on an afterschool basis. This is the program that most people are familiar with, where students form their own company to create, manufacture, market, and sell their own product.

In 1975, the organization entered the classroom with the introduction of *Project Business* for the middle grades. Over the last 30 years, JA has expanded its activities and broadened its scope to include in-school and afterschool students in grades K-12. JA’s mission is to educate and inspire young people to value free enterprise, business, and economics to improve the quality of their lives. JA’s purpose is to ensure that every child has a fundamental understanding of the free enterprise system. We are the world’s largest education organization dedicated to educating young people about business, economics, and free enterprise. JA programs are taught by volunteers in class and afterschool at locations throughout the United States and in 97 countries.

AA: How many domestic afterschool programs does JA operate and how can someone find a program in his or her area?

DC: JA is currently reaching approximately 300,000 students in the “out-of-school” timeframe. This includes students that are participating in JA during the 3-6pm hours, in the summer, and on the weekends.

The best way to find a JA program is to contact your local JA office. You can find this information on the JA web site at www.ja.org.

AA: Can you describe the curricula used in JA’s afterschool programs?

DC: JA Worldwide will unveil a new elementary afterschool program this summer called *JA Dollars and Sense™*. *JA Dollars and Sense* is designed to teach a diverse group of elementary aged-students personal financial and business skills through activities that will focus on earning, spending, and saving money.

This program was part of a three-year strategy to research, develop, demonstrate, and evaluate new highly experiential, entrepreneurial curricula for elementary, middle grades and high school students. The middle grades and high school programs will be released in 2006.

Many JA offices are also implementing JA’s classroom-based programs in afterschool settings. Ranging from kindergarten to twelfth grade, Junior Achievement programs focus on seven key content areas: business, citizenship, economics, entrepreneurship, ethics/character, financial literacy, and work-related life skills/career development.

JA Worldwide gratefully acknowledges the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention for its dedication to the development and implementation of JA afterschool programs. A grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, and U.S. Department of Justice supported this project.*

* Points of view or opinions in this newsletter are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

AA: We understand that volunteers are a vital component of JA’s work. Who are these individuals, and what contributions do they make?

DC: JA’s 178,000 classroom volunteers come from all walks of life and include business people, college students, and retirees. These dedicated individuals are the backbone of the organization. JA’s unique delivery of our programs provides students with role models from their own communities and inspires both the volunteer and the student. JA programs are welcomed by teachers in more than 252,000 classrooms around the world each year. In the U.S., JA reaches approximately four million students per year in inner cities, suburbs, and rural areas. Internationally, JA reached more than 2.6 million students last year in 97 countries.

AA: Please tell us about your online JA Student Center.

DC: JA Worldwide recently unveiled a new, online JA Student Center with a re-designed and expanded set of resources, giving students a fun, interactive, and educational online destination to prepare for the future. The JA Student Center can be found at www.ja.org, and offers information and resources geared to help teens become workforce-ready in the 21st century. Students can navigate the site to gain knowledge on how to find a college, pay for college, plan a business, handle their money, find a career, and much more.

AA: Please tell us about your partnership with JCPenney Afterschool Fund and how it benefits students.

DC: JA Worldwide is extremely grateful for the partnership we share with the JCPenney Afterschool Fund. JA’s partnership with the JCPenney Afterschool Fund began in 2002 and has been a driving force in JA’s afterschool initiative on the national level. Funding from JCPenney Afterschool Fund has allowed JA to explore and strengthen collaborations with the YMCA of the USA, 4-H, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, and the

Afterschool Alliance. These collaborations in turn benefit thousands of young people who are impacted by the programmatic collaborations that take place on the local level.

In addition, this is the fourth consecutive year that the JCPenney Afterschool Fund has financially supported afterschool programming at the local level. JA Area Offices apply for and are awarded JCPenney Afterschool Fund grants to collaborate with local afterschool providers and implement JA programs in afterschool settings. In turn, tens of thousands of young people have benefited from JA programs at no cost to them or their families. JA is extremely thankful for this great partnership that continues to positively impact so many families and afterschool communities in America.

AA: Are there any student success stories you'd like to share?

DC: Below is a story from one of our JA afterschool students in Los Angeles, California. Her name is Tova Seals, and she is 19 years old. Tova was involved in a *JA Company Program*, where she worked with her high school peers to start and run a business. The *JA Company Program* is the same afterschool program upon which JA was founded in 1919. In this case, Tova and her peers started a business called the Cougar Copy Center. Below is a story that Tova wrote to describe her experience in the *JA Company Program* afterschool program.

Tova's Accounting teacher, Maynard Brown, encouraged Tova to enroll in Junior Achievement's Company Program. Tova and a group of other students had the idea to create a reprographic services company, the Cougar Copy Center, which would operate on the high school's campus and provide educational incentives for the students. Much time, effort, and energy was exerted to make Cougar Copy Center a reality. The students worked after school on the planning, implementation, and coordination of the details of the company. Mr. Brown's

classroom created a safe haven for Tova. It was a place where she and the other students could think outside of the box, ask questions, and utilize those fundamental reading, writing, and math skills they had learned in the classroom. It kept Tova from the problems that are so prevalent in inner-city neighborhoods such as drug abuse, gang activity, unplanned pregnancies, etc. In fact, Tova has lost many friends and family members to gang violence and her best friend gave birth to a child while still in high school. The odds were definitely against Tova, but she was determined not to let that prevent her from realizing her full potential. Tova had a goal and it was the JA afterschool program that allowed her and so many other students the opportunity to and reach those goals.

Cougar Copy Center was incorporated as a for-profit California Corporation in June 2003. In August, Tova and several other students flew to Ohio, met with the president of SRA/McGraw-Hill and acquired the intellectual property rights to produce over 18,000 workbooks for seven elementary schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District. The following month Tova went on to continue her education at Stanford University. It was difficult for Tova to be actively involved with the company while at Stanford. There were contracts to be finalized and things that needed to be accomplished before the company could begin operations. Due to the distance, Tova was not able to assist in and oversee the day-to-day company matters. Instead, it was up to her colleagues to see that the company continued down the path of success. That summer the company started production. Tova made the decision to take a leave of absence from Stanford, so that she could do everything in her power to ensure the company's sustainability and witness and participate in its first year of operation. This decision has proved extremely beneficial for Tova. She is gaining a tremendous amount knowledge that cannot be learned nor simulated in a classroom. It is

something she will carry with her forever and that will ultimately benefit her when she goes back to Stanford in fall.

Today, Tova is a mentor, board member, and Chief Financial Officer of Cougar Copy Center, Inc. (CCC). Her goals for the company are as follows:

- Create afterschool and summer jobs for high school students.
- Teach the students small business management and allow them the opportunity to experience first-hand how a small business is operated.
- Allow for student interaction with business professionals in some of the leading corporations recognized worldwide.
- Instill self-confidence and enable the students to realize their full potential.
- Create awareness of the broad range of opportunities available in the printing industry and provide the students with the necessary training to become marketable candidates.
- Encourages the students to pursue post secondary education and provide the financial resources, in the form of scholarships, to make higher education more accessible.

Tova credits all of her success to Junior Achievement and she believes that Cougar Copy Center is evidence that students can achieve if given the opportunity. JA has been an integral part of her academic and business success. Tova cannot imagine her life without JA. She believes that everything she has achieved thus far is because of this wonderful organization. Prior to JA, Tova had no idea what she wanted to do with her life. Today, she not only knows what she wants to do, she is doing it!



AFTERSCHOOL AMBASSADOR RECOGNIZED

The California School-Age Consortium has named Afterschool Alliance/JCPenney Afterschool Ambassador John Ervin III one of two recipients of its 2005 Award of Excellence, which recognizes unique contributions to children, families and communities. Ervin was honored by the statewide nonprofit organization for his outstanding accomplishments in building successful afterschool programs in Modesto City Schools.

“John has a sincere and dedicated passion for the afterschool field,” noted Carol Collins, a coordinator with West Modesto King-Kennedy Neighborhood Collaborative who nominated Ervin, “because he feels strongly that afterschool programs keep children safe, improve academic achievement, address parents’ child care needs, and allow children to develop their creative, cultural, artistic and social potential.”

In selecting Ervin, judges noted his success in building 13 afterschool programs serving 1,500 Modesto students from just two sites in 1998. Ervin also partnered with the Modesto Mayor’s Office to implement an afterschool program at every school in Stanislaus County. Programs Ervin helped develop have been designated “models” by the California Department of Education and have won awards for improving students’ academic performance from U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and health insurance provider Blue Shield of California.

“Hundreds of new afterschool programs will soon be created under Governor Schwarzenegger’s Proposition 49, and communities throughout California are looking to leaders like John Ervin as examples of how to build great programs,” said Darci Smith, Executive Director of the California School-Age Consortium. “He exemplifies the best in providing in providing safe, enriching programs for kids.” The other

winner is Barbara Moreno of Vista, California.



RESOURCES

Professional Development Opportunities for Youth Workers

The National Youth Development Information Center has launched a new component of its web site that allows youth workers to search for professional development opportunities by geographic area. In addition, programs are invited to post staff development opportunities. *For more information, visit www.nydic.org/nydic/staffing/profdevelopment/prof_dev_search_form.cfm.*

Evaluations of Health and Sports of Out-of-School Time Programs

The Harvard Family Research Project has compiled information on evaluations conducted on out-of-school time (OST) programming related to health and sports/recreation. Information comes from the Out-of-School Time Program Evaluation Bibliography and Out-of-School Time Program Evaluation Database. *For more information, visit www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/resources/sports.html.*



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

April 24 – 30, 2005

The Global Campaign for Education, a coalition of nongovernmental organizations including teachers' unions, child advocates, and relief organizations, will hold the "Send My Friend to School" Action Week to call attention to the 100 million children globally who do not attend school. That week, the organization hopes to generate one million



PROJECT 2010 CONTINUES TO GAIN SUPPORT


The Afterschool Alliance's *Afterschool for All: Project 2010*, a sign-on campaign designed to demonstrate the diverse support for afterschool, recently received support from a variety of sports-related organizations. These organizations recognize the important role afterschool programs play in helping children develop an interest in health and physical activity. In fact, some of our nation's best athletes developed their talents and passions in afterschool programs.

New Project 2010 Partners include:

American Youth Soccer Organization
 Arena Football League
 Dixie Youth Baseball, Inc.
 National Council of Youth Sports
 National High School Drill Team Championships
 National Hockey League National Sports Museum
 National Youth Football Championships
 PONY Youth Baseball and Softball
 USA Cycling
 USA Gymnastics
 USA Roller Sports
 USA Water Polo
 Youth Basketball of America, Inc.


The Alliance welcomes new partners to Project 2010. To become a Project 2010 Partner, contact Jonathan Rhoads at jrhoads@afterschoolalliance.org. To view a complete partner list and other partner news, click on Afterschool for All: Project 2010 at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

messages from students on behalf of their peers around the globe to be delivered to world leaders in July at the Group of Eight Summit in Scotland. The deadline for submissions is May 10, 2005. *For more information, including sample letters and lesson plans, visit www.campaignforeducationusa.org.*

 **May 10 – 11, 2005**

The After-School Institute will sponsor the Eastern Regional Conference on After-School (intended for advocates and providers in Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, DC, and West Virginia). Co-sponsors include Associated Black Charities, DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation, Maryland State Department of Education, and the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning, among others.

The conference will be held at the Sheraton North in Towson, Maryland. *Online registration is available at www.afterschoolinstitute.org.*

 **May 17 – 18, 2005**

The Afterschool Alliance will convene its fourth annual Afterschool for All Challenge in Washington, DC. Advocates, parents, youth, educators and program leaders and staff are encouraged to participate in this event, which will include a “Breakfast of Champions” awards ceremony on the morning of May 18. Following the breakfast, providers and advocates will fan out across Capitol Hill for a series of meetings with their elected representatives. *For more information and the latest details, visit www.afterschoolalliance.org.*



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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