

# Afterschool Advocate

*A media outreach newsletter published by the Afterschool Alliance*

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## **GRANT NAMED AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE DIRECTOR**

After a nationwide search, the board of directors of the Afterschool Alliance has named Jodi Grant, a career-long advocate for children and families, to be the organization's new Executive Director.

"On any given day, 14.3 million children leave school without a safe place to go," Grant said. "Afterschool programs are a solution. They keep kids safe, help working families and inspire children to learn. I look forward to working with policy makers, educators, parents, business leaders and advocates to make afterschool programs available to every child who needs them."

"The Afterschool Alliance is delighted to have Jodi Grant on board," said Dr. Terry Peterson, Chair of the Alliance's Board of Directors. "She is an extraordinary leader with strong experience in the nonprofit world, and inside and outside of government. She is part of a new generation of leaders who know how to get things done."

"I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Afterschool Alliance on its new Executive Director, Jodi Grant," said U.S. Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), the Republican Co-Chair of the House Afterschool Caucus. "The Alliance's mission, to make afterschool programs available to all families that need them by the year 2010, is critically important and I look forward to working with Ms. Grant as part of the House Afterschool Caucus to meet that goal."

"Jodi Grant will be a wonderful addition to the afterschool movement and a powerful leader who knows what a big difference

afterschool initiatives make in student achievement and success later in life," added U.S. Representative Nita M. Lowey (D-NY), the Democratic Co-Chair of the House Afterschool Caucus. "This is an issue that matters deeply to Americans, and I look forward to working with Jodi on important afterschool programs around the nation."

Before joining the Afterschool Alliance, Grant served as Director of Work and Family Programs for the National Partnership for Women & Families. In that position, she was a member of the team that successfully defended the Family & Medical Leave Act before the U.S. Supreme Court, advised the Bush Administration on proposed regulatory changes to the law, and advanced work and family initiatives at the state and national levels.

Grant has also held several prominent positions on Capitol Hill, where she worked closely with the business and other communities, forging broad alliances that addressed education, school safety, the digital divide, workplace and women's issues, and health care. Her legislative accomplishments include expanded support for the child tax credit, the Child Health Insurance Program and class-size reduction.

Grant graduated from Yale University, and received her law degree from Harvard University. As a student, she volunteered at an afterschool program. Her older daughter will begin attending an afterschool program in September.



### **Join the Afterschool for All Challenge from Home**

If you are not attending the May 18 *Afterschool for All Challenge* in Washington, DC, you can participate from home! Invite students and parents to email messages about the importance of afterschool programs to Congress on May 18. Have a postcard or letter writing party at which parents send messages to state and federal officials about why afterschool matters to their family and community. Or arrange for students to visit the district office of one of your senators or your congressional representative on May 18, to share information about why afterschool programs are important.

### **AFTERSCHOOL PROFILE: WASHINGTON DC'S FIELDS OF DREAMS**

Baseball diamonds across the nation are springing back to life this month – major league ballparks and little league fields alike. In Washington, DC, home to the newly relocated Washington Nationals, the ping of aluminum bats striking cowhide balls can be heard at a unique afterschool program that combines instruction in the fundamentals of baseball and softball with character education and academic enrichment.

Founded in 2002, the Fields of Dreams out-of-school-time program, a project of A Greater Washington, brings children from some of the city's poorest areas together for instruction in the classroom and on the baseball diamond. The program will serve more than 400 children this year at half a dozen sites, during seven weeks this spring, twelve during the summer, and six this autumn. Children in the spring and fall afterschool program, located at host public schools, lead off their afternoons with a snack, before moving to an hour-long homework and enrichment session, led by a

regular-school-day teacher chosen by the principal and paid by A Greater Washington.

The classroom curriculum uses baseball as a springboard for character education. The program's director of academic enrichment, Jennifer Geoffroy, devised a curriculum built around lessons from the book, *Jackie's Nine, Jackie Robinson's Values to Live By*, written by the baseball great's daughter, Sharon Robinson. The nine values at the heart of the book and the curriculum are courage, determination, teamwork, persistence, integrity, citizenship, justice, commitment, and excellence, and Geoffroy devises baseball-based lesson plans to focus on each.

Academic lessons often have a baseball angle to them as well. A recent geography lesson invited students to identify major league cities on a map of the United States, for example. Other lessons touch on math, science, reading, and arts and crafts. In addition, the program is adding a health and obesity component this year, in response to high student rates of asthma, elevated cholesterol, iron deficiency, obesity, and diabetes. The area's drinking water supply has also been tainted by lead levels exceeding Environmental Protection Agency standards, exposing children and others to the threat of neurological development problems. So Fields of Dreams' "Healthy Eating Active Living" (HEAL) program will bring health professionals to the schools to teach students and parents about basic nutrition and physical health.

After daily classroom instruction, students take the field for an hour-plus worth of baseball practice. With funding from a number of Washington DC-area heavy hitters – including *The Washington Post*, the Fannie Mae Foundation, the Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, DC Parks and Recreation, and others – A Greater Washington has rebuilt baseball diamonds at four sites, and furnishes all participating students with uniforms and equipment. Each site has a baseball instructor, including a major league baseball scout who teaches fundamentals at

several sites. Coach and Fields of Dreams co-founder Keith Stubbs says his work goes beyond bats and balls, however. "Coaching the tangibles, like throwing mechanics and power-hitting, are only part of what I do," Stubbs recently told a *Washington Post* interviewer. "I'm also working on the intangibles, like attendance, hustle, and commitment."

John DeLoach, another Fields of Dreams coach, proudly tells the story of a pair of troubled brothers, who he said were partners in trouble before enrolling in the program. "When these two became involved with mischief, it exhausted everyone – teachers, principals and especially their mother," he says. The boys were regularly involved in verbal and physical confrontations with students and teachers. But the baseball program has provided an outlet for their energies and, DeLoach says, their involvement has turned their behavior around. Both now serve as volunteers for the program.



## IN THE NEWS

**National** – The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, with support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, has awarded ten states grants of \$10,000 to hold governors' summits to improve the quantity and quality of their extra learning opportunities, including afterschool programs. Grantees are Arkansas, Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. The summits, which will convene public and private leaders, will be held this year and in early 2006. *For more information, visit [www.nga.org/center](http://www.nga.org/center).*

**Arizona** – The Skills for Success afterschool program at Flowing Wells Junior High School in Tucson has been awarded the Arizona Education Foundations A+ Exemplary Programs Award. Sponsored by the *Arizona*

## 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](http://www.afterschoolscene.com) and [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org). Entries are due June 30, 2005, and can be submitted on either web site.

*Republic*, the Arizona utility company, APS, and Bank One, the award recognizes model programs in order to share best practices within and among schools. Skills for Success serves some 500 children and offers a variety of enrichment activities, including a Lego robotics program conducted with students at the University of Arizona's College of Engineering; an aviation class offered by the PIMA Air and Space Museum; a dance troupe; a percussion group; and an online mentoring program in which women employed at IBM coach girls interested in careers in math and science.

**Iowa** – Waterloo Community Schools reports that its ECHOES afterschool program recently received grants of \$40,000 and \$25,000 from John Deere Waterloo Operations and the R.J. McElroy Trust, respectively. These donations bolster the \$385,000 dedicated to the program last fall by the Board of Education. The program attributes its success to sustained outreach efforts to educate community leaders and

local media about the value of afterschool, as well as its participation in events such as the Afterschool Alliance's annual *Lights On Afterschool* rally and *Afterschool for All Challenge*.

**New York** – The Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy, a newly established charter school in New York City, reports that it has developed innovative afterschool programs for its kindergarten and sixth grade classes with help from the students themselves. Kindergarteners are studying Japanese language and calligraphy as well as learning the art of origami. Sixth graders, whose input was solicited in forming the afterschool curriculum, decided on fashion design. Instructed by a recent graduate of New York's Fashion Institute of Technology, both boys and girls are learning the fundamentals of fashion illustration and textile design.

**New Mexico** – A group of Rio Rancho Elementary students recently wrote and performed their own opera, reports the *Albuquerque Journal*. The Students Achieving for Excellence afterschool program produced "The Jaguar's Heart," under the direction of the Santa Fe Opera's artists in residence. In addition to writing the opera, the students composed the music and created the costumes and scenery. The program was made possible through a grant from the district's Safe Schools Healthy Students.

**North Carolina** – With help from New Orleans-based actor and performance artist José Torres Tama, a group of students at the Lakewood YMCA's afterschool program recently produced "Searching for the American Dream," a successful performance of poems, journal readings, songs and sketches exploring racism, immigration, family history and self image. The program's goal is to teach students to use performance as a form of self-expression and empowerment, reports the *Herald-Sun*.



## 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, continues to gain support. Vermont Governor Jim Douglas, New Hampshire Governor John Lynch, and Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell have recently joined longtime *Project 2010* gubernatorial partners Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. (MD) and Arnold Schwarzenegger (CA).

The Afterschool Alliance would like to thank Corporate Voices for Working Families for bringing several new *Project 2010* Partners aboard, including: Eastman Kodak; CVS; Texas Instruments; GlaxoSmithKline; Knowledge Learning Corporation; LifeCare, Inc.; KPMG, LLP; and Allstate Insurance Company.

To become a *Project 2010* Partner, contact Jonathan Rhoads at [jrhoads@afterschoolalliance.org](mailto:jrhoads@afterschoolalliance.org). To view a complete partner list and other partner news, click on *Afterschool for All: Project 2010* at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).

**Texas** – An antique car enthusiast and two classic boat collectors teamed up last month to raise funds and awareness on behalf of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Houston, reports the *Houston Chronicle*. The 10<sup>th</sup> annual "Keels & Wheels Concours d'Elegance" auction and exhibition, organized by the trio, raised some \$100,000 for the afterschool program. Aside from providing much-needed financial support, organizers said, the event educates people from around the country about the Clubs' work on behalf of some 12,000 local children. *For more information, visit [www.keels-wheels.com](http://www.keels-wheels.com).*

## MEET ROXANNE SPILLETT, PRESIDENT OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA

The *Afterschool Advocate* recently sat down with Roxanne Spillett to learn more about afterschool programs provided by Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

**Afterschool Advocate:** Can you tell us a little about the history and mission of BGCA?

**Roxanne Spillett:** A group of three women founded the first Boys Club in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1860 because they believed that the young boys who roamed the streets should have a positive alternative, so a cause was born.

In 1906, some 53 Boys Clubs decided their Federation of Boys Clubs could greatly benefit from the founding of a national organization, responsible for supplying effective programs, staff training and fundraising expertise. In 1931, the Boys Club Federation of America became Boys Clubs of America. In 1956, Boys Clubs of America celebrated its 50th anniversary and received a U.S. Congressional Charter.

In recognition of the fact that girls have the same development needs, the national organization decided to allow girls as members and changed its name to Boys & Girls Clubs of America in 1990. Accordingly, Congress amended and renewed the charter.

Our mission is to inspire and enable all young people, especially those from disadvantaged circumstances, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens.

We want to provide a safe place to learn and grow, ongoing relationships with caring, adult professionals, life-enhancing programs and character development experiences and, most importantly, hope and opportunity.

**AA:** How many students participate in BGCA afterschool programs nationally?

**RS:** There are more than four million boys and girls served at some 3,400 Clubs after school. We have locations in all 50 states and in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and at domestic and international U.S. military bases. Our goal for 2006, BGCA's Centennial, is to have 4,000 Clubs, serving more than five million young people. We also presently serve youngsters in a number of non-traditional settings, including schools, public housing and Native American Lands.

**AA:** Please describe some of your core programs.

**RS:** We have a lineup of tested and proven nationally-recognized programs that address today's most pressing youth issues, teaching young people the skills they need to succeed in life.

We offer more than 30 national programs in the areas of education, the environment, health, the arts, careers, financial literacy, diversity, alcohol/drug and pregnancy prevention, gang prevention, leadership development, and sports and fitness.

For example, one of our most popular and effective education programs is POWER HOUR. This afterschool homework help and tutorial program is designed to raise the academic proficiency of Club members, ages six to 18. The JCPenney Afterschool Fund sponsors POWER HOUR.

For career development we have CareerLaunch<sup>TM</sup>, a career exploration and mentoring program for teens ages 13 to 18. This program includes the CareerLaunch web site (<http://careerlaunch.net/>) that allows teens to take an interest survey, explore careers, identify training or college requirements, seek out financial aid and play skills-building games. This program is made possible through the GAP Foundation.

Under leadership development, The Reader's Digest Foundation sponsors the National Youth of the Year Program that recognizes and promotes Club members for their outstanding service to Club and community, academic performance and

contributions to family and spiritual life. Clubs select a local Youth of the Year (YOY) who receives a certificate and medallion and then advances to a state competition. Each State YOY receives a scholarship from The Reader's Digest Foundation and then moves ahead to a regional competition. Each September, the five Regional YOYs vie for the honor of becoming BGCA's national teen spokesperson and winning a \$10,000 scholarship from The Reader's Digest Foundation. For more information, visit [www.bgca.org/members/youth\\_of\\_year.asp](http://www.bgca.org/members/youth_of_year.asp). These are just a few of our many programs.

**AA:** What kind of work have you done with your corporate partners, including JCPenney Afterschool?

**RS:** Boys & Girls Clubs of America has been selected by some of the top Fortune 500 corporations as their charity of choice. These cause-related marketing partnerships annually contribute some \$16 million to the organization's bottom line. More importantly, as with Major League Baseball, these corporations raise brand awareness. Over the last six years, over 2,000 local Clubs have received educational funding from JCPenney Afterschool. In 2004, some 150 Boys & Girls Clubs received grants, and another 175 will receive grants in 2005.

BGCA is proud to provide *POWER HOUR: Making Minutes Count, A Resource Guide for After-School Homework Help and Tutoring* to all Clubs. This newly revised guide includes the latest research and best practices from the field, as well as gives Club staff the necessary tools and innovative ideas to make homework a fun and productive activity for Club members.

The JCPenney Afterschool Fund is also the sponsor of Goals for Graduation, an academic goal-setting program that helps Club members set achievable "Know-I-Can" goals, more challenging "Think-I-Can" goals and yearly "Believe-I-Can" goals, then create action plans.

**AA:** How can someone find a Club in their hometown?

**RS:** You can locate a Club near your area by going to [www.bgca.org](http://www.bgca.org) and clicking on "Find a Club." You can type in the city name to find a list of Clubs in your area. You can also call 1-800-854-CLUB.



## RESOURCES

### Harvard Family Research Project

- The Spring 2005 issue of *New Directions for Youth Development* focuses on participation in youth programs. It draws on the latest research and evaluation literature and provides research-based strategies on how to define, measure, study, and increase participation. *The issue is available at [www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/jhome/97015503](http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/jhome/97015503).*
- The May 2005 issue of *School Administrator* features an article by Afterschool Alliance Board Chair Terry Peterson, "Leveraging the After-School Value Added." The issue also includes, "Finding the Right Hook: Strategies for Attracting and Sustaining Participation in After-School Programs," which offers promising recruitment and retention strategies to school administrators seeking to boost participation rates in their school-based afterschool programs. *It is available at [www.aasa.org/publications/sa/2005\\_05/contents.htm](http://www.aasa.org/publications/sa/2005_05/contents.htm).*

### Youth Action Policy Center

The Youth Policy Action Center has launched a new web site for youth activists. The online hub will promote youth empowerment and offer resources to help youth become involved in issues they care about. Capital Advantage has provided one free year of

service of its award-winning Capwiz software, which allows users to send tailored messages to their elected officials. *For more information, visit*  
[www.youthpolicyactioncenter.org](http://www.youthpolicyactioncenter.org).



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### **May 19, 2005**

The Institute for Youth, Education & Families of the National League of Cities will hold an audioconference at 12:30 pm (ET) on “Connecting School and AfterSchool.” The audioconference allows participants to listen by telephone to lively discussions between Institute staff, national policy experts, and city officials. Registration is required two days before the event. *Visit*  
[www.nlc.org/iyef/events\\_\\_\\_audioconferences/1607.cfm](http://www.nlc.org/iyef/events___audioconferences/1607.cfm) *for more information.*

### **July 11 – 14, 2005**

The National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) will host a series of seminars for afterschool providers in Boston at the John Hancock Conference Center. The first session (July 11 – 12) features seminars on project-based learning and becoming a quality advisor. The second (July 13 – 14) features training on evaluation and program improvement. Tuition is \$525 per two-day session and includes a course notebook,

continental breakfast, lunch and snacks. *For more information, visit*  
[www.niost.org/training/sumsem05.html](http://www.niost.org/training/sumsem05.html).

### **July 14, 2005**

The Center for Summer Learning at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore is asking communities to host a “Summer Learning Day” event on July 14, 2005, to showcase summer programs and raise awareness about how summer programs send young people back to school ready to learn, support working families, and keep children safe and healthy. *For more information, visit*  
[www.summerlearning.org/summerlearningday/plan.html](http://www.summerlearning.org/summerlearningday/plan.html).

### **July 14 – 15, 2005**

The U.S. Department of Education and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, in conjunction with the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning at SEDL, are pleased to announce that the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) 2005 Summer Institute will be held in Chicago. This year’s focus will be on ensuring that afterschool programs engage participants – and their communities – in activities that effectively support both learning and youth development. *For more information, visit*  
[www.synergyentinc.com/21stcentury/](http://www.synergyentinc.com/21stcentury/).

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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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