



NEWS RELEASE
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Communities to Celebrate 8th Annual *Lights On Afterschool* with Ballet Folklorico, Poster Contests, Rallies, Recognition Ceremonies

The number of communities holding *Lights On Afterschool* events and the diversity of the activities increases each year. This year, from Connecticut to California and everywhere in between, afterschool programs are organizing rallies, fun runs, open houses and street fairs to mark *Lights On Afterschool* on or around October 18. *Lights On Afterschool* is organized by the Afterschool Alliance. Events planned for this year include:

- A Meet & Greet at Esperanza Elementary School in Phoenix, **Arizona** on October 18 that will include all 12 Isaac School District sites. Youth performances will include Mexican Ballet Folklorico, theater and band.
- A “Breakfast of Champions” at the Rotunda at City Hall in San Jose, **California** on October 18, at which exemplary afterschool champions will be honored and afterschool programs will showcase their many offerings.
- An open-air celebration on the Pearl Street Mall in Boulder, **Colorado** on October 18, at which Boulder Mayor Mark Ruzzin, Boulder Valley School District Superintendent Chris King and former Chairman of the Colorado State Board of Education Jared Polis will speak. Afterschool students will showcase afterschool activities including building robots, African drumming, singing and dancing.
- An Open House at John C. Daniels School in New Haven, **Connecticut** on October 18 at which afterschool staff members will share information about activities the program offers around the city.
- A youth poster contest and other activities at Youthville, a state-of-the-art youth center in Detroit, **Michigan** on October 18. Community leaders and residents will judge the poster contest and learn more about the Youth Development Commission’s many programs.
- A statewide rally on the steps of the **South Carolina** State House in Columbia on October 5. A ceremony honoring afterschool champions from around the state will be held afterward.
- A “Call to Action” breakfast at the Hyatt Regency Downtown in Houston, **Texas** on October 18, featuring Harris County Judge Ed Emmett. The event will include a

ceremony to recognize afterschool leaders. In the evening, afterschool programs across Harris County will host *Lights On Afterschool* events.

“This is just a small sample of the 7,500 *Lights On Afterschool* events that will be held around the country next month,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “In nearly every small town and big city across the United States, afterschool programs will hold *Lights On Afterschool* events that reflect their community interests. These diverse events will send one message: We need more quality afterschool programs to keep our kids safe, help working families and inspire them to learn.”

Lights On Afterschool was launched in October 2000. Last year, a million people rallied at 7,500 events to show their support for afterschool programs. Organizers expect this year’s event to be even larger. Actress Rhea Perlman is the spokesperson for *Lights On Afterschool* and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is National Chair, a position he has held since 2001.

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.

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