



Afterschool Alliance

MetLife Foundation

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## **Lansing Afterschool Program Wins National Award for Innovation from MetLife Foundation**

### ***Program Recognized for Innovation in Digital Learning***

The Afterschool Alliance and MetLife Foundation today honored Green Energy Technologies in the City (GET City) in Lansing with a 2012 Afterschool Innovator Award for youth development in science, technology, engineering, math and information technologies. GET City, a program of the Boys & Girls Club of Lansing, was one of only five afterschool programs in the country recognized for using innovative approaches to help middle school students succeed in the programs, school and life. Thomas Cornfield, Financial Services Representative for MetLife presented the award, which included \$10,000 for GET City to expand its work, during a special event that was part of *Lights On Afterschool*, the only nationwide rally for afterschool programs.

“Children learn in a variety of ways and middle school is the perfect time to take advantage of a student’s natural curiosity and interest in learning new things,” said Dennis White, president and CEO of Met Life Foundation. “We are honored to join the Afterschool Alliance in recognizing GET City which represents some of the most exciting innovations in expanding horizons and helping middle school students achieve their full potential.”

Each year, GET City provides 200 hours of programming for 30 middle school youth from low-income and under-represented backgrounds. GET City students develop “cybertoolkits,” including digital public service announcements, podcasts and raps, to educate the public about energy and environmental issues. Students put their knowledge and cybertoolkits to work in youth-led community workshops designed for student groups, churches and community centers, classroom lessons based on GET City projects, and social media outreach. They have also documented the impact of local energy policy on the community. Their multimedia projects have won statewide recognition and have been featured on Detroit Public Television, Lansing’s WLNS television, and Ann Arbor’s Michigan Historic Theater. Since 2006, the GET City Education Network has reached more than 3,120 youth, parents, and community members.

“It’s a great honor to be recognized by MetLife Foundation and the Afterschool Alliance for our work helping students open their minds to the world of green energy and technology,” said Angela Calabrese Barton, Co-Director of GET City. “We have seen our youth develop and thrive in our afterschool program. The Afterschool Innovator Award is a fantastic way to pay tribute to our hard-working students.”

GET City will be featured in an Issue Brief on the Afterschool Alliance's website on how digital learning afterschool programs benefit middle school students. The Afterschool Alliance's Issue Brief series examines the role of afterschool programs in addressing a variety of contemporary issues facing youth, schools and communities.

"Having students take part in our GET City program has allowed us to unlock their potential," said Carmen Turner, President of the Boys & Girls Club of Lansing. "We are very proud of all our students have achieved and the ways they are helping to improve our environment while learning important science, technology, engineering and math skills that will serve them all their lives."

Organized by the Afterschool Alliance, *Lights On Afterschool* includes more than 7,500 events being held across the country on and around October 18, providing children, parents, community leaders, educators and others an opportunity to come together to urge Congress not to divert funds from the afterschool programs that children and families need. Events also give youth a chance to showcase the skills they learn and talents they develop at their afterschool programs and send the message that millions more kids need quality afterschool programs.

"Afterschool programs are terrific settings for innovation," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "In afterschool programs, directors and staff have the flexibility to try creative and unusual approaches to learning and building skills that can help kids succeed in school and in life. We're so grateful to MetLife Foundation for working with us to highlight and recognize these outstanding programs."

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*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](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*

*MetLife Foundation was established in 1976 to continue MetLife's longstanding tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. The Foundation's commitment to building a secure future for individuals and communities worldwide is reflected in its dedication to empowering older adults, preparing young people and building livable communities. Since it was established, MetLife Foundation has provided more than \$530 million in grants and \$70 million in Program-Related Investments to nonprofit organizations addressing issues that have a positive impact in their communities. For more information visit [www.metlife.org](http://www.metlife.org)*