



NEWS RELEASE
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Bright House Networks to Sponsor Birmingham Youth At Afterschool Event in Washington, D.C. Next Week

Birmingham, AL – April 14, 2010 Local high school junior and YMCA Youth and Government Program participant Ebony Moore will spend April 19 through 21 in our nation's capital learning about advocacy and urging lawmakers to protect and increase funding for afterschool programs. Bright House Networks is sponsoring Moore's trip to participate in the Afterschool Alliance's ninth annual *Afterschool for All Challenge*, which is being held this year in conjunction with Be the Change, the National AfterSchool Association's annual convention.

"Bright House Networks is very proud of Ebony and her accomplishments at the YMCA and in her school" states Robert L. Smith, Director of Public Affairs for Bright House Networks Birmingham. "We are elated that she will represent our Division in Washington DC during this special event. We are equally proud of the opportunity that the YMCA has given Ebony and others like her".

Moore will join hundreds of parents, children, educators and advocates from around the country at the three-day *Challenge*. On Monday, she will participate in a special youth leadership training to prepare to meet with Members of Congress. On Tuesday, Moore will speak at a rally for afterschool on Capitol Hill featuring TV personality and afterschool supporter Judge Glenda Hatchett and guitarist Mark Bryan of Hootie & the Blowfish.

"Participating in the YMCA's Youth and Government program has enhanced my interest in politics and in becoming a lawyer," said Moore. "This program has allowed me to become involved with something much bigger than myself. We talk about the challenges our country faces and the challenges it will face in the future, and what we can do to help meet those challenges. I think afterschool programs are extremely important for teens my age. Too often, we don't have anything to do after school and programs like this give us something productive and interesting to get involved in. I want to thank Bright House Networks for giving me the opportunity to share my enthusiasm for afterschool with Members of Congress."

Before Tuesday's rally, Moore will join other afterschool advocates as they fan out across Capitol Hill to meet with Members of Congress and congressional staff. In the meetings, advocates will discuss the benefits offered by afterschool programs and urge Congress to

preserve and grow afterschool funding through the 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative (21st CCLC), and increase funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). 21st CCLC and CCDBG are the chief federal funding streams for afterschool.

“Afterschool programs are so important in helping children and youth find new interests and learn more about the world around them,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “In America today, one in four children – some 15 million kids – are unsupervised after the school day ends. We need to vastly increase the number of afterschool programs, so all kids will have opportunities to learn, discover new interests and engage with their communities. So many students like Ebony know first-hand that afterschool programs strengthen young people’s commitment to school and help them imagine different futures. We’re delighted that she’s joining us next week and so grateful to Bright House for making her trip possible.”

The Obama Administration’s *Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) has raised serious concerns among afterschool experts, as has the President’s proposed Fiscal Year 2011 budget, which would effectively reduce federal afterschool spending by \$13 million next year. Taken together, they suggest that the Administration wants to redirect monies from afterschool programs to programs that would lengthen the school day or year with the responsibility of more time squarely on school staff rather than drawing on the richness of community partners. This approach would diminish the role that community-based organizations play in providing students with engaging, enriching activities like applied science, experiential learning, music and art, community service, mentoring, and job readiness.

The 2010 NAA Convention/*Afterschool for All Challenge* is sponsored by: JCPenney Afterschool Fund, United States Tennis Association, Bright House Networks, Quaker Chewy, Torani, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Open Society Institute, Peavey Electronics, NAMM, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, D.C. Children & Youth Investment Trust Corporation, Cable in the Classroom, Council on Accreditation, and National Summer Learning Association.

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About the Afterschool Alliance

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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