



**NEWS RELEASE**  
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## **Director of the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice Honored as an Afterschool Champion in Nation's Capital**

### ***Parents, Educators, Students, Afterschool Leaders Urge Congress to Increase Afterschool Funding***

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Afterschool Alliance today honored Judge William R. Byars, Jr., State Director of the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice, for his support for afterschool programs at the “Breakfast of Champions,” a gala event in Washington, D.C. that featured performances by lead guitarist Mark Bryan of Hootie and the Blowfish and afterschool youth. Judge Byars has long been a powerful advocate for youth and a champion of afterschool programs that help them succeed. Judge Byars was one of just ten individuals from around the country honored at the “Breakfast” for supporting and working on behalf of the afterschool programs. The South Carolina Afterschool Alliance nominated him for the honor.

Judge Byars has been instrumental in establishing simple and innovative approaches to keeping non-violent youth ages 12 to 17 from entering the juvenile justice system. Through a partnership with the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus, Judge Byars created the Teen After-School Centers (TASC) in 2004. The South Carolina Afterschool Alliance, the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Friends of Juvenile Justice, a non-profit organization that supports DJJ and at-risk youth, became partners in the initiative soon after its inception. TASC has served more than 2,070 youth over the years, helping to divert a large number of young people away from the juvenile justice system. “Judge Byars has been a staunch supporter of afterschool and extended day programs in South Carolina by way of creating TASC sites throughout the state,” said Zelda Waymer, Executive Director of the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance. “There are currently 25 TASC sites throughout the state.”

The “Breakfast of Champions” is part of the ninth annual *Afterschool for All Challenge*, sponsored by the Afterschool Alliance, which brings together hundreds of parents, educators, children, program directors and advocates from around the country for a series of events and meetings with Members of Congress. It is being held this year in conjunction with Be the Change, the National AfterSchool Association’s annual convention. At these events, afterschool advocates are urging Congress to safeguard federal funding for these programs and reject Administration proposals to cut funding by \$13 million in Fiscal Year 2011 and to allow non-afterschool programs to compete for federal afterschool dollars.

“This year, federal support for afterschool programs is in serious peril,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “The Obama Administration is proposing making non-

afterschool programs eligible for the already limited federal dollars available through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) initiative, which is the principal federal funding stream for afterschool. It is more important than ever that advocates speak up and speak out to ensure that every child who needs afterschool has access to the programs that keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families.”

Other state champions honored at the *Afterschool for All Challenge* are: David Davison, President and CEO of the American Savings Foundation in New Britain; Jerry Ellis, Mayor of Farmington Hills, Michigan; Wendell Maddox, President and CEO of the United Way of Wyandotte County, Kansas; Thierry Malley, State Director of the Pennsylvania Area Council of Boys & Girls Clubs; Chuck Oberlie, Mayor of Michigan City, Indiana; Rhode Island State Representative Edwin Pacheco; Renee Rider, Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Child Care Services, New York State Office of Children and Family Services; Carla Sanger, President and CEO of LA’s BEST in Los Angeles, California; and Ronnie Steine, Councilmember-at-Large, Metro Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee.

The 2010 “Breakfast of Champions” is sponsored by: 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 and Cable in the Classroom.

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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).*