



NEWS RELEASE
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THINK Together Afterschool Program Founder and CEO 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 and the California Afterschool Network today honored Randy Barth, the founder and CEO of THINK Together, for his support of afterschool programs at the “Breakfast of Champions,” a gala event in Washington, D.C. which featured U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and Maggie Daley, Chair of After School Matters. THINK Together (www.THINKtogether.org) is a nonprofit community-based organization that provides academically-oriented afterschool programs all across Southern California. Barth was one of just seven individuals from around the country honored for supporting and working on behalf of the afterschool programs that keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families. The California Afterschool Network nominated him for the honor.

Barth first got involved with afterschool programs when he founded the Shalimar Learning Center, in response to a gang shooting in Westside Costa Mesa. That program was the model for THINK Together, established three years later, with Barth serving as volunteer Board Chair.

In late 2003, Barth left corporate America to join THINK Together as the nonprofit's Chief Executive Officer. During his tenure, the program has grown to serve 35,000 students at more than 200 school and community sites across Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. Specifically, THINK Together serves students at schools and community sites in the following Southern California communities: Azusa, Baldwin Park, Banning, Cabazon, Calimesa, City of Industry, Costa Mesa, Duarte, Jurupa, La Puente, Lake Elsinore, Mira Loma, Norwalk, Ontario-Montclair, Orange, Pomona, Rancho Cucamonga, Redlands, Riverside, Romoland, San Bernardino, Santa Ana, Santa Fe Springs, Tustin, Whittier, Wildomar and Yucaipa.

THINK Together has more than 1,300 paid staff logs over 100,000 volunteer hours each year.

The “Breakfast of Champions” is part of the eighth 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. At the *Challenge*, the Afterschool Alliance released its *Roadmap to Afterschool for All*, which includes a series of recommendations to make afterschool programs available to all students.

“At this time of tremendous economic stress, America needs many more quality afterschool programs so that our kids are safe and supervised after the school day ends,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “The *No Child Left Behind Act* authorized slow, steady increases for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) initiative, which is the principal federal funding stream for afterschool, but right now we are far below the \$2.5 billion authorized for this year. Our *Roadmap* demonstrates just how far we are from making sure every child who needs afterschool has access to it. Reaching that goal will require increased contributions from all levels of government and the business and charitable communities. We are looking to the federal government to lead the way.” The *Roadmap* is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.

Other state champions honored at the *Afterschool for All Challenge* are: Dr. Ella Brunner, Associate Professor at Jefferson Community and Technical College in Louisville, Kentucky; Michigan State Senator Bill Hardiman; Ohio State Representative Tracy Maxwell Heard; Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett of Maryland; New York State Deputy Secretary for Education Duffy Palmer; and Jeanette Scott, Principal of Eagle Ridge Elementary in Milledgeville, Georgia.

The “Breakfast of Champions” was sponsored by Abbott, United States Tennis Association, Bright House Networks, Marriott, Inc., Open Society Institute, NAMM, National Association of Chain Drug Stores, Cable in the Classroom, National Afterschool Association, National League of Cities, and Foundations, Inc.

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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.