



NEWS RELEASE
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New York Deputy Secretary of Education 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 New York Deputy Secretary for Education Duffy Palmer for his support for afterschool programs at the “Breakfast of Champions,” a gala event in Washington, D.C. which featured U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and After School Matters Chair Maggie Daley. Palmer 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 New York State Afterschool Network nominated him for the honor.

Palmer was the driving force behind the addition of \$9.8 million in afterschool funding to last year's New York State Education Department (SED) budget. The funds ensured that schools and organizations could continue offering after hours support to youth across the state, particularly in high-poverty and low-performing schools.

Palmer also led the New York State Summit on Student Engagement and Dropout Prevention, a collaborative effort between the Governor's office and America's Promise Alliance. He is currently working on a Supporting Student Success grant that will create a high-level working group in Governor Patterson's office to concentrate on afterschool and summer learning.

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: THINK Together afterschool program Founder and CEO Randy Barth of Santa Ana, California; 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; 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.