



NEWS RELEASE
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The After-School Corporation Receives Afterschool Innovator Award

*Parents, Educators, Students, City and State Leaders
Urge Congress to Increase Afterschool Funding*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Afterschool Alliance and MetLife Foundation today recognized The After-School Corporation (TASC) in New York as an Afterschool Innovator for the ways it connects afterschool programming to the school day and shapes its programming to help ensure students' academic success. TASC is one of four organizations being honored at the "Breakfast of Champions" as an Afterschool Innovator. Each has been profiled in *Afterschool Innovations in Brief*, a series of Issue Briefs developed by the Afterschool Alliance with support from MetLife Foundation.

TASC has helped 300,000 kids and families by supporting more than 320 afterschool programs in New York. TASC-model programs include these key elements critical to quality afterschool programming:

- Programs operate at least three hours a day, every day school is in session
- Employ a full-time, paid site coordinator
- Provide a variety of activities connected to, but different from, the school day, including academic support, arts, sports, and community service
- Maintain a diverse staff of teachers, artists, college students, parents and other community members
- Maintain a low student-to-staff ratio (10:1 for elementary and middle schools)
- Provide a snack or supper
- Offer open enrollment

In addition to incorporating these critical elements, TASC-supported programs integrate programming that is both educational and interesting to students, such as: cooking and healthy eating to teach math skills and reading comprehension; arts and cultural programs to teach geography, history, foreign languages and social studies; and community work to teach the importance of service and volunteerism.

A 2004 report by Policy Studies Associates found that active participants in TASC programs are more likely than other students to take and pass the Regents Math Sequential 1 exam by the time they are in the ninth grade. Thirty-two percent of active ninth grade participants took and passed the exam, compared to one percent of ninth grade nonparticipants.

The “Breakfast of Champions” is part of the seventh annual *Afterschool for All Challenge* 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. The 2008 *Challenge* is co-sponsored by the National League of Cities and the Afterschool Alliance. Following the “Breakfast,” advocates met with their U.S. Senators and Representatives and congressional aides.

“Parents, children and communities rely on afterschool programs to keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “But federal funding isn’t keeping up with the demand for afterschool, and President Bush proposes to cut federal afterschool funding even further. We’re in our nation’s capital this week to honor afterschool champions and remind lawmakers that these cuts are short-sighted and counterproductive. All kids need the opportunities that afterschool programs provide. Bipartisan support in Congress defeated the last proposed cut to afterschool programs, and we are seeking bipartisan support again this year so we can counter the President’s proposal and bring quality afterschool programs to all children who need them.”

In February, President Bush proposed cutting the federal budget for afterschool programs by \$281 million and converting the successful 21st Century Community Learning Centers afterschool initiative into a risky voucher system. If Congress agrees to his proposal, 300,000 students would lose access to afterschool programs.

The other organizations honored with MetLife Afterschool Innovator Awards are LA’s BEST in California, The Native Youth Club in South Dakota, and Lincoln Community Learning Centers in Nebraska.

At the “Breakfast of Champions,” the Alliance also honored 16 individuals as Afterschool Champions. They are: Boise Mayor David Bieter; Columbia (SC) Mayor Bob Coble; St. Paul Mayor Christopher Coleman; Kacy Conley, YMCA of Central Maryland in Baltimore; Omaha Mayor Mike Fahey; Grand Rapids Mayor George Heartwell; Savannah Mayor Otis Johnson; Morgantown (WV) Mayor Ron Justice; Charlotte City Council Member James Mitchell; Missouri State Representative Danie Moore; New York City Commissioner of the Department of Youth and Community Development Jeanne Mullgrav; San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom; Linda Robinson, Kentucky Department of Education; New Hampshire State Senator Kathleen Sgambati; Maxine Quintana, Denver Mayor’s Office for Education and Children; and Pennsylvania State Representative Jake Wheatley.

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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.