



NEWS RELEASE
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**California Education Leader Jennifer Peck
Honored as an Afterschool Champion in Nation's Capital**

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

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Afterschool Alliance today honored Jennifer Peck, Executive Director of the California-based nonprofit Partnership for Children and Youth, for her tireless commitment to advancing afterschool programs. Peck was presented with a State Afterschool Champion award at the “Breakfast of Champions” gala in Washington, D.C. featuring Project Exploration co-founders Dr. Paul Sereno and Dr. Gabrielle Lyon, actor Kevin Sorbo, and national education leaders, youth advocates, policymakers and nonprofit leaders and philanthropists.

Chosen as just one of eight State Afterschool Champions from across the U.S., Peck has played an integral role in developing state and federal policy to improve afterschool programs in California and across the country.

Peck has long been a thought leader and key advisor on the legislative front, most recently helping to pass California’s SB 429 which strengthens and adds flexibility to existing resources for summer learning programs. In 2011, California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson handpicked Peck to direct his Transition Team, and she has been instrumental in creating the California Department of Education’s new After School Division to improve support for state and federally-funded programs. Peck also leads California’s “Summer Matters” campaign to advance summer learning programs statewide, as well as the California Afterschool Advocacy Alliance’s federal issues committee.

“Jennifer Peck is a tireless and committed advocate for afterschool and summer learning programs,” said Renee Newton, Director of the Center for Community School Partnerships, who serves on the Executive Committee of the California AfterSchool Network. “Jennifer’s legislative expertise, her dedication to ensuring that children have opportunities to learn during out-of-school time, and her effectiveness in improving the quality of and access to afterschool and summer programs are deeply inspiring.”

The “Breakfast of Champions” is part of the eleventh 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. Following the Breakfast, participants fanned out across Capitol Hill to speak with Members of Congress about the importance of afterschool programs to children, families and communities.

“This year’s champions are working in areas such as research, policy development and advocacy in settings as diverse as universities, foundations, state government and community-based organizations to ensure that kids have somewhere safe, supervised, educational and inspiring to go after school,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “There’s an enormous body of research proving that afterschool programs are successful in keeping kids engaged in school, helping them learn and even encouraging them to explore possible careers. That’s why it’s more important than ever for us all to do whatever we can, in whatever forums are available to us, to be champions for afterschool.”

Other state champions honored at the *Afterschool for All Challenge* are: Claudia Davant, Managing Partner, Adams St. Advocates in Florida; Dr. Elaine Johannes, Associate Professor, Kansas State University; Olivia Diaz, Assemblywoman, Nevada State Legislature; Lena Townsend, Executive Director, Robert Bowne Foundation in New York; Anne Lawrence, Program Officer, Robert Bowne Foundation; Dr. Monica J. Mitchell, Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Co-Director of INNOVATIONS, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital & Medical Center; and Dr. Kathryn Hynes, Assistant Professor, Penn State University.

The 2012 *Afterschool for All Challenge* is generously sponsored by: United States Tennis Association, the NAMM Foundation, Peavey Electronics, Cable in the Classroom, National AfterSchool Association and Arnold and Sandra Grant. Additional funding is provided by Torani and the C.S. Mott Foundation.

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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.