



NEWS RELEASE
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Kansas State University Associate Professor 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 Dr. Elaine Johannes, Associate Professor at Kansas State University, for her support for afterschool programs. Dr. Johannes was named a State Afterschool Champion at the “Breakfast of Champions,” a gala event in Washington, D.C. featuring actor Kevin Sorbo and Project Exploration co-founders Dr. Paul Sereno and Dr. Gabrielle Lyon. Dr. Johannes has contributed to the professional development of youth workers across Kansas, the nation and the globe. She was one of just eight state champions from around the country honored at the Breakfast for supporting and working on behalf of afterschool programs. The Kansas Enrichment Network nominated her for the honor.

Dr. Johannes specializes in youth development, healthy lifestyles and community capacity-building. She teaches youth development classes to improve the skills of youth development staff and strengthen the afterschool programs in which they work. The classes are available online and reach national and international audiences. She has also directed two \$2.5 million efforts to use afterschool programs to prevent young people from engaging in risky behaviors and has written several afterschool curricula and teaching guides, as well as journal articles and reports on afterschool and youth development. Dr. Johannes is on the board of the Manhattan Boys & Girls Club, the executive committee of the Kansas Enrichment Network and the Kansas Military Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee. She also works with the Kansas Dropout Prevention Initiative and is chair of the Kansas Positive Youth Development team.

“Dr. Elaine Johannes is committed to quality afterschool programming, training and professional development for youth workers,” said Marcia Dvorak, Director of the Kansas Enrichment Network. “She is an asset to her community, the University, the State of Kansas, and others nationally and internationally. She is definitely deserving of this award.”

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 talk to Members of Congress about the importance of afterschool programs to children, families and communities.

“This year’s champions are working in a areas such as research, policy development and advocacy in settings as diverse as universities, foundations, state government and other 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: Jennifer Peck, Executive Director, Partnership for Children and Youth in California; Claudia Davant, Managing Partner of Adams St. Advocates; 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.