



NEWS RELEASE
May 9, 2012

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Nevada Assemblywoman 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 Olivia Diaz, an Assemblywoman in the Nevada State Legislature, for her support of afterschool programs. Diaz 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. Diaz helped pass a bill to ensure higher quality in out-of-school time programs by creating a standard definition for those programs. 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 Nevada Afterschool Network nominated her for the honor.

Assemblywoman Diaz began her first term in the State Legislature in February 2011. She was instrumental in the writing and passage of AB 362, which brought uniformity to out-of-school time programs in Nevada. The bill also created an Interim Task Force that is creating statewide, research-based standards for out-of-school time programs.

“Assemblywoman Olivia Diaz has fought hard for improvements to education and protections for Nevada’s most vulnerable citizens – our children and seniors,” said Danielle Bowen, Director of the Nevada Afterschool Network. “She knows our children are our most precious resource and deserve nothing but the best and she is committed to ensuring that we achieve the best for them.”

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 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; Dr. Elaine Johannes, Associate Professor at Kansas State University; 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.