



NEWS RELEASE
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Robert Bowne Foundation Executive Director and Program Officer Honored as Afterschool Champions 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 two representatives of the Robert Bowne Foundation – Executive Director Lena Townsend and Program Officer Anne Lawrence – for their support for afterschool programs. Townsend and Lawrence were named State Afterschool Champions 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. Townsend and Lawrence have been central to shaping, implementing and sustaining the Foundation’s afterschool investment strategy in New York. They were two of just eight state champions from around the country honored at the Breakfast for supporting and working on behalf of afterschool programs. The New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) nominated them for the honor.

Townsend and Lawrence have supported the afterschool field, the statewide afterschool system-building agenda, technical assistance, professional development and quality assurance goals through funding and in other ways. They have overseen the Bowne Foundation’s investments in the New York State Afterschool Network, afterschool programs throughout New York City and the Afterschool Alliance’s Afterschool Ambassador program. The Bowne Foundation also developed and supports *Afterschool Matters*, recognized as one of the most important contributions to the afterschool research and evidence base.

“Lena Townsend and Anne Lawrence are grantmakers who give as generously of their time and expertise as they do financial resources to afterschool programs and the organizations that support them,” said Sanjiv Rao, Director of NYSAN. “They have not only provided crucial funding to support afterschool in New York, they have also participated in NYSAN’s capacity-building committee and helped lead an Afterschool Evaluators Group. We are proud to have worked with these longstanding and outstanding champions for afterschool.”

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; Dr. Elaine Johannes, Associate Professor at Kansas State University; Olivia Diaz, Assemblywoman, Nevada State Legislature; Dr. Monica J. Mitchell, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Co-Director of INNOVATIONS at 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.