



NEWS RELEASE
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Penn State Assistant 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. Kathryn Hynes, Assistant Professor at Penn State University, for her support of afterschool programs. Dr. Hynes 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. Hynes has conducted and presented the findings of afterschool research that informs both practice and public policy. 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 Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool/Youth Development Network nominated her for the honor.

For the last several years, Dr. Hynes’ research has focused on out-of-school time programming for youth. Working with the Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool/Youth Development Network (PSAYDN), she has conducted studies and disseminated reports that identify best practices for recruiting and retaining older youth in afterschool programs, with a focus on career readiness. She has presented the results of her work in numerous venues, including events sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board, the Pennsylvania 4-H, the National Afterschool Association and the National Network of Statewide Afterschool Networks. Dr. Hynes’ research has been widely disseminated and she is currently co-editing an issue of *New Directions in Youth Development* focused on best practices in career programming for youth.

“Dr. Kathryn Hynes is a leader in conducting afterschool research that truly informs quality practice and policy and has a positive impact on the lives of children, youth and families,” said Kacy Conley, Director of PSAYDN. “She has extensive research expertise and a solid background in youth development and is using those in the service of improving our afterschool programs and, in turn, our communities. We are honored to work side-by-side with this true champion 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; Lena Townsend, Executive Director, Robert Bowne Foundation in New York; Anne Lawrence, Program Officer, Robert Bowne Foundation; and Dr. Monica J. Mitchell, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Co-Director of INNOVATIONS at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital & Medical Center.

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.