



NEWS RELEASE
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Fairfax County Public Schools Administrator Honored as an Afterschool Champion in Nation's Capital

*Parents, Educators, Students, Afterschool Leaders
Urge Congress to Increase Afterschool Funding, Help Expand Science, Technology,
Engineering and Math Programming*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Afterschool Alliance today honored Mark H. Emery, Ph.D., Administrator for After-School Programs for Fairfax County Public Schools, for his support for afterschool programs at the “Breakfast of Champions,” a gala event in Washington, D.C. featuring FIRST Robotics founder Dean Kamen. Dr. Emery oversees the development and implementation of afterschool programs in 27 middle schools in Fairfax Country. He was one of just nine state champions from around the country honored at the Breakfast for supporting and working on behalf of afterschool programs. The Virginia Partnership for Out-of-School Time nominated him for the honor.

Dr. Emery worked as a research physicist at the Naval Research Laboratory in Washington, D.C. for 25 years and has worked to share his love of and interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) with students in the Fairfax County afterschool programs. He is also a board member of the Fairfax Partnership for Youth and the Fairfax County Boys and Girls Club. He is former chairman of the Fairfax County School Board.

“Mark’s enthusiasm for the sciences and math has inspired him to encourage young people to learn more about how exciting, interesting and fun they can be,” said Blaire Denson, Director of the Virginia Partnership for Out-of-School Time. “His commitment to afterschool is reflected in his daily work and in his volunteerism, serving on several boards and doing all he can to improve and expand afterschool programs in the county.”

The “Breakfast of Champions” is part of the tenth 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 meet with Members of Congress and talk to them about the importance of afterschool programs and expanding opportunities for kids to engage in STEM activities in those programs. This year is The Year of Science in Afterschool.

“Afterschool programs are a lifeline for working families, they keep kids safe and –

most important – inspire them to learn. These programs are uniquely positioned to provide hands-on and real-world STEM learning opportunities,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “It’s no secret that our nation has some serious catching-up to do when it comes to math and the sciences. We know that afterschool programs are successful in getting children excited about the sciences. That excitement and interest has been shown to be a better predictor than good grades or test scores of who will pursue careers in the sciences. By offering children the opportunity to try robotics, CSI, rocket-building or constructing wind turbines, afterschool programs are developing future computer programmers, forensic scientists and engineers.”

Other state champions honored at the *Afterschool for All Challenge* are: Agnes Quiñones, Education Consultant, Connecticut State Department of Education; Nancy Volpe, Consultant-Youth Programs/America’s Promise, CVS Consultant, Pathways to Pharmacy and President, Volpe Communications in Kansas; Kathleen Straus, Board Member, Michigan State Board of Education; R.T. Rybak, Mayor of the City of Minneapolis, Minnesota; Sherry Comer, Afterschool Services Director, Camdenton R-III Schools, Camdenton, Missouri; Vaughn L. McKoy, President, PSEG Foundation, New Jersey; Kyle Stewart, Executive Director, Alliance of New York State YMCAs, Inc.; and Carmen M. Medina, Chief of the Division, Pennsylvania Department of Education Bureau of Teaching and Learning, Division of Student Services.

The 2011 Afterschool for All Challenge is sponsored by: United States Tennis Association, Peavey Electronics, NAMM, Open Society Foundations, Cable in the Classroom, National AfterSchool Association, Clever Crazes for Kids, and Arnold and Sandra Grant. Additional funding is provided by the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, Time Warner Cable, the Noyce Foundation and jcpenny.

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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.