



**NEWS RELEASE**  
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## **Innovative Afterschool Program Using Verizon Thinkfinity.org Resources Showcased At Kick-Off for Nationwide Rally for Afterschool in Washington, DC**

An innovative afterschool program that uses culturally sensitive educational resources from Verizon Thinkfinity.org was showcased at the kick-off for the 10<sup>th</sup> annual *Lights On Afterschool* event at the U.S. Department of Education.

Developed through a partnership between the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), the National Urban League (NUL) and the Verizon Foundation, the afterschool program uses free educational resources from thinkfinity.org to create resources designed to improve educational achievement and graduation rates among minority students.

The resources will be rolled out in a series of pilot programs at 12 afterschool locations affiliated with NCLR and NUL. Resources that produce the strongest educational gains will be made available – online and through a Verizon Thinkfinity afterschool guidebook – to all afterschool affiliates of both organizations. The information will also be available to parents and the general public for free through Verizon Thinkfinity ([www.thinkfinity.org](http://www.thinkfinity.org))

*Lights On Afterschool* is the only nationwide rally for afterschool programs. It is organized every fall by the Afterschool Alliance, and this year, includes more than 7,500 events across the country.

At the Department of Education, NCLR President Janet Murguía introduced a demonstration of Verizon Thinkfinity where several afterschool students from CentroNia in Washington, D.C. took part in interactive lesson designed to showcase how online resources can instill excitement and engage students. In the lesson, students were challenged to think about different types of power that can be used in a community and the impact on the environment.

“While education is a universal need, there is not a one-size-fits-all solution,” said Murguía. “For a student to reach his or her full potential, educators both in and outside of the classroom must continue to strive to find unique and compelling ways to reach today’s students. That’s why we’re proud to partner with the Verizon Foundation and the Urban League to create a dynamic, afterschool education initiative that will focus on real-world and relevant themes to reach youth.”

[Verizon Thinkfinity.org](http://VerizonThinkfinity.org) contains thousands of free, engaging educational resources that make learning fun. K-12 lesson plans, in-class activities and videos can be found quickly and searched by grade level, keyword or subject. Content for Thinkfinity is provided through a partnership

between the Verizon Foundation and 11 of the nation's leading organizations in the field of education and literacy: the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Council for Economic Education, International Reading Association, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, National Center for Family Literacy, National Center for the Humanities, National Council of Teachers of English, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Geographic Society, ProLiteracy, and the Smithsonian National Museum of American History.

“To ensure that today's students receive the valuable education they need to succeed, learning cannot end when the school day ends,” said Verizon Foundation President Patrick Gaston. “Verizon Thinkfinity's partnership with NCLR and NUL will help provide afterschool programs with the tools needed to fully engage, educate and inspire students.”

At *Lights On Afterschool* rallies throughout the country on and around October 22, Americans will urge leaders to increase support for the afterschool programs that children and families need. In support of the event, the Empire State Building will be lit up for the third year in a row and this year, for the first time, thanks to Woodcraft Rangers, city officials in Los Angeles will light the historic Lindbergh Beacon atop City Hall that evening, so that national landmarks on both coasts will be lit up in celebration of afterschool.

Actress Rhea Perlman is a spokesperson for *Lights On Afterschool* and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is Founding Chair, a position he has held since 2001.

In advance of *Lights On Afterschool* this year, the Afterschool Alliance released the second *America After 3 PM: A Household Survey on Afterschool in America*, the most in-depth study ever to explore how America's children spend their afternoons. Sponsored by the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, a charitable organization committed to inspiring children to be smart, strong and socially responsible, it finds that despite an increase in the number of children attending afterschool programs over the last five years, more than a quarter of the nation's schoolchildren are on their own in the afternoons. The parents of 18 million children say they would enroll their kids in afterschool programs, if programs were available. Data from all 50 states was released on October 15.

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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](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*