



## **Afterschool Ambassador Program: Legacy of Leadership**

NEWS RELEASE  
September 29, 2011

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### **Afterschool Alliance Names Spartanburg Afterschool Leader One of Just 20 ‘Afterschool Ambassadors’ from Across Nation**

#### ***Greg Tolbert Will Work in South Carolina and Nationally to Expand Afterschool***

**Washington, D.C.** – The Afterschool Alliance today announced that Greg Tolbert, President of Boys & Girls Clubs of the Upstate has been selected to serve as a 2011-2012 Afterschool Ambassador. He is one of just 20 local leaders from 17 states chosen for the honor this year. Each Ambassador will continue directing or supporting a local afterschool program while also serving a one-year Afterschool Ambassador term organizing public events, communicating with policy makers, and building support for afterschool programs.

“Quality afterschool programs are invaluable to students, families and communities,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “These programs keep kids safe, help working families, and inspire students to learn. But in Washington, D.C. and all across the country, the afterschool programs that families rely on are being threatened by budget cuts, decreasing donations, and efforts to divert afterschool funds to other programs. We need to spread the word about the urgent need to make opportunities to attend afterschool programs available to all children who need them. Greg will bring great skill and energy to that work in his role as an Afterschool Ambassador. I look forward to working with him to build even stronger support for afterschool programs among parents, business and community leaders, lawmakers and others.”

“I am delighted to have this chance to help increase support for afterschool programs, which give students opportunities to explore their interests and give parents the security that comes with knowing that their children are safe and supervised, with engaging, educational activities after the school day ends,” said Tolbert. “Afterschool programs are critical to students’ success in school, to families trying to survive in this recession, and to America’s workforce in the future. We need to strengthen the afterschool programs we have and ensure that there is a program for every child who needs one.”

As President of Boys & Girls Clubs of the Upstate for the last 15 years, Tolbert has built a great team of youth development professionals and volunteers who serve over 1,200 students each afternoon in six Upstate school districts. The organization’s focus on positive outcomes and providing academic support has been rewarded by the United Way of the Piedmont, The Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers program of the U.S. Department of Education.

Each Ambassador will organize a major event for *Lights On Afterschool*, the Afterschool Alliance's 12<sup>th</sup> annual national rally for afterschool, to be held on October 21<sup>st</sup> this year. Spartanburg's event will be held on Morgan Square at 10:00 AM in partnership with the Spartanburg Youth Council. Last year, a million people participated in some 7,500 *Lights On Afterschool* events across the United States and at U.S. military bases worldwide. Afterschool programs are under intense pressure this year, with the Senate considering legislation that would divert some of the already limited afterschool funds to other programs.

The remaining 2011-2012 Afterschool Ambassadors are:

- **Alabama, Loxley:** Cherry Penn, Afterschool Childcare Program Supervisor, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC;
- **California, Santee:** Pamela Brasher, Director, Out-of-School Time Programs;
- **Tampa, Florida,** Ralph Smith, Executive Director, Computer Mentors;
- **Hawaii, Honolulu:** Paula Adams, Program Manager, Fun 5 Program;
- **Illinois, Orland Park:** Priscilla Steinmetz, Founder & Executive Director, The Bridge Teen Center;
- **Kentucky, Corbin:** Karen West, Special Projects Curriculum Supervisor, Redhound Enrichment and Corbin Independent Schools;
- **Michigan, Saginaw:** Christine Benecke, Program Director, Youth First;
- **Montana, Havre:** Tim Brurud, Club Director, Boys & Girls Club of the Hi-Line;
- **Montana, Libby:** Kaide Dodson, CCLC Afterschool Coordinator and Enrichment Coordinator, Libby High School;
- **Minnesota, Faribault:** Lisa Wetzel, Kids World School Age Child Care;
- **New Hampshire, Bristol:** Elizabeth Colby, Extended Learning/Afterschool Director, Newfound Area School District;
- **New York, New York:** Esther Grant-Walker, Afterschool Program Coordinator/Director of School Age Programs, Isaacs Center Afterschool Program;
- **New York, Jamaica:** Deepmalya Ghosh, Director of Youth Development Programs, Child Center of NY;
- **North Carolina, Durham:** Michelle Gonzales-Green, Executive Director, SeeSaw Studio;
- **Pennsylvania, Etners:** Thierry Malley, State Program Director, PA Area Council of Boys & Girls Clubs;
- **Pennsylvania, Nesquehoning:** Jeanne Miller, Director of Carbon and Schuylkill County Education Services, SHINE Program at Lehigh Carbon Community College;
- **Tennessee, Chattanooga:** James McKissic, Chief Operating Officer, Urban League Chattanooga;
- **Washington, Tacoma:** Noah Prince, Partnership Administrator, Tacoma 360; and
- **Wisconsin, Racine:** Katherine Dunkerson, Director of Extended Day Programs and Community Engagement, Racine Unified School District.

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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).*