



Afterschool Ambassador Program: Legacy of Leadership

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New York City's Braithwaite Selected as One of Just 15 'Afterschool Ambassadors' from Across Nation

Braithwaite Will Work in New York and Nationally to Make Afterschool Available to More Students

Washington, DC – The Afterschool Alliance today announced that Marcel Braithwaite, Director of Center Operations at the Police Athletic League (PAL), has been selected to serve as a 2015-2016 Afterschool Ambassador. He is one of just 15 leaders from across the country to be chosen for the honor this year. Each Afterschool Ambassador will continue directing or supporting a local afterschool program while also serving the one-year Afterschool Ambassador term, organizing public events, communicating with policy makers, and building support for afterschool programs. Braithwaite's Ambassadorship is sponsored by The Robert Bowne Foundation.

“We are so pleased to have Marcel serving as an Afterschool Ambassador this year,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “He will mobilize even more support for quality afterschool and summer learning programs among parents, business and community leaders, lawmakers, educators and others in New York. Quality afterschool programs keep students safe, inspire them to learn and help working families. They offer young people hands-on, team-based learning opportunities, help with homework, science and technology activities, opportunities for sports and fitness, access to healthy snacks and meals, and much more. I look forward to working with Marcel this year to bring us closer to the day when every child will have the chance to participate in an afterschool program.”

“I am excited to be part of the Afterschool Alliance's work to increase resources for afterschool programs, here and across the country,” said Braithwaite. “In my 11 years working with young people, I've seen firsthand how afterschool programs give students opportunities to explore their interests and discover their passions, while giving parents the peace of mind that comes with knowing that their children are safe and supervised, with engaging, educational activities, after the school day ends. I look forward to helping raise awareness about the growing need for out-of-school-time opportunities for all children and youth.”

The Police Athletic League works closely with the NYPD and the law enforcement community to support and inspire youth in New York City. PAL afterschool programs are vital stakeholders in their communities, with a track record of flexibility, professionalism and structure. The Police Athletic League operates 26 afterschool programs in all five boroughs of New York City. Afterschool participants are actively engaged in: enrichment and remediation programs to help

students meet New York's Common Core Standards; physical fitness and nutrition activities addressing childhood obesity; opportunities to enhance youth leadership and project-based learning.

Each Ambassador will organize a major event for *Lights On Afterschool*, the Afterschool Alliance's annual rally for afterschool, to be held on October 22 this year. Last year, 1 million people participated in some 8,000 *Lights On Afterschool* events across the United States and at U.S. military bases worldwide.

The 2015-2016 Afterschool Ambassadors are:

- **Alabama:** Dr. Michael Wilson, Principal, Glen Iris Elementary School in Birmingham;
- **Colorado:** Patrick Wilhelm, Site Coordinator, Scholars Unlimited in Denver;
- **Connecticut:** Mark Fopeano, Program Manager, Dwight Hall at Yale in New Haven;
- **Indiana:** Brigitte Gurden, Executive Director, Boys & Girls Club of Morgan County in Mooresville;
- **Louisiana:** Patricia Johnson, Project Director, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Monroe City Schools in Monroe;
- **Maryland:** Kat Stork, Deputy Director, Caroline County Recreation & Parks in Denton;
- **Minnesota:** Christian Kibler, Program Coordinator, Burnsville Youth Collaborative in Burnsville;
- **Mississippi:** Jannette Adams, Project Director, 21st Century Afterschool Academy, Columbus Municipal School District in Columbus;
- **Missouri:** Colleen Abbott, Director, Learning Enriched Afterschool Programs in Eldon;
- **New York:** Marcel Braithwaite, Director of Center Operations, The Police Athletic League in New York City;
- **Oklahoma:** Kim Templeman, Principal, Central Oak Elementary in Oklahoma City;
- **Tennessee:** Kelly Drummond, Vice President of Human Resources and Administration at Boys & Girls Clubs of the Tennessee Valley in Knoxville;
- **Virginia:** Allyson Graul, Director of Youth Civic Engagement, Alternatives, Inc. in Fort Monroe;
- **Washington:** Beth Wyant, Program Coordinator, Northwest Community Action Center, a division of Yakima Valley FarmWorkers Clinic in Toppenish; and
- **West Virginia:** Kasey Carter, Executive Director, Communities In Schools of Greenbrier County in Lewisburg.

A large and growing body of evidence demonstrates improvements in attendance, behavior, academic achievement and more among children in afterschool programs. Researchers have also found that afterschool programs encourage increased parental involvement – an important building block for student success.

The 2014 "[America After 3PM](#)" household survey of more than 30,000 families, commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance, found that participation in afterschool programs increased to 10.2 million students nationwide, up from 6.5 million in 2004. But the unmet demand for afterschool programs has increased as well. Today, for every child in an afterschool program, there are two

more whose parents say they would participate, if a program were available. One in five students in the United States today is unsupervised after the school day ends.

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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.

New York City's Police Athletic League is the first and finest civilian-run PAL in the country. Founded in 1914, PAL has served the city's young people for over 100 years. PAL provides recreational, educational, cultural and social activities to 35,000 boys and girls annually. It is also the city's largest, independent, nonprofit youth organization. For more information, please visit www.palnyc.org.