



Afterschool Ambassador Program: Legacy of Leadership

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CONTACT: [Luci Manning](#)
202/371-1999

Afterschool Alliance Names 15 New Afterschool Ambassadors

Ambassadors Will Work in Their Local Communities and Nationally to Make Afterschool Programs Available to More Students

Washington, DC – The Afterschool Alliance today announced that 15 leaders from around the nation have been selected to serve as Afterschool Ambassadors for 2015-2016. Each Afterschool 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.

“Our Afterschool Ambassadors will mobilize even more support for quality afterschool and summer learning programs among parents, business and community leaders, lawmakers, educators and others in their communities and statewide,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “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 each of our Ambassadors this year to bring us closer to the day when every child will have the chance to participate in an afterschool program.”

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 Program in Eldon;
- **New York:** Marcel Braithwaite, Director of Center Operations, The Police Athletic League in New York City. NOTE: Braithwaite’s Ambassadorship is sponsored by The Robert Bowne Foundation;
- **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 has 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.