



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

### **News Release**

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### **Charleston's Herterich Selected as One of Just 15 Afterschool Ambassadors in United States This Year**

*Lauren Herterich Will Work Locally and Across the Country to Make Quality Afterschool and Summer Learning Programs Available to More Students and Families*

Washington, DC – The Afterschool Alliance today announced that it has selected Lauren Herterich, Executive Director at the Kids On Point, to serve as a 2025 Afterschool Ambassador – one of only 15 leaders in the country chosen for the honor this year. Afterschool Ambassadors continue working with local afterschool programs while serving a one-year Afterschool Ambassador term, during which they engage with community leaders and policy makers to organize events and in other ways grow support for the afterschool and summer learning programs that students and families rely on.

"We are absolutely delighted that Lauren Herterich will serve as a 2025 Afterschool Ambassador for the Afterschool Alliance," said Jodi Grant, Afterschool Alliance executive director. "This is going to be a pivotal year when we must continue the progress in making afterschool and summer learning programs available to more students, even as federal education spending is under scrutiny. We intend to continue spreading the word that afterschool programs are a wise, essential investment because they keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and give parents peace of mind that their children are safe and supervised after the school day ends. Herterich is exactly the kind of champion we need."

"I'm thrilled to work with the Afterschool Alliance this year to raise awareness and support for afterschool and summer learning programs," said Herterich. "I've seen firsthand how these programs can change lives—helping students succeed academically, stay engaged, and giving families the support they need, especially during challenging times. Right now, with so many families facing high costs and students struggling to stay on track, afterschool programs are more important than ever. They provide a safe space, caring mentors, and the tools kids need to catch up and thrive. I'm honored to be part of this movement and to be named a 2025 Afterschool Ambassador."

Kids On Point serves over 400 children annually at two sites located in Downtown Charleston and North Charleston. With a mission to empower youth to reach their full potential, Kids On Point creates a safe and inspiring environment where children can learn, grow, and thrive. Through a unique blend of academic support, mentorship, and enrichment programs, students are given the tools they need to excel both in and out of the classroom. At Kids On Point, every child is encouraged to dream big and aim high. Through personalized homework help, college and career readiness activities, and dynamic programs like robotics, arts education, and a variety of sports, students discover their passions and develop the skills they need for future success.

Supported by a network of more than 80 dedicated mentors, children build meaningful relationships and learn valuable life skills, fostering confidence, resilience, and leadership. The program's impact is amplified through strategic community partnerships with local schools, universities, nonprofits, and businesses. These collaborations enable it to provide holistic support that nurtures academic growth, social-emotional development, and overall well-being. Kids On Point is more than just an afterschool and summer program—it's a community where children are empowered to break down barriers, overcome challenges, and realize their full potential.

The 2025 Afterschool Ambassadors are:

- **Alabama, Gadsden:** Janie Browning, Gadsden City Schools
- **Alaska, Palmer:** Tyler Healy, Youth 360
- **Louisiana, Shreveport:** Victoria Morris, Volunteers of America LightHouse Program
- **Michigan, Detroit:** Curtis Blackwell, Sound Mind Sound Body Foundation
- **Minnesota, Minneapolis:** Clayton "Clyde" Quarles, Minneapolis Youth Congress
- **Nebraska, Omaha:** Nicole Everingham, Collective for Youth
- **New Hampshire, Stratham:** Melissa Goerbig, Big Brothers Big Sisters of New Hampshire
- **Nevada, Las Vegas:** Linda Johnson-McClinton, Enriching Explorations in Engineering
- **New York, Brooklyn:** Ghiles Jackson, After-School All-Stars
- **New York, Buffalo:** Talisa King, YWCA Western New York
- **South Carolina, Charleston:** Lauren Herterich, Kids on Point
- **South Carolina, Irmo:** Julius Scott, School District Five of Lexington & Richland Counties
- **South Dakota, Rapid City:** Malachi Nelson, 21st Century CFS South Middle Club Hub
- **Virginia, Richmond:** Jeanine Turner, Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Richmond
- **Wisconsin, Rhinelander:** Abbie Cline, YMCA of the Northwoods

A [public opinion survey](#) released in February found that 85% of voters say they want their newly elected leaders to provide more funds for afterschool programs, including 92% of Democrats, 81% of Independents, 77% of Republicans, and 77% of people who voted for President Trump. The unmet need is great. Some 24.7 million U.S. children not in an afterschool program would be enrolled, if a program were available to them, according to [a survey of nearly 1,500 parents](#) commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance in 2022. That is the highest number ever recorded. Unmet demand for afterschool programs is significantly higher among Latino and Black children (at 60% and 54% respectively) than among children overall (49%). Cost is the top barrier to enroll, cited by 57% of parents as a reason for not enrolling their child. Ninety percent of parents rate the quality of the program their child attends as excellent (51%) or very good (39%).

A large and powerful body of evidence demonstrates improvements in grades, school attendance, behavior and more among children who participate in afterschool programs. Researchers have also found that students in afterschool programs are more engaged in school and excited about learning, and develop critical work and life skills such as problem solving, teamwork, and communications.

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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).

*Kids on Point is an immersive, year-round program that takes place after school, on the weekends, and in the summer. Its holistic model prepares children to succeed in school and life. The program harnesses academic support, athletics, mentoring and service learning as vehicles to build skills essential to future academic and professional success: communication, life skill development, and initiative. More information is available at <https://kidsonpoint.org/>.*