



Afterschool Ambassador Program: Legacy of Leadership

News Release

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Stratham's Goerbig Selected as One of Just 15 Afterschool Ambassadors in United States This Year

Melissa Goerbig 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 Melissa Goerbig, Chief Programs Officer of Big Brothers Big Sisters of New Hampshire, 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 Melissa Goerbig 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. Goerbig is exactly the kind of champion we need.”

“I am excited to have the chance to work with the Afterschool Alliance to increase awareness and support for afterschool and summer learning programs this year,” said Goerbig. “I’ve seen firsthand the many ways these programs help students succeed and help families overcome challenges. That’s especially important now, with families struggling with high costs and many students disengaged. Many of our students have ground to make up and afterschool programs are uniquely positioned to help them do that. I’m very proud to be part of the afterschool movement and to be a 2025 Afterschool Ambassador.”

Big Brothers Big Sisters of New Hampshire (BBBSNH) impacts youth through mentoring programs that serve children and youth in their communities, schools, and the workplace across New Hampshire. By building a strong, one-to-one, and professionally supported mentoring relationship to serve as a foundation for transformative impact and life skills learning, BBBSNH’s innovative approaches to expanding mentoring opportunities help close the achievement and opportunity gaps for too many underserved children and youth. Its outcomes, collected through ongoing surveys of its mentees,

illustrate the impact mentors have on the children it serves. BBBSNH served 371 youth in mentoring relationships in 2024.

Each Ambassador will organize a major event for *Lights On Afterschool*, the Afterschool Alliance's annual rally for afterschool. Most of the thousands of local *Lights On Afterschool* events will be on or around Thursday, October 23, 2025.

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.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of New Hampshire (BBBSNH) is the only evidence-based, one-to-one mentoring program in New Hampshire. Its mission is to create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth, and its vision is that all youth achieve their full potential. What sets BBBSNH apart is that it solely focuses on one-to-one mentoring – that is its only mission, not a side program as part of a larger mission. As a result, it excels at committing resources to both making matches designed to last, and to providing intensive staff support to each one-to-one mentoring relationship through regular contact with parents, children and volunteer mentors for the duration of the match. All check-ins include safety questions as child safety is its number one priority. Its professional staff work with the child, their family and mentor to provide crisis management, coaching and mentoring, or provide referrals to other organizations for additional services, when needed.