



**NEWS RELEASE**  
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## **Increase Afterschool Funding, Parents, Students, Afterschool and Community Leaders Urge Congress**

### *Nation's Mayors Honored at Event Promoting Afterschool for All*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – More than 500 parents, children, educators and advocates from around the country visited Capitol Hill on Wednesday to encourage Members of Congress to increase funding for afterschool programs. Organized by the Afterschool Alliance, the fifth annual “Afterschool for All Challenge” kicked off with a *Breakfast of Champions* at which Providence Mayor David N. Cicilline, Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman, and former Florida Secretary of State and Orlando Mayor Glenda E. Hood spoke on behalf of a group of mayors being honored for working to make afterschool programs available to all families in their cities. The *Breakfast* was co-hosted by the National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education, and Families.

“Every day, 14.3 million children leave school without a safe place to go,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “In all, more than 15 million kids would participate in afterschool programs, if only they were available. But federal funding shortfalls have squelched the growth of afterschool. We’re gathered here in Washington to remind lawmakers that America’s cities – as well as its suburbs and rural areas – need afterschool programs, and are relying on Congress to help support them. We are delighted to be joined by mayors who have worked to expand afterschool opportunities for children in their cities.”

The bi-partisan *No Child Left Behind Act* authorized \$2.5 billion for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) afterschool initiative in FY 2007, but funding has fallen far behind authorized levels. If the initiative was funded at *No Child Left Behind* levels, 1.5 million more children would have access to quality afterschool programs.

After the *Breakfast of Champions*, students, parents and afterschool leaders fanned out across Capitol Hill for more than 200 meetings with Members of Congress and staff. In the meetings, they discussed the benefits offered by afterschool programs and urged Congress to fully fund 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, the chief federal funding stream for afterschool.

At a lunchtime reception co-sponsored by T-Mobile USA, Senators Joseph Biden (D-DE), Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Michael Enzi (R-WY), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and Craig Thomas (R-WY) joined the call to increase afterschool funding. The event featured remarks by Thomas Sugrue, Vice President, Government Affairs, T-Mobile.

The “Afterschool for All Challenge” was organized by the Afterschool Alliance and was held in conjunction with the National League of Cities’ City Afterschool Summit.

Mayors honored at the *Breakfast of Champions* included: Rick Baker of St. Petersburg, Florida; Walter James of Bladensburg, Maryland; William Mattiace of Las Cruces, New Mexico; Garret Nancolas of Caldwell, Idaho; John Purcell of Lawton, Oklahoma; and Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick of Detroit, who was represented by Deputy Mayor Anthony Adams.

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization supported by a group of public, private, and nonprofit entities dedicated to ensuring that all children and youth have access to afterschool programs. More information is available at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).

The National League of Cities (NLC) is the nation’s oldest and largest organization devoted to strengthening and promoting cities as centers of opportunity, leadership and governance. NLC is a resource and advocate for 19,000 U.S. cities, towns and villages, which collectively serve 225 million people. To learn more, visit [www.nlc.org](http://www.nlc.org).

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