



Afterschool Ambassador Program: Legacy of Leadership

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Afterschool Alliance Names 19 Afterschool Leaders to 2009-2010 Class of ‘Afterschool Ambassadors’

Afterschool Providers and Advocates from 15 States Will Work to Expand Afterschool

Washington, DC – The Afterschool Alliance today announced the selection of 19 afterschool providers and advocates from around the nation to serve as 2009-2010 Afterschool Ambassadors. The 19 local leaders hail from 15 states. Each 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.

“Quality afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and help working families,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “Americans strongly support afterschool programs but across the nation, we’re seeing programs cut back or closed in the face of recession-driven budget cuts. Our new Ambassadors bring energy and talent to their work as Afterschool Ambassadors, and will spread the word about the urgent need to make afterschool programs available to all families that need them. We are proud to have them on our team.”

This year’s class of Afterschool Ambassadors is the tenth group selected for the honor. Past Ambassadors include a variety of state and local afterschool leaders – more than 150 in all.

Each Ambassador will organize a major event for *Lights On Afterschool*, the Afterschool Alliance’s tenth annual nationwide series of rallies for afterschool, on October 22 this year. Last year, a million people rallied at 7,500 *Lights On Afterschool* events around the country and at military bases worldwide. Despite overwhelming public support, and an agreement embodied in federal legislation, federal support for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative – the principal federal funding stream for afterschool programs – has lagged far behind the need.

Ambassadors also are working to share the results of the Afterschool Alliance’s *America After 3PM* study, a nationwide survey of 30,000 households gauging their views on afterschool and gathering data on afterschool’s impact. The survey was sponsored by the JCPenney Afterschool Fund.

The new class of Afterschool Ambassadors include one returning Ambassador (Flo Trujillo of New Mexico) and 18 new Ambassadors. They are:

- **Vestavia Hills, Alabama:** Ronda Charping, Vestavia Hills City Schools Extended Day;
- **Ridgecrest, California:** Sandra Goldstein, Southern Sierra Boys & Girls Club;
- **Bakersfield, California:** Garrett Shipes, Greenfield Success After School Program, Greenfield Union School District;
- **New Haven, Connecticut:** Dr. Charles Warner, Gateway Center, New Haven Public Schools;
- **Fort Shafter, Hawaii:** Peter Tedtaotao, Ft. Shafter Youth Center SAS Program;
- **Wichita, Kansas:** Patricia Houston, Community Education, City of Wichita;
- **Paris, Kentucky:** Leslie Spears, Promise Program, Paris Independent Schools;
- **Catlettsburg, Kentucky:** Teresa Spurlock, Catlettsburg Elementary WOW Afterschool Program, Boyd County Public Schools;
- **Boston, Massachusetts:** Daniel Rosen, Citizen Schools;
- **College Park, Maryland:** Kendra Wells, 4-H Youth Development Extension, University of Maryland;
- **Detroit, Michigan:** Gazell Watkins-Mitchell, Before and After School Programs, Communities In Schools of Detroit;
- **Farmington, New Mexico:** Florencia (Flo) Trujillo, Farmington Public Library (returning Ambassador);
- **Haddonfield, New Jersey:** Denise Sellers, Haddonfield Child Care;
- **Las Vegas, Nevada:** Judy Schroeder, Safekey Program, City of Las Vegas, Department of Leisure Services;
- **New York, New York:** Liz Hopfan, Free Arts NYC;
- **Bronx, New York:** Danny Peralta, THE POINT CDC;
- **Dallas, Texas:** Tanya McDonald, Dallas AfterSchool Network;
- **Irving, Texas:** Gail Vessels, YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas; and
- **West Valley City, Utah:** Margaret Peterson, Community Education Partnership of West Valley City, Inc.

The Robert Bowne Foundation has sponsored the Ambassadorships of Liz Hopfan and Danny Peralta of New York, and Bright House Networks has sponsored the Ambassadorships of Gazell Watkins-Mitchell of Michigan and Garrett Shipes of California.

More information on *Lights On Afterschool* events, the new *America After 3 PM* study, and the new Afterschool Ambassadors is available at www.AfterschoolAlliance.org.

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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.