



NEWS RELEASE
November 22, 2011

CONTACT: [Gretchen Wright](#)
202/371-1999

Sarasota, Florida Volunteer Working to Strengthen Afterschool Programs in Carson City, Nevada

Richard Birmingham Completes Service Along With Eight Other Afterschool Alliance VISTA Volunteers Nationally to Support Afterschool Sustainability and Expand Nutritional Resources

Afterschool programs help working families, keep kids safe and inspire learning. In communities like Carson City, Nevada, they are considered vital resources. But the economic downturn has put a squeeze on programs, causing many to scale back their offerings or even close their doors. Richard Birmingham, an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer, worked with the Afterschool Alliance to change that.

Along with eight other VISTA volunteers selected from across the country, Birmingham worked to develop a local afterschool sustainability plan. His work included identifying local resources and needs and collaborating with local and national leaders to strengthen afterschool programs in Carson City. He worked closely with the Nevada Afterschool Network. He began his service in November of last year, and completes his service this month. Other Afterschool Alliance VISTA volunteers are working to increase participation in free afterschool and summer meals programs.

“Today, children and parents depend on high quality afterschool programs to provide engaging hands-on learning opportunities, nutritious and healthy snacks and meals, and opportunities to explore the sciences, arts, physical fitness and more. But many of these same programs are in dire financial straits. That’s why the Afterschool Alliance was delighted to have the support of Richard Birmingham in Carson City, Nevada. We are grateful for the contributions he made in helping keep the doors open at afterschool programs, so that more children and families can benefit from all they have to offer,” said Jodi Grant, Executive Director of the Afterschool Alliance.

Birmingham worked to ensure that 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) continue to provide high quality afterschool programs for low-income children. The 21st CCLC program provides funding for school/community partnerships at schools that serve primarily low-income students. To help maintain this funding in Nevada, Birmingham worked to increase community engagement and program sustainability through engaging community volunteers, creating sustainability plans to ensure long-term success of programs, gathering data and research to show the positive impact of these programs, and examining other programs’ sustainability models.

The need for afterschool is great. Research conducted by the Afterschool Alliance has shown that only 16 percent of Nevada's K-12 students are in afterschool programs, while 28 percent care for themselves after the school day ends. Nationally more than 15 million children are unsupervised after the school day ends.

#

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.