



NEWS RELEASE
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Michigan City Mayor Chuck Oberlie Honored as an Afterschool Champion in Nation's Capital

*Parents, Educators, Students, Afterschool Leaders
Urge Congress to Increase Afterschool Funding*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Afterschool Alliance today honored Michigan City Mayor Chuck Oberlie for his support for afterschool programs at the “Breakfast of Champions,” a gala event in Washington, D.C. that featured performances by lead guitarist Mark Bryan of Hootie and the Blowfish and afterschool youth. As Mayor, he has helped to fund, improve and expand afterschool programs for the children and youth of Michigan City. Oberlie was one of just ten individuals from around the country honored at the “Breakfast” for supporting and working on behalf of the afterschool programs. The Indiana Afterschool Network nominated him for the honor.

Oberlie was instrumental in the development of the LaPorte County Coalition of Youth Service Agencies in 2003, which now includes 20 agencies. The Coalition provides activities and resources for local youth, with a focus on the summer hours. Under Mayor Oberlie’s leadership, the Michigan City City Council has made a significant investment in afterschool and summer programs.

The “Breakfast of Champions” is part of the ninth annual *Afterschool for All Challenge*, sponsored by the Afterschool Alliance, which brings together hundreds of parents, educators, children, program directors and advocates from around the country for a series of events and meetings with Members of Congress. It is being held this year in conjunction with Be the Change, the National AfterSchool Association’s annual convention. At these events, afterschool advocates are urging Congress to safeguard federal funding for these programs and reject Administration proposals to cut funding by \$13 million in Fiscal Year 2011 and to allow non-afterschool programs to compete for federal afterschool dollars.

“This year, federal support for afterschool programs is in serious peril,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “The Obama Administration is proposing making non-afterschool programs eligible for the already limited federal dollars available through the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) initiative, which is the principal federal funding stream for afterschool. It is more important than ever that advocates speak up and speak out to ensure that every child who needs afterschool has access to the programs that keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families.”

Other state champions honored at the *Afterschool for All Challenge* are: William Byars, State Director of the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice; David Davison, President and CEO of the American Savings Foundation in New Britain, Connecticut; Jerry Ellis, Mayor of Farmington Hills, Michigan; Wendell Maddox, President and CEO of United Way of Wyandotte County, Kansas; Thierry Malley, State Director of the Pennsylvania Area Council of Boys & Girls Clubs; Rhode Island State Representative Edwin Pacheco; Renee L. Rider, Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Child Care Services, New York State Office of Children and Family Services; Carla Sanger, President and CEO of LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program, California; and Ronnie Steine, Councilmember-at-Large, Metro Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee.

The 2010 "Breakfast of Champions" is sponsored by: United States Tennis Association, Bright House Networks, Quaker Chewy, Torani, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Open Society Institute, Peavey Electronics, NAMM, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, D.C. Children & Youth Investment Trust Corporation and Cable in the Classroom.

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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.