



NEWS RELEASE  
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## **First-Ever Latino Leadership Summit on Afterschool Yields Community-Wide Commitment to Improve Afterschool Opportunities**

### ***Latino Leaders Share Views on Afterschool's Impact on Community, Look to Future***

Washington, DC -- The first-ever Latino Leadership Summit on Afterschool, held this Spring under the auspices of the Afterschool Alliance and the Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans, produced a wide-ranging discussion of afterschool's role in addressing unique challenges facing the Latino community, and a commitment from leaders to continue to work for increased afterschool opportunities and stronger afterschool programs.

Participating organizations in the historic Summit, held in Washington, D.C., included representatives of CentroNia (Washington, D.C.), HENAAC (California), Latino Family Services (Detroit), LULAC National Educational Service Centers, Inc., National Community for Latino Leadership, Inc., National Council of La Raza, National Puerto Rican Coalition, Inc., and White House Initiative on Education Excellence for Hispanic Americans. In addition, the Cuban American National Council and Chicanos Por La Causa (Tucson, Arizona) joined the meeting by satellite, courtesy of the Latino Technology Network. Also joining by satellite for part of the event were afterschool students from around the country.

"We made important progress at the Summit," said Afterschool Alliance Interim Executive Director Jen Rinehart. "Our recent research tells us that, for every Latino child in an afterschool program, there are three more whose parents would enroll them if programs were available. Demand for afterschool programs is high in Latino families, so we have to ensure that programs are available to Latino students and that parents know how to find them. We will work together to accomplish this goal."

"Afterschool programs make an enormous difference in the lives of Latino families," said Gilbert Moreno, President of the Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans. "The afterschool hours are critical for kids, and what they do with that time, day in and day out through their K-12 years, can set them on a path to success, or close doors to future opportunities. We need afterschool programs to help keep kids engaged in learning, and to help keep them away from negative choices."

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The summit included presentations and discussions on a variety of issues related to Latinos and afterschool. Presenters included Alfred Ramirez, President of the National Community for Latino Leadership, Inc., who opened the Summit with welcoming remarks and facilitated discussions throughout.

Gilbert Moreno from the Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans and Maria Matos of the Latin American Community Center joined in a baseline-setting presentation on the status of afterschool in the community.

Ray Mellado of HENAAC and Dennis Stecchi of the Los Angeles Unified School District discussed Viva Technology, an afterschool program in Los Angeles designed to engage inner-city and rural K-12 students, teachers and parents in the applications of technology.

Also, via satellite, the group “visited” with three different afterschool programs: a Miami, Florida program offered by the Cuban National Council; the George I. Sanchez School in Houston, Texas; and Chicanos por la Causa in Tucson, Arizona.

Among the conversation topics: tailoring afterschool programs to the needs and wishes of the Latino community; educating parents about program offerings; the need to engage entire families, not just children; the problem of funding shortfalls; the need for robust data-collection about the programs’ impact; professional training and development; transportation to and from afterschool sites; and more.

Participants agreed to continue the collaboration begun at the Summit, starting with an online communications network, and building toward specific collaborations in the future.

The Summit was made possible by a grant from the William T. Grant Foundation.

The Afterschool Alliance’s groundbreaking report, *America After 3PM*, a household survey on afterschool issues, found that just 15 percent of Latino children are in afterschool programs and 44 percent of parents of Latino children *not* in afterschool programs say they would enroll their children if quality afterschool programs were available. By contrast, 30 percent of *all* parents of children not in afterschool said they would enroll children if a program were available.

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization supported by a group of public, private, and nonprofit entities working to ensure that all children and youth have access to afterschool programs by the year 2010. More information is available at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).

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