



NEWS RELEASE
April 8, 2013

CONTACT: Gretchen Wright
202/371-1999

‘Afterschool in Action’ Compendium Highlights Innovative Programs, Strategies

Publication Spotlights Breakthrough Approaches Pioneered by MetLife Foundation Afterschool Innovator Award Winners

Washington, DC —Santa Ana, California’s The Wooden Floor afterschool program combines instruction from professional dancers with individualized academic and social services, and a 10-year mentoring commitment to produce a 100 percent graduation rate among its predominantly minority and underprivileged students. In rural Parma, Idaho, with the support of a 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant and a School Improvement Grant, the Parma Learning Center offers middle school, at-risk students afterschool classes in robotics, broadcasting, gardening and more, as well as homework assistance, and has produced significant gains in children’s scores on state proficiency tests. For their innovations and success, those two programs, together with programs in Milwaukee, WI; Washington, DC; and Lansing, MI; were 2012 recipients of the MetLife Foundation Afterschool Innovator Award.

The programs’ stories are told in detail in a newly released compendium from the Afterschool Alliance. In addition to case studies of The Wooden Floor and Parma programs, the publication looks closely at the work of the Latino Arts Strings & Mariachi Juvenil Program in Milwaukee; the Kid Power, Inc., VeggieTime Project in Washington, DC; and Green Energy Technologies in the City in Lansing.

In addition to the profiles, the compendium includes four issue briefs from the Afterschool Alliance, focused on different approaches to afterschool program success:

- Arts Enrichment in Afterschool;
- Afterschool: A Key to Successful Parent Engagement;
- Afterschool: An Ally in Promoting Middle School Improvement; and
- Digital Media & Learning in Afterschool.

The publication was released today at the national convention of the National AfterSchool Association, which is meeting in Indianapolis.

“Across the nation, we’re seeing afterschool programs develop innovative ways to meet the localized needs of their communities,” said Jodi Grant, Executive Director of the Afterschool Alliance. “Afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire students to learn and help working families, and the programs we highlight here are shining examples. The purpose of our compendium is to draw out the lessons of these and other successful afterschool programs, both to help afterschool leaders improve their work and to help policymakers fully appreciate the reach of afterschool in our communities.”

Since 2008, the Afterschool Alliance and MetLife Foundation have collaborated to highlight the work of quality afterschool programs that support children, families and communities across the nation. The goal is to ensure all children have access to quality afterschool programs, and the MetLife Foundation Afterschool Innovator Awards are helping raise awareness of the many ways access to such programs is making a positive difference in the lives of young people. In recent years, the awards have focused on afterschool programs serving middle school youth — children at a critical point in their lives when they can greatly benefit from the guidance, support and resources that quality afterschool programs offer.

“Afterschool programs for middle school youth are vital because they reach young people at a pivotal stage of their development, taking advantage of their natural curiosity and interest in learning new things,” said Dennis White, president and CEO of MetLife Foundation. “We are proud to join the Afterschool Alliance in recognizing all of the MetLife Foundation Afterschool Innovator Award recipients, and pleased that this new publication will share their work with a nationwide audience.”

###

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.

MetLife Foundation was established in 1976 to continue MetLife’s longstanding tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. The Foundation’s commitment to building a secure future for individuals and communities worldwide is reflected in its dedication to empowering older adults, preparing young people and building livable communities. Since it was established, MetLife Foundation has provided more than \$570 million in grants to nonprofit organizations addressing issues that have a positive impact in their communities. For more information visit www.metlife.org.