



Afterschool Ambassador Program: Legacy of Leadership

A Project of the Afterschool Alliance and the JCPenney Afterschool Fund

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Afterschool Alliance Names 23 ‘Afterschool Ambassadors’ from 21 States

Local Leaders Promote Afterschool During 2004-05 School Year

Washington, DC – The Afterschool Alliance has selected 23 local leaders around the nation to serve as Afterschool Ambassadors for the 2004-2005 school year. Each Ambassador runs, directs or provides support to a local afterschool program, and will serve a one-year term organizing public events, communicating with policy makers, and building support for afterschool programs. The JCPenney Afterschool Fund sponsors the ambassadorships.

“Afterschool programs help kids succeed in school and in life,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Judy Y. Samelson. “At the local and state levels, Afterschool Ambassadors lead the effort to make afterschool programs available to all children who need them. They know first-hand that afterschool programs keep kids safe, help working parents, and inspire academic achievement. And they carry the message of afterschool’s great value to lawmakers and the public. We are proud to have these talented men and women join our team.”

A groundbreaking study released in May concluded that 14.3 million latchkey children have no adult supervision in the afternoons. *America After 3 PM: A Household Survey on Afterschool in America* was conducted for the Afterschool Alliance with funding from the JCPenney Afterschool Fund. It found that the parents of 15.3 million children say they would send their child to an afterschool program if one were available in their community.

“Afterschool Ambassadors do a terrific job building support for quality afterschool programs in their communities and from lawmakers,” said JCPenney Afterschool Fund Executive Vice President Ed Solczak. “We’ve seen the need for these programs across the country and the way children blossom from their involvement. It’s our pleasure to continue to fund the ambassadorships for the 2004/2005 school year.”

Each Ambassador will plan a major event for *Lights On Afterschool*, the Afterschool Alliance’s October 14 nationwide rally for afterschool. On that day, more than 5,000 programs across the country will rally support for afterschool.

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Six of the 2003-2004 Ambassadors were chosen to continue as Ambassadors in the new school year: Julie Jimenez, Maricopa, **Arizona**; Debra Ballinger, St. Petersburg, **Florida**; Matthew Tullis, Marshalltown, **Iowa**; Kima Reed, New York, **New York**; Claire Tate, Charlotte, **North Carolina**; and Sue Matkin, Fort Worth, **Texas**.

New 2004-2005 Afterschool Ambassadors are:

- Bonnie Hardy, Anchorage, **Alaska**;
- CynDee Zandes, Bakersfield, **California**;
- John Poch, San Jose, **California**;
- Martha Garcia-Gardinali, Miami, **Florida**;
- Debra Mikulka, Chanute, **Kansas**;
- Pamela L. Stearns, Edmonton, **Kentucky**;
- Jenny Wright, Minneapolis, **Minnesota**;
- Manola C. Erby, Raymond, **Mississippi**;
- Rose Woodford, Superior, **Montana**;
- Keith Pressey, Orange, **New Jersey**;
- Shaun Frecska, Dayton, **Ohio**;
- Erin Wirtz, Beaverton, **Oregon**;
- Alana S. Kulesa, Pittsburgh, **Pennsylvania**;
- Christine Gingerella, Central Falls, **Rhode Island**;
- Cynthia M. Bennett, Columbia, **South Carolina**;
- Illia Moore, Nashville, **Tennessee**; and
- Karen Walz-Fuentes, Fairfax, **Virginia**.

Afterschool programs offer young people safe, enriching, fun and engaging places to spend their afternoons. Youth in afterschool programs have been shown to perform better in school and have greater expectations for the future, while children who are unsupervised in the afternoons are at greater risk of becoming involved with crime, substance abuse and teenage pregnancy.

About the Afterschool Alliance

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 2010. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org

About the JCPenney Afterschool Fund

JCPenney Afterschool is committed to helping provide children with high-quality, affordable after-school programs to help them reach the “power of their potential.” The JCPenney Afterschool Fund is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization. JCPenney Afterschool has contributed more than \$34 million during the past five years to five of America’s leading after-school advocates. JCPenney Afterschool’s support helps provide safe, fun and educational after-school programs and raise awareness of the need for more such programs across the country.

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