



## **Afterschool Ambassador Program: Legacy of Leadership**

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CONTACT: [Luci Manning](#)  
202/371-1999

### **Afterschool Alliance Names 20 Afterschool Leaders to 2011-2012 Class of ‘Afterschool Ambassadors’**

#### *Afterschool Providers and Advocates from 17 States Will Work to Expand Afterschool*

Washington, DC – The Afterschool Alliance today announced the selection of 20 afterschool providers and advocates from around the nation to serve as 2011-2012 Afterschool Ambassadors. The 20 local leaders hail from 17 states. Each Ambassador will continue directing or supporting a local afterschool program while also serving a one-year Afterschool Ambassador term organizing public events, communicating with policy makers, and building support for afterschool programs.

“Quality afterschool programs are invaluable to students, families and communities,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “These programs keep kids safe, help working families and inspire students to learn. But in Washington, D.C. and all across the country, the afterschool programs that families rely on are being threatened by budget cuts and efforts to divert afterschool funds to other programs. We need to spread the word about the urgent need to make opportunities to attend afterschool programs available to all children who need them. Each of these 20 Afterschool Ambassadors brings great skill, energy and talent to that work. I look forward to working with each of them to build even stronger support for afterschool programs among parents, business and community leaders, lawmakers and others. We are proud to have them on our team.”

This year’s class of Afterschool Ambassadors is the 12<sup>th</sup> group selected for the honor. Past Ambassadors include a variety of state and local afterschool leaders – more than 150 in all who are still active in the field.

Each Ambassador will organize a major event for *Lights On Afterschool*, the Afterschool Alliance’s 12<sup>th</sup> annual national rally for afterschool, to be held on October 20 this year. Last year, a million people participated in some 7,500 *Lights On Afterschool* events across the United States and at U.S. military bases worldwide. Afterschool programs are under intense pressure this year, with policymakers considering measures that would divert some of the already limited afterschool funds to other programs.

The 2011-2012 Afterschool Ambassadors are:

- **Alabama, Loxley:** Cherry Penn, Afterschool Childcare Program Supervisor, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC;
- **California, Santee:** Pamela Brasher, Director, Out-of-School Time Programs;
- **Tampa, Florida,** Ralph Smith, Executive Director, Computer Mentors;
- **Hawaii, Honolulu:** Paula Adams, Program Manager, Fun 5 Program;
- **Illinois, Orland Park:** Priscilla Steinmetz, Founder & Executive Director, The Bridge Teen Center;
- **Kentucky, Corbin:** Karen West, Special Projects Curriculum Supervisor, Redhound Enrichment and Corbin Independent Schools;
- **Michigan, Saginaw:** Christine Benecke, Program Director, Youth First;
- **Montana, Havre:** Tim Brurud, Club Director, Boys & Girls Club of the Hi-Line;
- **Montana, Libby:** Kaide Dodson, CCLC Afterschool Coordinator and Enrichment Coordinator, Libby High School;
- **Minnesota, Faribault:** Lisa Wetzell, Kids World School Age Child Care;
- **New Hampshire, Bristol:** Elizabeth Colby, Extended Learning/Afterschool Director, Newfound Area School District;
- **New York, New York:** Esther Grant-Walker, Afterschool Program Coordinator/Director of School Age Programs, Isaacs Center Afterschool Program;
- **New York, Jamaica:** Deepmalya Ghosh, Director of Youth Development Programs, Child Center of NY;
- **North Carolina, Durham:** Michelle Gonzales-Green, Executive Director, SeeSaw Studio;
- **Pennsylvania, Etners:** Thierry Malley, State Program Director, PA Area Council of Boys & Girls Clubs;
- **Pennsylvania, Nesquehoning:** Jeanne Miller, Director of Carbon and Schuylkill County Education Services, SHINE Program at Lehigh Carbon Community College;
- **South Carolina, Spartanburg:** Greg Tolbert, President, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Upstate;
- **Tennessee, Chattanooga:** James McKissic, Chief Operating Officer, Urban League Chattanooga;
- **Washington, Tacoma:** Noah Prince, Partnership Administrator, Tacoma 360; and
- **Wisconsin, Racine:** Katherine Dunkerson, Director of Extended Day Programs and Community Engagement, Racine Unified School District.

The Robert Bowne Foundation is sponsoring the Ambassadorships of Deepmalya Ghosh and Esther Grant-Walker of New York; and Bright House Networks is sponsoring the Ambassadorship of Ralph Smith of Florida.

More information on *Lights On Afterschool* events and the new Afterschool Ambassadors is available at [www.AfterschoolAlliance.org](http://www.AfterschoolAlliance.org).

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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](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*