



Afterschool Ambassador Program: Legacy of Leadership

News Release

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Sean Prospect of Miami Named One of 16 Afterschool Ambassadors in United States This Year

Mr. Prospect Will Work to Make Quality Afterschool and Summer Learning Programs Available to More Students and Families, Locally and Nationwide

Washington, DC – The Afterschool Alliance has selected Sean Prospect, Executive Director at South Florida After-School All-Stars and the FIU After-School All-Stars Program, to serve as a 2026 Afterschool Ambassador – one of just 16 leaders in the entire nation chosen for the honor this year. Afterschool Ambassadors continue supporting local afterschool programs while serving the one-year Afterschool Ambassador term during which they engage with policy makers and community leaders to organize events and in other ways grow support for the afterschool and summer learning programs that students and families rely on.

“The country urgently needs strong afterschool advocates, so we are thrilled that Sean Prospect will serve as an Afterschool Ambassador for the Afterschool Alliance this year. Sean will help spread the word that too many children and youth are without the afterschool programs that help them succeed in school and in life,” said Jodi Grant, executive director of the Afterschool Alliance. “This is a pivotal year when we must continue building support for these essential programs, which keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and give parents peace of mind that their children are safe and supervised after the school day ends. Mr. Prospect is exactly the kind of champion we need.”

“I am pleased and excited to have the opportunity to work with the Afterschool Alliance to increase awareness and support for afterschool and summer learning programs this year, a cause near and dear to my heart,” said Prospect. “Through my personal experience, I have seen how afterschool programs play an integral part in supporting families by coming alongside them and their students and addressing challenges together. This is especially important now, as many families are struggling with rising living costs, in addition to the distractions and challenges students face that affect their education and preparation for life. Afterschool and summer programs are uniquely positioned to help students connect with peers and caring mentors, explore their interests, and discover their passions. I am proud to be part of the afterschool movement and to be a 2026 Afterschool Ambassador.”

The South Florida chapter of After-School All-Stars (SFASAS) was founded in 1996 and today serves 5,496 students across 50 South Florida school sites. SFASAS, in conjunction with Florida International University, takes a holistic approach in serving middle and high school students. Guided by youth voice and choice, programs are designed around five core areas:

- **Health & Wellness** – Students build healthy habits through athletics, nutrition, gardening, cooking, dance, and mindfulness practices.
- **Science, Technology Engineering & Math** – Project-based experiences in coding, robotics, virtual reality, forensics, and 3D printing strengthen collaboration, problem-solving, and creativity.
- **Visual & Performing Arts** – Programs in dance, photography, music, stage production, fashion, and design foster confidence, self-expression, and leadership.
- **Workforce Development** – Through intentional skill building, college readiness courses, mentorship, internships, and financial literacy opportunities, students gain exposure to career pathways and higher education options.
- **Academic Readiness** – Homework help, tutoring, dual enrollment, test preparation and critical thinking skills prepare students to succeed in school and beyond.

All programming is intentionally designed to prepare youth for long-term success—academically, socially, and professionally.

Each Ambassador will organize a major event for *Lights On Afterschool*, the Afterschool Alliance’s annual rally for afterschool. Most of the thousands of local *Lights On Afterschool* events will be on or around Thursday, October 22, 2026.

The 2026 Afterschool Ambassadors are:

- **Alabama, Tuscaloosa:** Lindsey Blevins, Tuscaloosa City Schools
- **Alaska, Fairbanks:** Lindsay Weaver, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District
- **Arkansas, Hot Springs:** Amos Gray, High Impact Movement, Inc.
- **Arkansas, Texarkana:** Tina Jones, Four States Urban Development Project
- **DC, Washington:** Katrina Owens, DC SCORES
- **Florida, Miami:** Sean Prospect, South Florida After-School All-Stars, Inc.
- **Indiana, Indianapolis:** Christine (Chrissy) Balak, Central Indiana Educational Service Center, MSD of Pike Township Schools
- **Mississippi, Cleveland:** Tracy Henshaw Cameron, Delta Area Association for Improvement of Schools
- **Mississippi, Hattiesburg:** Jo Hawkins-Jones, Going Beyond Apprenticeship 21st CCLC Program
- **North Dakota, Grafton:** Lori Zahradka, North Valley Career and Technology Center
- **Oklahoma, Oklahoma City:** Les Thomas, Urban Bridge
- **Pennsylvania, Milton:** Travis Stevens, Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit, STEAMS Afterschool & Summer Programs
- **Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh:** Ana Kay Yaghoubian, Building for Success in School and Life, United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania
- **Texas, Dallas:** Angelica Portillo, Dallas Afterschool
- **Virginia, Arlington:** Paula Fynboh, Aspire Afterschool Learning
- **West Virginia, Shinnston:** Michelle Frase, Buzz Learning Academy

A [2025 household survey](#) found that the parents of 29.6 million children want afterschool programs for their children – but less than 7 million kids are currently enrolled. Another 22.6 million children would attend an afterschool program if it were available. That means three in four kids whose parents want afterschool programs for them (77%)—including many in middle- as well as low-income families – are

being left behind. Cost and accessibility are the barriers many families cannot overcome. It's no wonder that 89% of parents favor public funding for these programs. Ninety-five percent of parents with children in afterschool programs are satisfied with the program their child attends.

A large and powerful body of evidence demonstrates improvements in grades, school attendance, behavior and more among children who participate in afterschool programs. Researchers have also found that students in afterschool programs are more engaged in school, more excited about learning, and develop critical work and life skills such as problem solving, teamwork, and communication.

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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.

South Florida After-School All-Stars is a nonprofit that provides comprehensive after-school and summer programs that keep children safe and help them succeed in school and life. Their vision for students is to be safe and healthy, to graduate from high school and pursue higher education, to find a career they love, and to give back to their communities. SFASAS began a partnership with Florida International University in 2014, creating the FIU After-School All-Stars program to enhance opportunities and expertise available to students throughout the community. More information is available at www.sfasas.org

[Florida International University](http://www.fiu.edu) is a Top 50, preeminent public research university with 55,000 students from all 50 states and more than 140 countries, as well as an alumni network of more than 340,000. Located in the global city of Miami, the university offers more than 200 degree programs at the undergraduate, graduate and professional levels, including medicine and law. FIU faculty are leaders in their fields and include National Academy members, Fulbright Scholars and MacArthur Genius Fellows. A Carnegie R1 institution, FIU drives impactful research in environmental resilience, health and technology and innovation. Home to the Wall of Wind and Institute of Environment, FIU stands at the forefront of discovery and innovation. With a focus on student success, economic mobility and community engagement, FIU is redefining what it means to be a public research university. www.fiu.edu