



NEWS RELEASE
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**Assistant Commissioner of New York State
Office of Children and Family Services
Honored as an Afterschool Champion in Nation's Capital**

*Parents, Educators, Students, Afterschool Leaders
Urge Congress to Increase Afterschool Funding*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Afterschool Alliance today honored Renee L. Rider, Assistant Commissioner in the Division of Child Care Services at the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) for her support for afterschool programs at the “Breakfast of Champions,” a gala event in Washington, D.C. that featured performances by lead guitarist Mark Bryan of Hootie and the Blowfish and afterschool youth. Rider is actively involved in setting direction for the New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) and in developing high-quality afterschool programs across New York State. Rider was one of just ten individuals from around the country honored at the “Breakfast” for supporting and working on behalf of the afterschool programs. The New York State Afterschool Network nominated her for the honor.

In addition to Rider’s primary role in overseeing the Advantage Afterschool Program (AASP), a state funded program administered by OCFS that serves more than 25,000 children, she also sits on NYSAN’s Operations and Steering Committees. She has also helped the afterschool system build a relationship with the early care and education community in order to create a system that supports the education and development of children from birth through young adulthood. Rider has also led cross-agency collaboration by helping create the first-ever cross-agency map of all active, publicly-funded afterschool programs in New York State and in initiating an effort to align afterschool funding streams across city and state agencies. These efforts inform the decision making of state agencies and lawmakers.

The “Breakfast of Champions” is part of the ninth annual *Afterschool for All Challenge*, sponsored by the Afterschool Alliance, which brings together hundreds of parents, educators, children, program directors and advocates from around the country for a series of events and meetings with Members of Congress. It is being held this year in conjunction with Be the Change, the National AfterSchool Association’s annual convention. At these events, advocates are urging Congress to safeguard federal funding for afterschool programs.

“This year, there are serious questions about proposed federal support for afterschool programs,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “The Obama Administration is proposing changes to the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) initiative, the principal federal funding stream for afterschool, which will mean fewer resources to support

afterschool programs and the community partners that make them strong. It is more important than ever that advocates speak up and speak out to ensure that every child who needs afterschool has access to the programs that keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families.”

Other state champions honored at the *Afterschool for All Challenge* are: William Byars, State Director of the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice; David Davison, President and CEO of the American Savings Foundation in New Britain, Connecticut; Jerry Ellis, Mayor of Farmington Hills, Michigan; Wendell Maddox, President and CEO of United Way of Wyandotte County, Kansas; Thierry Malley, State Director of the Pennsylvania Area Council of Boys & Girls Clubs; Chuck Oberlie, Mayor of Michigan City, Indiana; Rhode Island State Representative Edwin Pacheco; Carla Sanger, President and CEO of LA’s BEST, California; and Ronald Steine, Councilmember-at-Large, Metro Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee.

The 2010 “Breakfast of Champions” is sponsored by: United States Tennis Association, Bright House Networks, Quaker Chewy, Torani, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Open Society Institute, Peavey Electronics, NAMM, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, D.C. Children & Youth Investment Trust Corporation and Cable in the Classroom.

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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.