

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Michigan Chosen to Host Statewide Mayoral Afterschool Summit**

**Michigan's Michigan After-School Partnership** was chosen as one of five statewide afterschool networks to host a Statewide Mayoral Summit on Afterschool/Expanded Learning as part of technical and financial assistance from the National League of Cities' (NLC) Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF Institute), with support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

The summit will offer municipal officials an opportunity to connect with state leaders in order to address critical afterschool challenges in communities, showcase promising practices, and jointly determine next steps for making afterschool a priority. In addition, mayors will be able to share information regarding their afterschool needs and priorities with state-level decision makers and explore ways that cities and towns can utilize federal resources made available through the states under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The summit, to be held in the spring of 2010, will help highlight the importance of after-school/Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs) as a vital strategy for workforce development, entrepreneurial skill-building for youth, and as supports for working families. It will help promote the role of ELOs to help all children succeed and link these efforts with the state's economic and workforce development priorities. The summit will bring state legislators, business leaders, policy makers, the foundation community, advocates, and after-school providers together to develop and create an agenda that supports quality ELOs, particularly for middle and high school youth.

Mary Sutton, Executive Director of the Michigan After-School Partnership, "Michigan has a tremendous opportunity to showcase the strength of cities across the state working in tandem with state legislators to strengthen the foundation upon which youth will be supported in their efforts to succeed academically and grow the skilled and talented workforce necessary to revitalize and diversify our economy. We are excited to be able to help raise the collective voice in support of these vital programs."

Millions of children in cities and towns across America need a safe place with engaging activities during afterschool hours. Expanded learning opportunities expose children and youth to an array of enriching experiences that enhance learning and equip the next generation with the skills necessary for success in postsecondary education and the workforce. When youth have no access to afterschool programs, they are also more likely to engage in crime and other risky behaviors, presenting a significant challenge to local and state leaders.

All of the state networks selected to participate in this new initiative have received commitments from their governor's offices and/or state legislative representatives, state education department officials, and key mayors to participate in and help plan the summit. "The National League of Cities Institute of Youth, Education, and Families is a strong national partner who together with us will shine a light on the

importance of quality after school programs for children.” Mayor G. Heartwell, City of Grand Rapids who will be providing leadership for the Summit. .

“Municipal leaders understand that afterschool programs support academic achievement, improve public safety and contribute to the overall vitality and quality of life in cities,” said Clifford M. Johnson, executive director of the YEF Institute. “By connecting with their state counterparts, municipal officials can address critical policy and funding issues and lay a stronger foundation for afterschool programming in communities throughout the state.” The Michigan Municipal League will also be part of the planning team for the Summit. “The League was proud to support the proposal for a statewide summit. The future of children and youth in Michigan affects every community and the League is committed to ensuring that local communities are part of the solution to our state's challenges.” Dan Gilmartin, CEO and Executive Director, Michigan Municipal League.

The YEF Institute awarded a grant of \$5,000 to the Michigan After-School Partnership (MASP), which can be used for summit expenses, including publications and meeting materials, outreach, meeting costs and travel time. Technical assistance provided by the YEF Institute will include support in refining summit goals and messages, developing an agenda and panelist questions, serving as a summit presenter or facilitator, and assisting with outreach to mayors and city leaders across the selected states. Additional topic-specific research and consultation or contacts with national experts may also be part of the technical assistance.

The other state networks selected to receive this technical and financial assistance include the Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence, Georgia Afterschool Investment Council, Iowa Afterschool Alliance, and the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance.

The five selected statewide afterschool networks are supported in part through grants from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. Nationally, a total of 38 statewide afterschool networks are funded to shape state policies, build partnerships and assist the development and sustainability of quality afterschool programs. To learn more about these statewide afterschool networks, visit <http://www.statewideafterschoolnetworks.net/>

The YEF Institute and the Afterschool Alliance will also host the biennial National City Afterschool Summit on April 19-21, 2010, in Washington, DC. Mayors from the statewide mayoral summits will be featured at this national event, as well as other key mayors who are using their leadership positions to create citywide afterschool systems.

The National League of Cities is the nation’s oldest and largest organization devoted to strengthening and promoting cities as centers of opportunity, leadership and governance. NLC is a resource and advocate for 19,000 cities, towns and villages, representing more than 218 million Americans. For more information visit [www.nlc.org](http://www.nlc.org), [www.nlctv.org](http://www.nlctv.org) or [twitter.com/leagueofcities](http://twitter.com/leagueofcities).

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