

“Making the Connections for After School”

Connecticut
After School
Network

2006-2007 Annual Report



Contents:

Children’s Champions Honored at the Capitol	3
Network Helps Secure \$2.3 Million in State Funding	3
New Haven After School Program Gives Refugee and Immigrant Students an Academic Boost	4
Network Accomplishments 2006–2007	5
Financial Statement / Goals	6
Our Donors / Our Network	7
Summer Youth Corps Trainings	8

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*Our Mission is to lead, educate and advocate
for excellence in the after school field by
building professionalism, strengthening
program quality and increasing availability
and affordability.*



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Leaders Come Together to Honor “Children’s Champion”

On October 10, 2006 the Connecticut After School Network, along with its national partners the Afterschool Alliance and the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, honored State Representative and Speaker of the House, James Amann, with the 2006 “Children’s Champion Award” for his support for new funding for after school programs at a luncheon event at the State Capitol. It was Representative Amann’s leadership that helped make it possible to provide opportunities for more than 6,000 children and youth to have a safe place to go after school, where there are fun and enriching activities to help them learn and grow.



House Speaker Jim Amann

A crowd of close to 100 people—among them members of the after school community, state and local officials, philanthropists and business leaders—came together to celebrate after school in

“All of us know that after school programs work... The challenge is to find the money and the will to fund them.”

—Rep. James Amann

Connecticut and to examine newly released data from two surveys that provide further evidence of the need for quality after school programs across Connecticut.



Jodi Grant addressing the crowd

“All of us know that after school programs work,” said Speaker Amann. “Indeed, they are an integral part of the learning day for students. The challenge is to find the money and the will to fund them.”

Keynote speakers included Michelle Doucette Cunningham, Executive Director of the Connecticut After School Network, Blenda J. Wilson, President and CEO of the Nellie Mae Education Foundation and Jodi Grant, Executive Director of the Afterschool Alliance.



Michelle Doucette Cunningham presents Rep. James Amann with the 2006 Children’s Champion Award

Network Helps Secure \$2.3 Million in State Funding in 2007

In late June, 2007, the Connecticut General Assembly approved an increase in funding for after school programs of \$2.35 million dollars for fiscal year 2008. This new funding, which will be used for competitive grants to after school programs across the state, will increase the number of children served by more than fifty percent.

“The Connecticut legislature made a great investment this year by increasing support for after school programs,” said Michelle Doucette Cunningham, Executive Director of the Connecticut After School Network. “These crucial programs keep kids safe and help them succeed academically, and their long-term benefits should not be under-rated.”

The Network was also successful in supporting improvement to the after school grant program, changing it from a one-year grant to a two-year award, adding a parent involvement component, increasing program accountability and providing funding for training, technical assistance and evaluation.



New Haven After School Program Gives Refugee and Immigrant Students an Academic Boost

It is a short walk from the Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services (IRIS) office in New Haven to the East Rock Magnet School, home to the IRIS after school program. But for the program’s students, the journey began thousands of miles away in places like Afghanistan, Honduras, Somalia and the Philippines. Designed to help refugees assimilate into the American educational system, the after school program began in 2003 with education as its focus. This proved to be a challenge, as many of the children had never stepped foot in a classroom before arriving in the United States.

“The program is driven by the need to help the kids catch up,” says Chris George, Executive Director of IRIS. “Their parents are highly motivated and have a strong sense of the importance of academic achievement.”

Just over a year ago, Folly Delgado started as an IRIS volunteer for pre-school aged children and quickly transitioned into a position as a tutor in the after school program.

“I saw immediately that there was something different about these kids,” says Delgado. “They were willing to be children so much longer than American kids. They took so much pleasure

from just going to the park or reading a book.”

Delgado recalls a 4th grade Somali girl who couldn’t read. After explaining to the girl that they’d have to begin lessons at the kindergarten level with phonics, to Delgado’s surprise, the girl became really excited. After a few months of intense tutoring the girl was well on the way to reading at her grade level, triumphantly exclaiming, “I can read now!”

“I saw immediately that there was something different about these kids. They were willing to be children so much longer than American kids.”

“I think the program is unique because we are truly project-based with an emphasis on academics. The kids love coming. They know they’re here to learn,” says Delgado.

IRIS is working with a consultant from Southern Connecticut State University to develop a tool to track the children’s progress in the after school program. Its components include how the program affects classroom behavior, discipline and completed homework assignments. The tool will be applied next school year. IRIS also uses

standard school tests to get an idea of the children’s progress.

The after school program is free, and currently hosts 50 children grades K – 8. Recently the organization expanded to include immigrants as well as refugees. Some of the program’s participants are the children of immigrants who need language help because they don’t speak English in their homes.

IRIS representatives go directly into the public schools asking teachers to identify students with language needs. Many refugee students are introduced to the program because their parents are already IRIS clients.

In addition to the after school program, IRIS offers housing, health care coordination, a food bank, legal services and job assistance to the hundred or so refugees who come to the New Haven area annually.

The IRIS after school program is an outstanding example of a program that applies all the elements of a quality curriculum to a specific need in the community. The Connecticut After School Network is proud to assist them and the hundreds of other great programs throughout Connecticut with training and technical assistance.

Network Accomplishments 06 - 07

- Our Training & Consultation Service instructors conducted 50 workshops that provided training to 1,112 staff, as well a Directors' Leadership Training, a Special Needs Roundtable Discussion and a Grant Writing Workshop/ Support Group. Additionally, a Camp Yankee Summer Camp Training was conducted in collaboration with the YMCA. Quality Advisors provided technical assistance to seven after school programs in Stamford.
- The Quality Workgroup completed the Best Practice Guidelines for Connecticut After School Programs and the Quality Assessment Tool. Both are now available on our Web site, and training on how to use these tools is available through the Network.
- The Network collaborated with Charter Oak State College, Connecticut Charts-a-Course, and the National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) to develop a BA degree with a concentration in Child and Youth Development offered at Charter Oak College beginning in the Fall of 2007.
- **October 2006**—Children's Champion luncheon at the Capitol honoring Speaker of the House James Amann coincided with Lights On After School Day. The Network presented the results from their survey of the parents of 853 children titled, "After School In Connecticut: What Are Kids Doing After School?" (See page 3)
- **October 2006**—The Network hosted two days of Effective Program Management Training with Ellen Clippinger, NIOST Trainer, and Quality Advisor, Carole Weisberg. This valuable training covered the roles of supervisors and managers and the leadership styles they exhibit to their staff. Program participants were coached on the best strategies for building a strong, dedicated staff. Close to 60 after school professionals from around the state attended the seminars which were held in Farmington and Madison.
- **November 2006**—The Network hosted its annual Fall Conference.
- **December 2006**—19 programs participated in the IBM-sponsored training "Kids Create and Invent for the New Millennium." Activities designed to help children generate innovative ideas, improve their creations and inventions and explore funky new technologies topped the agenda. Each group received a \$500 mini-grant to purchase related materials, staff training and field trips.
- **February 2007**—Three listening sessions on DPH licensing regulations were held at various sites throughout Connecticut.
- **March 2007**—The 3rd annual After School Day at the Capitol. Children's Champion awards presented to Representatives Denise Merrill and Andrew Fleischman.
- **March 2007**—The Network hosted its annual Spring Conference.
- **May 2007**—A Program Survey was developed and published online featuring information about after school programs statewide.
- **June 2007**—The Network provided summer youth corps grants and training to ten local after school networks. (See page 8)



Our Goals

- ◆ *Create a sustainable structure of statewide partnerships focused on supporting policy development at all levels.*
- ◆ *Support the policies that secure the necessary resources to sustain new and existing after school programs.*
- ◆ *Support statewide systems to ensure programs are high quality.*
- ◆ *Build the Connecticut After School Network as an entity, with increased capacity to carry out its mission.*

Financial Statement

July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007

Income

State Funds	225,000
Grants	105,890
Program Service Fees	58,980
Donations (In-Kind)	16,740
Membership Fees	12,370
Miscellaneous	1,832

Total Income:

\$420,812

Expenses

Wages	208,086
Grants	90,400
Conferences / Meetings / Workshops	35,660
Payroll Taxes/Benefits	30,618
Travel / Mileage	15,209
Occupancy Expense	14,435
Professional Fees	8,545
Printing	5,956
Miscellaneous	4,984
Program Related Contracts	4,783
Office Expenses	4,738
Dues / Subscriptions	4,232
Postage	3,989
Telephone	3,438
Insurance (non-employee)	1,551
Equipment Lease / Maintenance	1,179
Depreciation Expense	935
Staff Development	872

Total Expenses:

\$439,610

Our Network

73 Individual Professional Members

60 Organizational Memberships

1,483 Total Members

1,300 e-Alert Subscribers
(non-members)

There are currently eleven local and regional after school networks in Connecticut:

- ◆ Bridgeport After School Initiative
- ◆ Community Alliance for Danbury Youth
- ◆ Coalition for Children, Youth and Families (Hartford)
- ◆ Fairfield County After School Network
- ◆ New Britain Youth Network
- ◆ New Haven City Wide Youth Coalition (CWYC)
- ◆ Northwest Connecticut After School Alliance
- ◆ Norwalk After School Alliance
- ◆ Stamford Out-of-School Time Alliance (SOSTA)
- ◆ Waterbury Prevention Policy Board
- ◆ Windham Community Before and After School Task Force

Our Donors

In-kind Donations

Office Space and Utilities, Branford School Age Care
Meeting Space, Sandy Hook School, Newtown
Meeting Space, Frenchtown Elementary School, Trumbull
Meeting Space, Hartford Public Library
Meeting Space, Wilson Library, New Haven
Office Supplies, Day Pitney LLC.
Printing Services, Northeast Utilities

Volunteers

Tom Brant
Melanie Carfora
Amy Cardoza
Chrissy Civik
Debbie Cole
Dave Krampitz
Theresa Syzmanski
Board members

2006 - 2007 Supporters

Silver

Jennie's Catering, Trumbull

Gold

Patricia Brown, Barefoot Books, Trumbull
Royal Printing, Guilford

2006—2007 AT A GLANCE

- ◆ 1,483 professional members.
- ◆ 50 workshops serving 1,112 after school professionals.
- ◆ Two conferences serving 335 after school professionals.
- ◆ \$2.3 million added to the State budget to serve an additional 6,000 Connecticut students.
- ◆ \$90,400 given in training grants to after school and summer programs.
- ◆ Children's Champion Luncheon held at the Capitol with our national partners the Afterschool Alliance and the Nellie Mae Foundation.
- ◆ After School Day at the Capitol held in March, 2007. Over 100 after school supporters participated in this advocacy event to personally let their legislators know how important After School is to them.
- ◆ After School Best Practice Guidelines and Self-Assessment Tool completed.

Summer Youth Corps Trainings Encourage Professionalism

In June the Network awarded \$8,000 grants to each of ten sites to train youth who work with children in summer programs. The training opportunities, dubbed, "Youth Corps" peppered the state in areas that included Hartford, Litchfield, Norwalk, Danbury, Bridgeport, Willimantic, Waterbury, Stamford, New Haven and Montville, all with the intention of promoting collaboration between various organizations and resource centers throughout Connecticut.

The grants were designed to help local after school networks provide training for their regional summer programs.

Topics included teambuilding, child and youth development, activity ideas, conflict resolution and job readiness skills. The youth participation was diverse and ages ranged from 13 to 20.

Although it can be challenging to train youth of such a vast age difference, the benefits were clearly illus-

trated in the students' comments and their overall reflection on what they learned. One 11th grader commented, "This program taught me how to be creative and how to handle kids when they're in trouble."



Youth Corps participants in Hartford

A 10th grader in the program had this to say, "I feel as though I've learned how to become a leader and what I need to know to work with younger kids."

Workshops such as, *Welcome to the World of Work* and *Leadership* helped many to understand the seriousness of

their responsibility to their programs and themselves. There were also recreational activities designed to inspire youth to be creative and have fun.

Close to 50 Hartford youth attended a two-day training organized by the Coalition for Children, Youth and Families (CCYF). The youth, ranging in age from 13 – 18, work for various non-profits including Camp Courant and Organized Parents Make a Difference (OPMAD). Some of the youth work throughout the year, and according to Lisa Wascholl of OPMAD, it will help them build on the skills they already have.

"It's great working with the youth and helping them develop for the future," said Wacholl. "We get students in second and third grade that continue to stay with us. They become like our family."