



Afterschool Ambassador Program: Legacy of Leadership

A Project of the Afterschool Alliance and the JCPenney Afterschool Fund

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Afterschool Alliance Names Pyramid Lake's Learning Center Coordinator Carolyn Harry, An 'Afterschool Ambassador'

Harry to Promote Afterschool During 2003/2004 School Year

(PST) The Afterschool Alliance today announced that it has chosen Carolyn Harry of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe's Community Learning Centers to serve a second one-year term as an Afterschool Ambassador. Harry is one of 25 Afterschool Ambassadors selected from across the nation, and one of just seven chosen to serve a second term during the 2003-2004 school year. Her focus as an Ambassador will be to build grassroots support for afterschool programs. Harry's ambassadorship is sponsored by the JCPenney Afterschool Fund.

"We are so proud to have Ms. Harry on our team again this year," Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Judy Y. Samelson said. "She has an impressive record at Pyramid Lake and in the community, and distinguished herself last year as an Afterschool Ambassador. We are delighted to extend the appointment for a second year. In communities across the nation, more and more afterschool programs are helping kids succeed in school and in life. We owe a great debt to leaders like Ms. Harry and we are delighted that she will continue to help us spread the word about the great need for more afterschool programs in America today."

Afterschool Ambassadors serve one-year or two-year terms organizing public events, communicating with policy makers and building community support for afterschool. Each will plan a major event for *Lights On Afterschool!*, the Afterschool Alliance's October 9 nationwide rally for afterschool.

"I'm delighted to continue as an Ambassador because it's a great opportunity to showcase the achievements and promise of afterschool programs," Harry said. "The benefits of Afterschool programs in Nevada are clear. Our students are engaged academically, socially, and in a safe environment. Nevada communities are stronger as afterschool programs involve the students, but parents, caregivers, business leaders and volunteers. Harry noted afterschool programs actually

save taxpayers money. She stated “afterschool programs fit Nevada’s educational climate as the final piece in an educational jigsaw puzzle. All pieces fit together.”

As part of the Afterschool Ambassador program, the JCPenney Afterschool Fund will contribute \$1,000 to the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe’s Afterschool Learning Centers. The contribution is just one part of the retailer’s ongoing \$30 million commitment to afterschool issues.

“The Afterschool Ambassadors do an extraordinary job of building support from lawmakers and the public for quality afterschool programs,” said Ed Solczak, Director of the JCPenney Afterschool Fund. “Afterschool programs help children flourish while keeping them safe after the school day ends. JCPenney and the JCPenney Afterschool Fund are deeply committed to afterschool programs. They make good sense for our children, their parents and their communities”

Nationwide, as many as 15 million latchkey children have no adult supervision during non-school hours. Afterschool programs offer young people safe, enriching, fun and engaging places to spend the afternoons once the school day is over. Research shows that afterschool programs are a good investment. They improve academic achievement, keep kids safe, help working families, and teach children social skills and conflict resolution. Afterschool programs also lead to increased school attendance and lower dropout rates.

The Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe’s Learning Centers uses a holistic approach as part of its mission. Programs are designed to meet cultural identity while promoting academics, and opportunities for students and the community. With funding from a 21st Century Community Learning Center, the Tribe offers a 7th-12th Grade Afterschool Program based at Pyramid Lake High School, but available to all community 7th-12th graders. A second learning center currently offers the community a computer lab equipped with high speed internet access, distance education programs with Truckee Meadows Community College, Adult Diploma/GED programs, Paiute Language, and Computer Classes. The programs continually work in collaboration with the American Distance Education Consortium and many of the Tribe’s Programs such as the Sumunumu Prevention Program, the Parks and Recreation Program, 4-H,, the Cultural Center/Language Programs and many more. A community library, located at the center, will also be opening in early November.

“We’re very proud of Harry,” said Pyramid Lake Tribal Chairwoman Bonnie Akaka-Smith. “Our students and community have benefited enormously from her work, and we are delighted that she is receiving well-deserved recognition.”

Last year, Harry organized a well-attended *Lights On Afterschool!* event, joined a delegation from Nevada visiting Washington, D.C. for a day-long “Afterschool for All” Challenge on Capitol Hill, and advocated year long at events garnishing support for afterschool programs.

The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization supported by a group of public, private, and nonprofit entities dedicated to ensuring that all children and youth have access to afterschool programs by 2010. The Alliance is proud to count among its founding partners the C.S. Mott Foundation, U.S. Department of Education, the JCPenney Afterschool Fund, Open Society Institute/The After-School Corporation, the Entertainment

Industry Foundation and the Creative Artists Agency Foundation. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org

The JCPenney Afterschool Fund supports the Alliance's Afterschool Ambassador program, and is National Presenting Sponsor of Lights On Afterschool! this year. The JCPenney Afterschool Fund is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization contributing financial support to five of America's leading after school advocates – the YMCA of the USA, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, 4-H, Junior Achievement and the Afterschool Alliance. Support from the JCPenney Afterschool Fund helps provide safe, fun and educational after school programs and raise awareness of the need for more such programs across the country.

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