

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **The Center for After-School Excellence Graduates First Class of After-School Educators**

**Thursday, July 10, 2008:** The after-school field in New York took an important step toward boosting the success of kids who attend after-school and summer programs citywide today. In a first for New York City, 72 after-school educators who work with kids in all five boroughs studied this year at colleges within the City University of New York (CUNY) and received professional certificates in after-school education.

High-quality after-school programs improve kids' school performance and expose them to new ways of learning during the hours when many would otherwise have no supervision or engaging activities. In New York City, enrollment in complete daily after-school programs has grown from 10,000 to 140,000 kids in the past decade, and government support has more than quadrupled to \$295 million annually.

Research shows that staff members who have strong academic training are better equipped to respond to the developmental and academic needs of kids, and to deliver high quality activities that engage kids and encourage them to succeed. Currently fewer than half of young people who attend after-school programs are taught by an adult with a university degree.

The graduates were honored in a ceremony hosted by The Center for After-School Excellence, which created the professional certification program in partnership with CUNY. The certificate-holders attended college courses designed to improve their practice in supporting kids academically, socially and emotionally in programs that typically combine arts, sports and recreation with academic support. The Center also provided scholarships and support to the after-school educators as many tried college for the first time, and others returned to college to pursue the completion of their bachelor's degrees.

"These pioneers are showing other after-school educators that they can manage jobs, families and college courses if they are determined to build their career prospects in the growing field of after-school," said Mark Levine, Executive Director of The Center for After-School Excellence. "What really inspires them, however, is their desire to do a better job for kids. They can be proud to know they stand behind their own advice: the way to succeed is to go to college."

The graduates earned their certificates within these CUNY institutions: York College, Medgar Evers College, LaGuardia Community College, Kingsborough Community College and Hostos Community College.

The new certificate-holders work for city agencies as well as nonprofit community organizations. These include the New York City Housing Authority; the city's Department of Parks and Recreation; Good Shepherd Services; Police Athletic League; Washington Heights-Inwood Coalition; East Side Settlement House; Community League of the Heights; Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation; Groundwork, Inc.; Learn and Play Child Care Center; Neighborhood Initiative Development Corporation; The Children's Aid Society; CAMBA; The Child Center of New York; Harlem Children's Zone, Inc.; Phipps Community Development Corp.; Queens Community House; St. Ann's Episcopal Church; Center for Family Life; and SCAN New York.

## **About The Center for After-School Excellence**

The Center for After-School Excellence is an initiative of The After-School Corporation. The Center is currently enrolling after-school educators in certificate programs for the upcoming academic year. Courses will be offered at Hostos Community College, Kingsborough Community College, Medgar Evers College and York College. The Center is also inaugurating a graduate-level certificate program at Hunter College School of Education for after-school educators who have their graduate degrees.

For more information, visit the Center's Web site at [www.afterschoolexcellence.org](http://www.afterschoolexcellence.org).

## **About TASC**

The After-School Corporation (TASC) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to enhance the quality, availability and sustainability of after-school programs in New York City and beyond, with the goal of making after-school a public responsibility. TASC funds, monitors, evaluates and supports after-school programs in New York City. It works with local and national partners to build high quality, sustainable after-school systems in New York and beyond.

For more information, visit the TASC Web site at [www.tascorp.org](http://www.tascorp.org).