



Contact:

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(Editor's Note: At 3 p.m. on Oct. 20 U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor will be at the George M. Steinbrenner West Tampa Boys & Girls Club, 1301 N. Blvd., for one of the local Lights on Afterschool rallies.)

Tampa Wins National League of Cities Award for Afterschool Programs as it Celebrates Lights on Afterschool Day Oct. 20

TAMPA, FL (Oct. 20, 2011) – The National League of Cities has named Tampa one of the 27 most advanced cities in the U.S. for its efforts to coordinate afterschool opportunities for children and youth. The announcement comes as the result of a research report commissioned by the Wallace Foundation and published by the National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education and Families.

Other cities include Boston, Chicago, New York, Washington, D.C. and Jacksonville, the only other Florida city represented. Six key elements identified by the Wallace Foundation as essential for building sustainable, coordinated afterschool systems include: committed leadership, a public or private coordinating entity, multi-year planning, reliable information, expanding participation, and a commitment to quality.

The honor comes as Tampa and Hillsborough County out-of-school programs take part in the nationwide Afterschool Alliance 12th Annual Lights On Afterschool rallies the afternoon of Oct. 20. The local rallies – held at Boys & Girls Clubs, schools, parks and recreation locations, and faith-based and other providers – are to bring attention to afterschool programs, which have suffered recent budget cuts across the country. As part of the “Lights On” rallies the Suntrust Building in Tampa will be fully lit the evening of Oct. 20.

“Afterschool programs inspire children to learn, keep kids safe and allow parents to work,” said Bobbi Davis, resource development manager at the Children's Board of Hillsborough County, head of the Hillsborough Out-of-School Time committee and an ambassador with the Afterschool Alliance. Davis secured a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Center, the only federal afterschool funding in the country, which goes through the Children's Board to benefit three Tampa Boys & Girls Clubs.

For more information about the National League of Cities announcement and the complete list of winners, go to <http://www.nlc.org/find-city-solutions/iyef/afterschool/municipal-leadership-for-afterschool-citywide-approaches-spreading-across-the-country>. For more information about the Afterschool Alliance Lights On Afterschool initiative, go to http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyStateFacts.cfm?state_abbr=FL.

The Children's Board of Hillsborough County serves as the leading voice and advocate for children and families in our community. The board is the only organization of its kind in Hillsborough County that generates revenue to help children and families. The Children's Board is recognized nationally for its contributions to best practices in policies and programs aiding children and families. Citizens may visit www.childrensboard.org to learn more about the board's programs.