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MEDIA ALERT/PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

Lights On Afterschool Celebration at the Weisman Art Museum

Thursday, Oct. 26, 3:30 – 6 p.m.

MEDIA ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND & PHOTOGRAPH ALL ACTIVITIES

What: Thursday, Oct. 26 marks the 18th annual *Lights On Afterschool*, a nationwide celebration of the important role afterschool programs play in helping young people do better in school and make positive choices, supporting working families, and preparing our next generation for success.

Ignite Afterschool is hosting a special *Lights On Afterschool* event at the Weisman Art Museum to showcase afterschool programs in Minnesota, honor local afterschool champions, and illuminate startling gaps in access to afterschool that indicate a need for more afterschool.

When: **3:30 – 6 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 26**, Minnesota's *Lights On Afterschool* celebration

Where: **Weisman Art Museum**, University of Minnesota East Bank Campus
333 East River Parkway, Minneapolis, MN 55455
Free media parking is available in the Weisman Art Museum lot. The sign will say lot closed, but media should proceed to the parking attendant and say they have a reserved spot for the *Lights On Afterschool* event.

Why: Research shows that young people who regularly participate in afterschool attend school more often, do better in school, and are more likely to avoid risky behaviors. Despite these proven benefits, large gaps persist in access to afterschool programs in Minnesota.

Consider the following troubling revelations from the 2016 Minnesota Student Survey:

- More than 1 in 3 Minnesota youth are not regularly engaged in afterschool at least three times per week
- 51% of low-income youth regularly participate in afterschool, compared to 69% of their higher-income peers
- 57% of youth of color regularly participate in afterschool, compared to 67% of their white peers, with the greatest disparities among Hmong, Latino and Somali youth

Visuals: **Afterschool Program Showcase, 3:30 – 6 p.m.**
Young people from numerous afterschool programs across the Twin Cities will be doing hands-on activities that highlight fun and learning that takes place during afterschool. Youth and program staff will be available to answer questions about their programs and afterschool experiences. Select highlights include: *(continued on next page)*

- **The Works Museum** staff and youth use the engineering design process to create one-of-a-kind cars using only picnic supplies like straws, lids and plates. Then the designs are put to the test as the cars cruise down a ramp to win the race.
- **The Bakken Museum** staff and youth bring electricity to life with hands-on activities like building circuits complete with batteries, lights, buttons and switches. They'll also spark some fun by creating light-up greeting cards that use electricity.
- **Minnesota 4-H** staff and youth will illuminate the creativity of 4-H by making LED flashlights. Their ingenuity will be on display with the 2016 4-H Rube Goldberg challenge, a complex competition to design and build a machine to crush and recycle an aluminum soft drink can.

Afterschool Access Snapshot, 4:45 – 5 p.m.

Dr. Michael Rodriguez, the University of Minnesota's Campbell Leadership Chair in Education and Human Development and professor in the college of Education and Human Development, will release **new data from the 2016 Minnesota Student Survey** that reveals alarming gaps in access to afterschool, particularly for youth of color and youth with low income.

Awards for Afterschool Champions, 5 – 5:30 p.m.

Twelve individuals from across the state will be recognized for their ongoing support of policies and practices that enhance the quality of and access to afterschool for all Minnesota youth with the **first-ever Minnesota Afterschool Champion awards**.

Community Leader award recipients are as follows:

- Christopher Coleman*, Mayor, City of Saint Paul
- Amy Eich*, Executive Director of Community Education, Rochester Public Schools
- Matt Grose, Superintendent, ISD 317 and ISD 319
- Jayne Miller*, Superintendent, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
- Ricky White, Superintendent, Circle of Life Academy, White Earth Reservation

Practitioner award recipients are as follows:

- Leticia Flores*, Community Partner Specialist, Girl Scouts River Valleys
- Darius Lyles, YMCA School Success Director, Brooklyn Center Community Schools
- Carneada Milton, Teacher Assistant, CDF Freedom Schools
- Kayleen Monacelli, Community Education Coordinator, Boys & Girls Club
- Candace Thomas, Founder, Literacy Volunteers of Southwest Minnesota
- Siddeeqah Shabazz*, Teen Program Coordinator, Pillsbury House + Theater

*Names marked with an * indicate individuals who will receive their awards in person at this event, schedule permitting. Others will receive their awards on Oct. 26 in their local communities.*

About Ignite Afterschool

Ignite Afterschool is Minnesota's statewide network of funders, program providers, researchers and others dedicated to young people's engagement in afterschool. To learn more about Ignite Afterschool, visit www.igniteafterschool.org, "like" Ignite Afterschool on Facebook or follow on Twitter @IgniteMN #AfterschoolSuccess. On Oct. 26, 2017, follow Lights on Afterschool with the hashtag #LightsOnAfterschool.

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