



NEWS RELEASE
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Local Landmarks across Country to Be Lit for 12th Annual *Lights On Afterschool* Events Next Week

From Rice Lake, Wisconsin to Ramstein, Germany, Special Events Will Shine a Spotlight on the Need for More Afterschool Programs for America's Kids

Thanks to support from jcpenny, fountains, bridges, hot air balloons, monuments, a battleship, the Kennedy Space Center rocket garden, and a statue of iconic children's television personality, Fred Rogers, will be among the many local landmarks lit up on October 20th for *Lights On Afterschool*. Organized by the Afterschool Alliance, *Lights On Afterschool* is the only nationwide rally for afterschool programs. This year, a million people are expected to participate in some 7,500 events across the United States and at U.S. military bases worldwide.

The local lightings will add to the list of landmarks that have been lit for *Lights On Afterschool* in recent years, including the Empire State Building, Mount Rushmore, and the Lindbergh Beacon atop Los Angeles' City Hall. To support local communities that are lighting up their own landmarks, jcpenny is providing grants to 17 local organizations to support their events this year. For more information on the winning events, go to <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loaLandmark.cfm>. The grants go to:

- **Arizona, Lake Havasu City. Lake Havasu City London Bridge;**
- **California, Compton. Civic Center Monument;**
- **Florida, Jacksonville. Friendship Fountain;**
- **Florida, Viera. Kennedy Space Center Rocket Garden;**
- **Kentucky, Monticello. Hot Air Balloon;**
- **Michigan, Grand Rapids. La Grande Vitesse sculpture;**
- **Minnesota, Duluth. Enger Tower;**
- **Mississippi, Gulfport. Biloxi Town Green;**
- **Montana, Great Falls. Historic Tenth Street Bridge;**
- **Ohio, Newark. Newark Courthouse, Chase Bank Tower;**
- **Oklahoma, Del City. Del City Neighborhood;**
- **Pennsylvania, Bethlehem. Bethlehem Steel Corporation Blast Furnaces;**
- **Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. LOVE Fountain and Boathouse Row;**
- **Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh. Fred Rogers Memorial Statue;**
- **Texas, Pasadena. Battleship Texas;**
- **Wisconsin, Rice Lake. Lincoln Clubhouse; and**
- **Germany, Ramstein. Kaiserslautern Military Community Center Mall.**

“Afterschool programs provide a safe, supervised place for kids to get homework help, hands-on learning opportunities, and more after the school day ends,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “Shaped around local needs and reflecting the culture and uniqueness of their communities, these programs look different from one community to another, much like the *Lights On Afterschool* celebrations selected as winners of our ‘Light Up a Landmark’ contest. “

A special feature at the Jacksonville, Florida ‘Light Up a Landmark’ event will be the official release of the *2011 State-by-State Progress Reports and Consumer Guides*, which consists of 50 state reports that examine how each state is helping keep the lights on for kids and families after school. Produced by the Afterschool Alliance and sponsored by jcpenny, the progress reports review state policies, funding and other activities that affect afterschool programs, examine the need in each state for these programs, offer tips to parents seeking afterschool programs for their children and suggest ways that all state residents can support afterschool.

Information about other *Lights On Afterschool* rallies planned across the country, is available at <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loaFindEvent.cfm>.

A significant body of research demonstrates that students who attend afterschool programs regularly are more likely to improve their grades, tests scores and overall academic behavior. Nationwide, more than 15 million school-age children – more than one in four kids in the United States – are unsupervised after the school day ends. The parents of 18 million children say they would enroll their kids in afterschool programs – if programs were available.

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The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org.