



## ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2008

Youth Community Connections and its partners had a successful year. Significant progress was made in the Strategic Plan and in positioning itself as an alliance that brings stakeholders together to work on collective issues for the field of afterschool, summer and year-round learning opportunities.

### **Goal One**

Build awareness, access and support for quality, culturally responsive afterschool, summer and year-round opportunities.

### **Objective One**

*Advocate for policies and resources that support systems, communities, organizations and professionals to ensure access to quality, culturally responsive afterschool, summer and year-round opportunities.*

1. **Legislative breakfast.** YCC worked with partners through the Youth Policy Alliance to host a legislative breakfast featuring a panel of youth to talk about the importance of comprehensive youth services. The purpose of the legislative breakfast was to call legislators and stakeholders together around comprehensive youth policy. Approximately 50 people attended the breakfast to hear the call to action for comprehensive youth policy in MN, for a children and youth budget, and for a youth caucus. YCC will continue to support the work of its partners in calling for comprehensive policy and for a youth caucus.
2. **Children's Briefing.** YCC talked to more than 200 children and youth advocates about the benefits of engaging young people in afterschool opportunities and shared the latest research on impacts of quality afterschool programs. YCC has been invited to participate in the Children's Briefing for the past three years to highlight youth policy issues. Sheltering Arms Foundation, the MN Council of Non-profits and several other foundations support the Children's Briefing each year.
3. **Legislative visits and calls.** YCC staff and partners made legislative visits and calls about the importance of afterschool and youth serving funds. Nearly all legislators on key policy and funding committees were reached by staff or YCC partners. These strategic calls and visits helped ensure current investments were protected.
4. **Tracking/monitoring legislation.** YCC tracked legislation affecting afterschool and youth serving programs this session. The primary focus was on protecting existing investments. Direct funds for youth were for the most part protected during session. However, state agency cuts may have implications on what is available for youth and communities. YCC will continue to monitor and track changes that result from these cuts.
5. **Congressional visits.** YCC, its partners, and a youth from MNYAC made congressional visits this year to discuss afterschool opportunities. Visits focused on MN's efforts to leverage private and public resources and to align with federal program outcomes. Each partner organization was positioned as a resource to congressional representatives and their staff. YCC staff will continue to position the statewide alliance as a resource for Congressional representatives.

### **Objective Two**

*Persuade the public, beneficiaries and stakeholders about the value of afterschool, summer and year-round opportunities and their beneficial roles in the development of young people in order to promote individual and collective action.*

6. **Governor's Afterschool Opportunities Summit.** The Governor's Afterschool Opportunities Summit made the case that afterschool opportunities are essential and make a significant difference in the lives of young people. Over 200 key stakeholders were reached during the summit and through the planning process. The summit generated a lot of interest and desire to help spread the word and continue to make the case about the importance of afterschool opportunities. More information about the summit is available on the website <http://www.youthcommunityconnections.org/infoResources.html>. YCC staff will lead the follow up work around leveraging public and private resources and will work with key partners to build the business community commitment and create a marketing plan.
7. **Building champions.** YCC worked with its partners to develop job descriptions for champions and connectors for afterschool. Potential champions and connectors have been identified and follow up has begun. For the first time YCC brought elected officials and someone from the Governor's administration to the Mott Foundation's Annual Statewide Network meeting. YCC staff will continue to cultivate champions and work with partners to identify emerging champions.
8. **Common messages about after school.** Key messages about the benefits of afterschool were woven into several YCC and partner sponsored events and activities. Specific messages were geared toward parents and elected officials or decision makers. These messages are available on the website

<http://www.youthcommunityconnections.org/takeAction.html> and were

incorporated in **MNSACA's Annual Meeting** when Janelle Cousino from Afterschool Alliance, Judy Nee from National AfterSchool Association and Glynis Shea from the University of MN discussed messaging in afterschool. Over 600 people were reached during the MNSACA Annual Meeting. In addition these messages were then woven into the **Children's Briefing**, the **legislative visits**, **Legislative Breakfast**, and the **Afterschool Summit**. YCC will lead the work on pulling together stakeholders to discuss communication and marketing needs for the field.

9. **Afterschool Challenge.** Mayor Chris Coleman of St. Paul received the Breakfast of Champions award after being nominated by YCC. Thirteen other local leaders from cities around the country received similar recognition during this event. Mayor Chris Coleman was nominated for this recognition due to his efforts to better coordinate public and private resources in St Paul. YCC will continue to position Minnesota's elected officials and community leaders within the national afterschool movement.

### **Goal Two**

Enhance the quality of practice, programs, organizations, and systems that provide afterschool, summer and year-round opportunities.

### **Objective One**

*Advocate for and enable systems to align support for practitioners, organizations and communities in the delivery of accessible, culturally responsive, quality afterschool, summer and year-round opportunities.*

1. **Quality Workgroup.** YCC has identified co-chairs for the Quality Workgroup and will call this group together to begin the work during summer 2008. The workgroup will identify a framework to support quality work of practitioners, organizations and communities and outline the essential

actions needed to increase quality in the field of afterschool.

2. **Cost Study.** YCC has completed data collection for the study and is completing the final data analysis. YCC has developed important relationships with the Finance Project and the Wallace Foundation in the process of completing this survey research. YCC will prepare the final report this summer and release it during the fall of 2008.
3. **Gaps Analysis Study.** University of Minnesota's Center for Youth Development has completed the data collection and initial analysis has begun on the parent and youth surveys of the Gaps Analysis. Further analysis is needed and the report(s) will be released by the end of calendar year 2008. The provider survey of the Gaps Analysis needs to be developed and conducted in 2008/09.
4. **Core Assets and Capacities.** YCC has drafted a final report on the Core Assets and Capacities. The final report will be available on YCC's website late summer 2008. Work to implement these core assets has only begun and needs further assessment and agreement. Target audiences for the core assets are program directors and administrators, training organizations and funders.