



@fterschool advisor - December 4, 2012

Announcements from the Center

Spot 127 Uses Community Partnerships to Educate the Next Generation of Digital Media Experts



While SPOT 127.0.0.1 might not yet mean anything to you, to Phoenix area high school students it means home. Last week marked the community grand opening of SPOT 127, an innovative afterschool program that is a joint project of KJZZ , Rio Salado College, Phoenix Union High School District and other community partners. The new youth media center is a prime example of the quality of youth opportunities that can be generated when community groups partner.

The building housing SPOT127 was donated by Phoenix Union and renovated by the design firm Fitch to be aesthetically-appealing to teens, with bold colors and a break room kids for socializing. The instructional space was specifically designed to be both functional and hip, a place very different from a traditional classroom where kids will want to be, not have to be, according to Executive Director, Greg Pereira.

Modeled after a program in Oakland, California, SPOT 127 is designed to have industry experts teach students journalism and digital media production which then leads to students creating and producing real life stories relevant to their lives. The program currently serves 100 high school students, primarily from the Phoenix Union District, who meet from 3:30-6:30 on either Mondays and Wednesdays or Tuesdays and Thursdays.,

Exemplifying key tenets of youth development, the learning is complementary to the school day rather than a replication - the instruction periods are brief, leaving teens plenty of time in the newsroom and media lab where the real magic happens. Free nightly meals are served thanks to a partnership with St Mary's Food Bank, and Fridays offer an opportunity to get help on school work as well as continue work on their media projects.

Students in the program also have an opportunity to attend Rio Salado College and pursue internships and career opportunities opened to them by SPOT 127's strong ties to the community.

High school programs are few and far between, but SPOT 127 is taking a truly innovative approach to serve a high-need age group. At the end of the day, says Pereira, the program's true goal is to have hundreds and eventually thousands of kids in higher education because they had the support to get there. When they get there, it will be thanks in no small part to the program and its champions in the community, who partnered to make the project a reality. Colleges of journalism across the country, prepare for the next generation of digital media mavens!

For more information about SPOT 127, see www.spot127.org.

Key Research Supports Afterschool Standards Process

As part of a commitment to supporting quality afterschool programming in Arizona, AzCASE along with the Valley of the Sun United Way is leading the effort to develop a Continuous Quality Improvement System. The first step, begun this fall, is the creation of Quality Standards for Afterschool, tailored to meet the unique needs of Arizona programs. The standards will be followed by the creation of an assessment tool and a professional development framework, to support the continued progress towards quality youth development in our state.

The Arizona [Standards Committee](#), convened this fall, is composed of policy makers, afterschool and school leaders, funders, and other stakeholders from across the state. Their work is being informed by best practices and research into successful youth development. Read on for more on what the bar for quality is based on, and how this will impact the standards process.

Evidence Supporting the Elements of Quality in Afterschool Programs

Afterschool standards identify quality benchmarks above those set by licensing regulations. These standards provide guidance to program leaders on the components of a high-quality program and the qualifications of well-trained program staff.

Therefore, our commitment to quality afterschool in Arizona has to begin with our collective understanding of program characteristics likely to benefit youth.

Drawing from related research on youth development and education, a 2005 study by the RAND Corporation entitled [Making Out-of-School-Time Matter](#) lists some key conditions, including:

- a clear mission;
- high expectations;
- a safe environment;
- supportive emotional climate;
- small total enrollment;
- stable, trained personnel;
- appropriate content and pedagogy;
- and frequent program assessment.

The [National Network of Statewide Afterschool Networks](#), which focuses explicitly on the core components of afterschool and expanded learning opportunities-engaged learning, school-community partnerships and

family involvement, further maintains that high-quality programs feature:

- Positive relationships between students and staff.
- Positive relationships between students.
- A mix of academic and non-academic skill-building activities.
- High levels of student engagement.
- Mastery orientation.
- Appropriate levels of structure.

Below are some recommended resources that offer an evidence base for elements of quality in afterschool. The evidence therein supports the conclusions that high quality after school programs produce increase student academic achievement, positive social and emotional development, regular and consistent school attendance, increased student engagement, positive work and study habits and stronger links between students, families and schools.

Our work developing quality standards for afterschool in Arizona is not only backed by an array of credible research and experience in the field, it is supported by the work of other states and places that have undergone similar processes. Currently:

33 states have established or are developing practitioner standards that identify indicators of program quality;
24 states have identified core knowledge and competencies-what practitioners should know and be able to do to provide high-quality afterschool and expanded learning programming; and
More than 18 states have developed school-age professional credentials.

For more information and research, we encourage you to view the reports below and check out the Statewide Afterschool Networks (SAN) collection of [quality standards resources and research](#).

Title: [Helping Youth Succeed Through Out-Of-School-Time Programs](#)

This report by the American Youth Policy Forum presents research on the effectiveness of out-of-school-time programs and how they contribute to positive skill development for youth; what some of the more advanced communities around the United States are doing to integrate Out-of-School-Time programs into their vision for the healthy development of their youth; and recommendations on what policymakers and practitioners can do to institutionalize high quality out-of-school time programs for youth.

Title: [Implementing Evidence-Based Practices: Six 'Drivers' of Success](#)

Author: Allison J. R. Metz, Karen Blase, and Lillian Bowie: Child Trends

Description: This brief defines implementation, highlights why the effective implementation of evidence-based practices is critical to achieving outcomes and outlines six core components that drive successful program implementation.

Title: [The Quality of School-Age Child Care in After-school Settings](#)

Author: Priscilla M. Little: Harvard Family Research Project

Description: An overview of the features of high-quality after school settings, including an examination of key research on links between program quality and developmental outcomes, a review of current practice in program quality assessment, and a set of quality-related considerations for policymakers.

Title: [Putting It All Together: Guiding Principles for Quality After-School Programs Serving Preteens](#)

Author: Rachel A. Metz, Julie Goldsmith and Amy J.A. Arbretton: Public/Private Ventures

Description: This practical guide reports on the characteristics for developing a quality afterschool program for preteens based on the latest research.

For more information on the Arizona Afterschool Standards Committee or the Continuous Quality Improvement System development, contact Melanie McClintock at 602.496.3307 or mmclintock@azafterschool.org.

Afterschool Directory Offers Targeted Marketing Opportunity!



Families are increasingly discerning consumers - in addition to a safe, nurturing environment, parents and families now look for more information when making a decision about what afterschool or summer program their children attend. Does the program have **STEM enrichment**? Is there **arts integration** or **sports**? Are **mentoring** and **leadership development** an option?

We at AzCASE know that all those things and more are happening at sites across Arizona, and **now you have a way to let parents and families know too!** The [Arizona Afterschool Program Directory](#) is the state's only bilingual, centralized database of organized afterschool and out of school time programs. Its powerful search features allow parents and families to look for programs not only geographically and age-wise, but also to **search via programming criteria**.

Current options include:

- STEM
- Mentoring
- Arts & culture
- Sports & recreation
- Character education
- Leadership
- Volunteering
- College & career readiness
- Nutrition and more!

Parents and families are looking for specific types of programming when they make afterschool and summer program decisions - **make sure they find you!**

Updating or entering data into the directory is easy!

- **If your program already has a login**, enter the directory to review your data and update your information so families can better find you.
- **If you do not yet have a login**, create one and enter the requested data to make your site readily accessible to Arizona families looking for quality afterschool programming!

[Click here to go to the Arizona Afterschool Directory!](#)

Questions? Watch the [video tutorial](#) or contact AzCASE at info@azafterschool.org or 602.496.3308.

The Fiscal Cliff and Afterschool: What Does It All Mean?



It seems that each day brings new news of sequestration cuts, the fiscal cliff, and budget woes. With just under a month left for Congress to reach a budget deal, here's an overview of the fiscal cliff and what it means for afterschool programs here in Arizona.

What is the fiscal cliff all about?

The fiscal cliff refers to the combination of tax increases and spending cuts that will happen automatically at the beginning of 2013 if Congress does not act. In an effort to force themselves to act, Congress created a mechanism of automatic cuts called sequestration, that will mean significant cuts to all federal spending, including defense, health, and education, that will be triggered unless some agreement is brokered to scale down the national deficit by the end of the year. Despite differences of opinion over taxation and spending, neither political party is keen to see the country go over the fiscal cliff.

What does this have to do with afterschool in Arizona?

The fiscal cliff and sequestration cuts have the potential to impact the Arizona afterschool community in several ways:

- The Department of Education stands to lose about eight percent of its budget. This means that the **21st Century Program**, which is federally-funded, will have less money to disperse.
- Arizona is one of several states where federal funding makes up more than 15 percent of the operating budget in over half of school districts. Sequestration cuts would mean that **school districts** will face even tighter budgets moving into the 2013-14 school year, which could lead to staff and program reductions.
- A proposed change to tax structures would cap deductions at a certain amount which could potentially have negative impacts for **charitable donations to nonprofits**, which are currently tax-deductible.
- The general impact of sequestration cuts on Arizona's economy would be harmful; education, health care, defense, and other industries in the state would be hit hard, and would in turn **increase the demand for services** while **decreasing the state's revenue**.

What is being done to fix it?

The President and Republican leadership are working on a deficit reduction deal that would allow the US to avoid triggering the automatic cuts, but [reports suggest](#) they are still far from reaching an agreement.

What can you do?

If you wish to contact your legislator to let them know your thoughts on what should be done with education funding in specific or the budget deal in general, see the resources below.

Senate:

Contact Arizona's senators, Sen. John McCain and Sen. John Kyl, [here>>](#)

House of Representatives:

Find your representative and their contact information by searching [here>>](#)

Note: Rep. Jeff Flake and Rep. Ed Pastor of Arizona are on the House Appropriations Committee, which plays a large role in shaping budget and spending decisions.

Focus on Health

Afterschool programs play a key role in the health and well-being of youth through activities that encourage healthy behaviors, an environment that includes a healthy snack or meal, and opportunities for physical activity. This section features new topics, resources, curriculum ideas and activities to help you ensure youth are fit, healthy, and ready to learn. [See a complete list of our afterschool health resources here>>](#)

Stay active for a healthy brain!



We all know there are many health benefits to fitting in regular exercise-maintaining a healthy body weight, increased energy, and stress relief to name a few - and there may be one more to add to the list. Researchers from the Center for Development of Advanced Medicine for Dementia in Japan have found that adults who exercised daily were less likely to experience frontal lobe atrophy, or a shrinkage to the part of the brain responsible for memory, emotions, judgment, problem-solving-even our personality. The research has shown that adults who incorporate the most physical activity into their daily lives, including those who took the most steps per day, were less likely than sedentary adults to develop conditions related to brain atrophy, such as dementia, as they age.

As role models, it's important that adults encourage children to form healthy habits early in life that will continue to benefit them through their lives. The CDC recommends that children engage in at least 60 minutes of aerobic activity daily. Hiking, biking, and playing sports are fun activities adults and children can do together to stay healthy and ward off disease.

[Read more about the study's findings here>>](#)

[Find out more about the CDC's recommendations here>>](#)

Health Funding Opportunities

Champions for Healthy Kids

Deadline: December 3

Through the Champions for Healthy Kids program, the General Mills Foundation will award 50 grants of \$10,000 to nonprofit organizations working to improve nutrition and physical fitness behaviors for youth. Programs should be focused towards youth ages 2-18, programs must incorporate physical education and nutrition education, and a registered dietician or registered dietetic technician must oversee the delivery of the nutrition education.

[More information>>](#)

Mantis Gardening Equipment Grants

Deadline: March 7

The National Gardening Association and Mantis will give 25 charitable and educational garden programs a Mantis Tiller/Cultivator with border/edger and kickstand and the choice of a gas-powered 2-cycle engine or electric motor. All nonprofits that enhance their local communities are eligible. Past winners include community gardens, schools, ministries, colleges, master gardening groups, and hospices.

[More information>>](#)

APS Foundation Grants

Deadline: Rolling

Through Corporate Giving, APS supports nonprofit organizations with a 501(c)(3) Internal Revenue Service tax exempt status through cash and/or in kind services. APS supports local communities in five strategic areas: health and human services, community development, education, arts and culture, and environment. Grants have been awarded to schools, recreation centers, sports programs, and many other community groups. Award Amount: Award amounts vary

[More information>>](#)

The Wal-Mart Foundation

Deadline: Rolling

The Wal-Mart Foundation supports programs and initiatives addressing education, workforce development, economic sustainability, and health and wellness. For health and wellness in particular, the Foundation looks to promote healthy lifestyles and behaviors. Organizations that meet the eligibility requirements for this program can request an application at their local Wal-Mart or Sam's Club. Award Amount: \$250 - \$5,000

[More information>>](#)

SPARK Grants

[Grant Finder Tool](#) allows you to search for Grants by location and program of interest. Grants updated daily.

Arizona's Coordinated School Health Program

Provides current funding opportunities from their partnering organizations.

[View here>>](#)

Conferences, Trainings & Seminars

Sixth Annual Children's Obesity Conference

Thursday, December 6, 2012

Desert Willow Conference Center in Phoenix

Explore children's health through the lens of this year's theme, "Mental Health and Childhood Obesity: An Exploration of the Role of Bullying, Self Esteem and Health Among Children and Families."

[More information>>](#)

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Afterschool in the News

Soft Skills, Long a Focus of Out of School Time, Gain Traction in the Classroom

In the years following No Child Left Behind and the rise in prominence of high-stakes testing, the so-called soft skills of self-efficacy, resiliency, and agency moved from the classroom to the realm of out of school time. In response to concern that today's high school students may lack the socio-emotional skills needed to be successful in college and the workplace, though, the tides may have turned. [According to Education Week](#), schools are increasingly beginning to borrow tools of the afterschool trade, realizing that problem solving and resourcefulness are just as important as math and reading ability for a youth to be college and career ready. Part of the challenge, and a reason for schools eschewing soft-skills in the first place, lies in the difficulty of assessing such talents - there's no multiple-choice test for grit.

The need for data is one shared between school and afterschool. If your program is looking for a way to measure these outcomes, consider the [assessment review report from the Forum on Youth Investment](#), which examines eight different assessments and shows how they can be put to use to help afterschool programs prove what great work they do.

Arizona Graduation Rates Lag Behind Nation's

After years of states reporting high school graduation rates based on their own unique formulas, skewing national data and making comparisons difficult, new data for the 2010-2011 school year released by the U.S. Department of Education standardized the process, and the news for Arizona is not good. The state ranks in the bottom half of the list for graduation rates, with 78 percent of students completing high school in four years. The rates for English language learners were the lowest in the nation: only 25 percent of these students completed high school in the traditional four years. This is in contrast to Texas, where the ELL graduation rate is 58 percent and California, with a 60 percent ELL graduation rate. The data clearly suggests that something needs to change; the question is, what role does afterschool have?

Read more about the reactions in Arizona [from KNAU](#) and [AZ Central](#)>>

[See national analysis and the full set of graduation data here](#)>>

Job Opportunities

**HAVE AN AFTERSCHOOL JOB OPENING
TO POST IN OUR NEWSLETTER?**

[Post it here](#)>>

First Things First

Parent Awareness & Community Outreach Coordinator (Coconino County)

[Read more](#)>>

Phoenix Elementary School District

PEER Afterschool Program Leader (Phoenix)

[Read more>>](#)

O'Connor House

Speak Out Arizona Program Coordinator (Phoenix)

[Read more>>](#)

Boys & Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Phoenix

Cause Marketing Coordinator

[Read more>>](#)

Impact Learning Specialist

[Read more>>](#)

Balsz School District

Community Liaison (Phoenix)

[Read more>>](#)

Girl Scouts Arizona Cactus-Pine

Campaign Coordinator (Phoenix)

[Read more>>](#)

[View the full list of available positions and descriptions on our website>>](#)

Funding Opportunities

***New opportunities in red**

BoatUS Foundation Grants

Deadline: December 17

The BoatUS Foundation awards nonprofit organizations up to \$10,000 for the promotion of safe and clean boating education. Over the past 20 years the Foundation has awarded over a million dollars to local community organizations, yacht clubs, flotillas and squadrons. The Foundation is looking for creative and innovative projects that promote safe and clean boating on your local waterway. Past topics have ranged from PSAs on the effects of boating under the influence to hands-on education about the effects of marine debris.

[More information>>](#)

Starbucks Youth Leadership Grants

Deadline: December 15

The Starbucks Foundation believes in developing young people to become extraordinary leaders, by investing in the leadership skills required for the changing global economy. At this time there are more than 1.2 billion 15 to 24 year olds, the largest global cohort of young people in history. Unfortunately, a growing number of these young people are disengaged and unemployed, often referred to as NEET (not engaged in employment, education, or training). The Starbucks Foundation is interested in supporting organizations that equip young people ages 15 to 24 years old in the areas of business savvy, social conscience, and collaborative communication.

[More information>>](#)

National Science Foundation STEM Grants Deadline: January 14, 2012

The Advancing Informal STEM Learning program invests in research and development of innovative and field advancing out of school STEM learning and emerging STEM learning environments.

[More information>>](#)

Community Action Grants

Deadline: January 15, 2013

The American Association of University Women is offering Community Action Grants to individuals, AAUW branches, AAUW state organizations, and community-based non-profit organizations that propose programs promoting education and equity for women and girls. One-year grants of \$2,000-\$7,000 will provide seed money for new projects whose topics include a clearly-defined activity that promotes education and equity for women and girls. Two-year grants of \$5,000-\$10,000 will provide start-up funds for longer-term programs that address the particular needs of the community and develop girls' sense of efficacy through leadership or advocacy opportunities. Special consideration will be given to projects focused on K-12 and community college girls' and women's achievements in science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM).

[More information>>](#)

Department of Veterans Affairs Grants

Deadline: February 1, 2013

The Department of Veterans Affairs is funding Supportive Services for Veterans' Families grants, available to nonprofits that provide assistance to the children and families of service members.

[More information>>](#)

The Big Read Grants

Deadline: February 5, 2013

Encourage literacy in your community! Approximately 75 organizations in communities of varying sizes across the country will be selected to participate in The Big Read from September 2013 through June 2014. Community organizations participating in The Big Read develop and produce community-wide reading programs which encourage reading and participation by diverse audiences. Applicant organizations for The Big Read must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit; a division of state, local, or tribal government; or a tax-exempt public library.

[More information>>](#)

Captain Planet Foundation Grants

Deadline: February 28, 2013

The CPF annually funds projects that serve as catalysts to getting environment-based education in schools and inspire youth and communities to participate in community service through environmental stewardship activities. Recipients of these awards are often schools and nonprofits that propose projects involving children and young adults (aged 6-18). Generally, the sum of awarded grants is between \$250-2,500.

[More information>>](#)

Michael and Susan Dell Foundation Grants

Deadline: Rolling

The Michael and Susan Dell Foundation is committed to alleviating urban children experiencing poverty and gives grants of varying amounts to charitable or tax-exempt organizations. The Foundation seeks to fund projects that directly serve or impact children in 5 essential focus areas: education, health, safety, youth development, and early childhood care. The MSDF will review submitted online grant proposals and respond via e-mail within six weeks. If they find the proposed project to be aligned with their mission, the applicant will be asked to complete a formal grant application for funding.

[More information>>](#)

W.K. Kellogg Grants

Deadline: Rolling

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation is accepting proposals for new and innovative ideas aimed at helping vulnerable children succeed. Areas of interest include educated kids, healthy kids, secure families, racial equity, and civic engagement. Proposals are accepted throughout the year, and grants range in size.

[More information>>](#)

[Find more resources and funding opportunities on our website>>](#)

Awards, Contests & Fellowships

Phoenix Outstanding Young Man & Young Woman of the Year Awards

Deadline: December 7

Do you know any outstanding high school students? The City of Phoenix is seeking exceptional students for its 27th Annual Outstanding Young Man and Young Woman of the Year Awards. One exceptional young man and young woman will be selected for recognition from each of the eight City Council districts. Of the 16 finalists, a deserving young man and young woman will be awarded the honor of Citywide Young Man/Young Woman of the Year, and will each receive an additional prize!

For more information, contact the Neighborhood Services Department at 602-534-4444 or mailbox.youth@phoenix.gov
[More information>>](#)

Governor's Arts Awards

Deadline: December 14

Arizona Citizens for the Arts is now accepting nominations for the 2012 Governor's Arts Awards in the following categories; Artist, Arts in Education (Individual) Arts in Education (Organization), Business, Community and Individual. These awards recognize those who have made significant contributions to the arts in Arizona.

[More information>>](#)

NASA Optimus Prime Challenge

Registration Deadline: December 15

Have you taken a picture with your cell phone camera lately? Or slept on a memory-foam mattress or pillow? If so, you've had a spinoff in your life. Like OPTIMUS PRIME, they come from space. They are among us, right now, in forms you may not recognize, and they work to save lives and protect our planet. The NASA Optimus Prime contest lets kids share the benefits of NASA technologies by making a video about their favorite spinoff, to be submitted and voted on.

[More information>>](#)

Stephen Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Awards

Deadline: December 16

The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is seeking nominations for the 2013 Kennedy Center/Stephen Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Awards, a series of annual grants that recognize inspiring teachers in the United States. To be eligible, nominees must be legal residents of the U.S. Nominations must be based on experience as a full-time classroom teacher in a K-12 school in the U.S. or as a college or university instructor in the U.S. Nominators must be at least 18 years of age and have been a student of the nominee. Nominations for teachers by peers, parents, relatives, or other individuals based on non-teacher-student interactions will not be reviewed.

[More information>>](#)

Governor's Volunteer Service Awards

Deadline: January 15

Know a youth, an adult, or an organization that has gone above and beyond in service to others? The Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism is accepting nominations for the 12th Annual Governor's Volunteer Service Awards. Nomination forms will be accepted through January 15, 2013, with the award recipient announcement made in March 2013. Those selected as this year's recipients of the Governor's Volunteer Service Award will be honored at a special reception in April 2013.

[More information>>](#)

Volvo Adventure Competition

Deadline: January 31

Volvo Adventure, in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme, is an educational program that rewards environmental activities outside of the classroom. To enter, students between the ages of 13-16 must form a team of 2-5 members and perform an environmental project in their local community. The best projects will be selected for an all-expenses-paid trip to Göteborg, Sweden where the top 3 teams will win \$4,000-10,000.

[More information>>](#)

2013 Excellence in Summer Learning Award

Deadline: February 8

The National Summer Learning Association's Excellence in Summer Learning Award recognizes outstanding summer programs that demonstrate excellence in accelerating academic achievement and promoting healthy development for young people between kindergarten and twelfth grade. In addition to recognizing the Excellence Award-winning programs, NSLA will also recognize summer learning innovations in high-interest categories such as, but not limited to: Family Engagement, Digital Learning, Health and Nutrition, Early Literacy, and New Vision for Summer School. All programs also receive detailed written feedback--highlighting both strengths and recommendations for improvement based on NSLA's quality standards.

[More information>>](#)

Christopher Columbus Awards

Deadline: February 4, 2013

The Christopher Columbus Awards is a national, community-based science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) program for middle school students. The program challenges the students to work in teams of three to four, with an adult coach, to identify a problem in their community and apply the scientific method to create an innovative solution to that problem. Eight finalist teams and their coaches will receive an all-expense-paid trip to Walt Disney World® to attend National Championship Week and compete for cash prizes and the \$25,000 Columbus Foundation Community Grant, plus a \$200 development grant to further refine their idea.

[More information>>](#)

Arizona Rubik's Tournament

Competition: March 2, ASU West Campus

Introduce kids to a classic puzzle, the Rubik's cube! The tournament will consist of teams of eight students in grades K-12 plus a teacher/coach, divided into elementary, middle school, and high school divisions. The teams will be competing to collectively solve 25 Rubik's Cubes.

[More information>>](#)

Trainings & Conferences

WEBINAR -- Feeding America's Children After School

December 5, 11 AM

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 opened up a new federal funding source for afterschool programs across the country by expanding the At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program to all states. This year, in addition to coordinating with the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) to promote child nutrition programs within the afterschool and summer learning space, the Afterschool Alliance is working with ES Foods to increase participation in this important program. This webinar is intended for afterschool providers interested in bringing afterschool meals to their program.

[More information>>](#)

WEBINAR -- Getting Better Every Day: Improve with Camp Program Quality Assessment

December 11, 11 AM - 12:30 PM

Everyone wants to improve their programs but often struggles to find effective options. This webinar is focused on helping participants become familiar with a program self-assessment process conducted with the Camp Program Quality Assessment (C-PQA), an instrument developed by ACA and the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality. We will share how the C-PQA might be used in camp programs as well as provide related training resources. A program administrator from the Camp Fire National Headquarters will share insights from recent implementation of the C-PQA used as a part of the Camp Fire Program Quality Initiative. Join us to jump-start YOUR improvement process!

[More information>>](#)

WEBINAR -- STEM in Afterschool Virtual Tour

December 12, 11 AM

The webinar will provide an opportunity to ask questions and learn how the Afterschool Alliance is supporting STEM after school through field-building, policy and advocacy, and research. Join our STEM director and STEM research assistant for an interactive virtual tour of the resources available on our website, and an overview of recent and upcoming STEM publications for the afterschool field.

[More information>>](#)

WEBINAR -- Federal Student Aid: Tools & Resources for College Access Professionals

December 13, 10 AM - 11:30 PM

This webinar, part of a series presented by the Arizona College Access Network, will be conducted by representatives from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) in collaboration with AzCAN. The webinar will highlight the new tools and resources available to college readiness organizations, community-based organizations, and families, as well as touch on the 2013-14 FAFSA updates.

[More information>>](#)

Mapping to the Core

January 24, 2013, Grand Canyon University, Phoenix

Hosted by Grand Canyon University and the Arizona Department of Education, this dynamic professional development opportunity helps schools take a deeper approach to using the Common Core Standards to map their curriculum. Dr. Heidi Hayes Jacobs will lead the training, showing how the switch to Common Core offers the opportunity to upgrade teaching and learning for 21st century learners.

[More information>>](#)

Beyond School Hours XVI

February 20-23, 2013, Jacksonville, FL

Beyond School Hours XVI will be held February 20-23 at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront in Florida. Conference participants will learn how to successfully engage older youth, see best practices in action and connect with education leaders. Ron Clark, the 2000 Disney American Teacher of the Year and two-time New York Times bestselling author, will be the keynote speaker.

[More information>>](#)

22nd Annual Celebrate the Young Child Conference

March 9, 2013, Glendale Civic Center

One of the largest Early Childhood Conferences in Arizona, the Celebrate the Young Child Conference provides a full day of training for over 600 early childhood professionals. It is sponsored by Association for

Supportive Child Care and the Arizona Child Care Association, and offers professional development and networking opportunities.

[More information>>](#)

Best of Out of School Time Conference

May 1-4, 2013, Palm Springs, CA

BOOST invites you to join the nation's largest, most recognized and comprehensive conference for after school and out-of-school time professionals. Set in a retreat-like atmosphere, this conference promises to rejuvenate your passion and boost your direction for quality programming.

[More information>>](#)

Community Events

Pueblo Grande Annual Indian Market

December 8-9

Pueblo Grande Museum, 4619 E Washington, Phoenix

Be a part of a Phoenix tradition, and join Pueblo Grande Museum and the Pueblo Grande Museum Auxiliary as they hold the 36th Annual Indian Market at Pueblo Grande Museum on Saturday 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Sunday 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. The Indian Market features top Native American artist's paintings, sculptures, jewelry, baskets and much more. There will be music and dance performances scheduled throughout, artist demonstrations, and traditional Native American foods including delicious, authentic frybread. Admission is \$5 for adults and children under 12 are free. Price includes the market and the museum exhibits.

[More information>>](#)

Discovery Second Saturday

December 8, 2 PM - 4 PM

The Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff

Join MNA for exciting kids' programs, hands-on activities, and creative crafts. Programs are included with admission and take from 2-4 p.m. Family and kids of all ages are welcome. Come investigate a Very Flagstaff Winter!

[More information>>](#)

A Charlie Brown Holiday

December 14, 4:30-6:30

Bret Tarver Learning Center, 1516 N 35th Ave, Phoenix

A great free holiday event with crafts, hot coco and a movie in the park! Free, ages 7-12. For more information call 602.262.7127.

La Fiesta de Guadalupe

December 16, 10 AM - 4 PM

DeGrazia Gallery in the Sun, 6300 N Swan, Tucson

This free annual festival celebrates Mexico's patron saint with spirited outdoor performances by youthful mariachi and folklorico groups, a Yaqui deer dance, Domingo DeGrazia's Spanish-Guitar Band, and Las Posadas procession by Carrillo Magnet School students. Piñatas filled with treats are hoisted hourly for the kids while vendors offer regional food. Community Food Bank donations requested.

SRP EarthWise Energy Contest

Vote until December 31

Six local nonprofits, including the Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley and the Phoenix Zoo, are finalists to win a solar energy system from SRP. SRP uses customer contributions to build solar projects for Valley nonprofits - allowing them to focus their funding on the communities they serve. Vote by December 31st, only one vote per address.

[More information>>](#)

Resources, Research & Reports

Word Generation Brings Vocabulary To Life

It's been said that the achievement gap is a literacy gap, and that the literacy gap is a word gap. Programs can take steps to close that gap with Word Generation, a research-based vocabulary program designed to teach words through language arts, math, science, and social studies. The program is geared towards older students (middle school and high school), and features a collection of units that introduce each introduces 5 high-use academic target words through brief passages outlining controversies currently under debate in this country. The paragraphs are intended to help students join ongoing "national conversations" by sparking active examination and discussion of contemporary issues. This introduction is followed by cross-content activities that allow students to interact with the words in multiple contexts, cementing their understanding. While presented for use in the traditional classroom, the debates, experiments, and writing activities could easily be used in the out of school context. Kids sharpen critical thinking skills as they discuss and analyze issues ranging from junk food to Title IX to cloning, all the while picking up key academic vocabulary crucial to college and career readiness.

[Find out more and download the free materials here>>](#)

Financing STEM Guide: Know Your Funders

STEM continues to be a hot topic among both afterschool providers and funders. The trick is how to get everyone speaking the same language so innovative projects and funding can find one another. The Afterschool Alliance's guide to STEM funding offers an overview of the major players in the STEM funding landscape, both public and private, as well as highlighting how to lay the groundwork to successfully finance a STEM program.

[Read the guide here>>](#)

[Get more resources to make the case for STEM afterschool>>](#)

Featured Activity



Popsicle Stick Snowflakes

Whether you're in northern Arizona or a part of the state somewhat less likely to have a white winter, this month's budget-friendly art project is sure to be a crowd pleaser.

Materials:

Popsicle sticks

Paint

Glitter or other decorations (optional)

Construction paper place mats or something similar to protect work surfaces (optional)

Instructions:

1. Have kids select popsicle sticks and work on arranging them into snowflake pattern.
2. After deciding on a design, arrange over the place mats and glue popsicle sticks together. Leave to dry.
3. Once the glue had dried, paint the snowflakes, adding glitter or other decorative touches if desired.
4. Display once paint has dried.

Academic enrichment options:

- Introduce a trickle of environmental science with a discussion of precipitation and the water cycle.
- Talk geography and climate. Think through with kids why it snows in some places and not others.
- Mix in some math! Use the popsicle sticks to work on counting and addition or subtraction with younger kids. Challenge older kids to use acute or obtuse angles as they make their masterpieces.

[See this and other art project ideas from Mrs. Picasso's Art Room blog here>>](#)



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