

The Delaware Afterschool Network (DEAN) celebrates STEM Afterschool Professionals
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April 25th through April 29th is Afterschool Professional Appreciation Week! Afterschool Appreciation Week recognizes those who work with youth during out-of-school hours. The week is commemorated by celebrations and public relations efforts to encourage people to thank afterschool professionals who make a difference in the lives of young people in their communities.

An estimated 10.2 million children participate in afterschool programs each year. The 2020 Delaware After 3 PM report shows 16,237 children participate in afterschool programs, and 14,188 children have opportunities to participate in S.T.E.M. learning in those programs. Compared to the previous America After 3 PM survey, the percentage of families reporting their child's afterschool program offers S.T.E.M. learning has increased.

In the last decade, one of the most notable transformations in the S.T.E.M. educational landscape is the rise of the out-of-school-time sector as a leading provider of S.T.E.M. enrichment. We know that afterschool programs have become more than just childcare and are credited with enhancing academic and life outcomes for the youth they serve. High-quality O.S.T. programs provide young people with rich, engaging learning experiences, coupling S.T.E.M. concepts with hands-on activities that foster youth voice and choice and apply S.T.E.M. to real-world social contexts.

As a S.T.E.M. Next Million Girls Moonshot grant recipient, DEAN and our partners are helping students, especially girls, and BIPOC, see who they can be by breaking the generational cycle of poverty and reducing income inequality. All children, regardless of zip code, race, ethnicity, national origin, or gender, have a fundamental right to the opportunity to prepare for the knowledge-based economy.

We want to celebrate all STEM-related programs and staff! Thank you to programs using the Mizzen by Mott app and Million Girls Moonshot asset packages resources, activities, and professional development webinars/training! And a special thank you to Candice Brown - Let's P.L.A.Y. Events, Joy Dixon - Scholars Turf Youth Lounge, Stephen Wilkerson - Bellevue Community Center, Tasha Esham – Laurel Boys & Girls Clubs, Melissa Ockels - Seaford Boys & Girls Club, Teresa Allen - Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center, Marion Austin - WINNERS, and U.W.D.E. Bancroft 21st Century Community Learning Center staff for providing access to quality S.T.E.M. learning opportunities and activities for our young people and their families.

Now, it's your turn to let the afterschool professionals in your life know how important they are and how much you appreciate their hard work. Help spread the word on Afterschool Professionals Appreciation Week by downloading flyers or images on social media. For more information on how to support Afterschool Professionals Appreciation Week, click here.