**MASN Afterschool Ambassador Program Overview 2023-24**

The goal of the Afterschool Ambassador program, founded by the MASN Public Policy and Awareness Committee, is to empower up-and-coming leaders in the field of afterschool to confidently and effectively advocate for afterschool for all Missouri children. Ambassadors will build relationships with state and local elected officials through in-person meetings, phone calls, emails and social media. You will receive training that will prepare you for outreach to policymakers and other leaders, then participate in events and activities to promote afterschool programs and the policies that make them possible. This is a great opportunity to amplify your work to serve Missouri youth.

**Eligibility**

We welcome anyone with a strong passion for afterschool and an interest in advocacy to apply. This can include, but is not limited to, afterschool professionals (directors, managers, front-line staff, etc.) school administrators, city or county-level officials, and more. However, we will limit selection to one person per organization.

Ambassadors Emeritus (returning ambassadors) do not need to reapply. They can simply complete the program evaluation and indicate that they want to continue.

**Monthly meetings**

Meetings will occur the third Wednesday of the month. Monthly meetings will be held 11 a.m.-12 p.m. and 6:30-7:30 p.m. We host a morning and evening session to try to accommodate all ambassador schedules. In November the ambassador meeting will meet in person at the MOSAC conference, with a virtual option for ambassadors who cannot attend MOSAC.

**One-on-one meetings**

This year, there will be two one-on-one meetings for each ambassador, one in September, and another during the legislative spring break (time TBA). These will be 30-min meetings between an ambassador and Natalie or Deborah to check in on your work.

**Regional ambassador meetings**

This year, we will schedule 1-2 virtual, regional meetings for ambassadors to attend.

KC, STL, SW, SE, Mid-MO, N. The goal of these meetings will be to collaborate among other ambassadors in your region and conversely, to avoid duplication. Other regional members on the policy committee may also join. Each region will have a leader responsible for coordinating the meetings. Ambassadors who do not fall neatly into one of the regions may decide to which region they want to belong.

**Policy pals**

Each new ambassador will be paired with an Ambassador Emeritus as their “Policy Pal.” The experienced ambassador will serve as a mentor for the new ambassador. The Ambassadors Emeritus will schedule short check in meetings with the new ambassadors monthly. Ambassadors Emeritus who are not paired with a new ambassador will be paired with another Ambassador Emeritus to help motivate one another and provide accountability. You will check in with one another monthly via whatever method you choose.

Please initiate contact with your Policy Pal by August 31, 2023.

During the one-on-one meetings in September, we will check in to see whether you have had contact with your policy pal. If one partner has attempted to contact the other and has not heard back, we will “re-pair” you with another ambassador.

**MOSAC**

Ambassadors will convene at the MOSAC conference for a social gathering and monthly ambassador meeting. They will receive a discount off of registration. Ambassadors who have financial constraints may contact Natalie Hampton to discuss arrangements. This is an optional gathering for ambassadors. This may change based the input of the Ambassador Planning Committee.

**Ambassador Planning Committee**

The ambassador program has a newly-established planning committee comprised of several ambassadors emeritus. They will provide feedback on ambassador training, MOSAC and other events and activities in which ambassadors participate.

**Show Me Afterschool Day**

**Jefferson City, February 21, 2024**

Ambassadors will convene in Jefferson City on February 20, 2024, the afternoon before Show Me Afterschool Day, for a social event and training before Show Me Afterschool Day at the Capitol. MASN will cover the hotel and food.

**Messaging Weeks**

We often hear from legislators that the best way to increase our efficacy is to make sure that we are not showing up *only* for our capitol day. That is why we have added two messaging weeks with activities around a specific message – one around mental health/substance use prevention in afterschool and another around workforce development in afterschool. The week will include a mail piece to legislators, phone calls, social media and a booth in the rotunda. This is a great time for you to visit the capitol. During both weeks, the capitol day (the actual day we will be there in person) will be on Wednesday of that week.

January 22-26, 2024 Mental health messaging week (Capitol visit Jan 24)

April 1-5, 2024 Workforce Development messaging week (Capitol visit Apr. 3)

**Policy Committee Meetings**

Ambassadors are encourage to attend, but not “required.” These meetings will be virtual, with the exception of the policy retreat, which will likely be at Lake of the Ozarks.

* Thur. Sept 14, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
* Wed. December 15, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
* Wed. March 13, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
* Thur. May 16, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
* Retreat in June

**Expectations**

When ambassadors fulfill the terms of their ambassadorship, they will receive a $500 stipend at the end of their term. In order to receive the $500 stipend at the completion of your term, you will need to:

* Participate regularly in ambassador meetings and activities
* Complete a project deliverable plan (see project deliverable page)
* Complete three approved project deliverables. Each deliverable will relate to Missouri AfterSchool Network policy goals of raising awareness about the benefits and needs of afterschool programs statewide.
* Complete a final report on deliverables

**Benefits**

Your service as an ambassador will benefit Missouri children but you will also benefit from the program:

* Building partnerships to ensure that your program maintains funding
* Networking with other advocates and mentorship from MASN staff and returning ambassadors
* Honing communication, public speaking and leadership development skills
* Preparing you to run for office or become more engaged in the political process
* $500 stipend at the end of your term after fulfilling the required criteria