WARWICK BEACON

Date: Thursday, October 13, 2011
Location: WARWICK, RI
Circulation (DMA): 7,383 (51)
Type (Frequency): Newspaper (2WK)
Page: A15
Keyword: Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance

Youth advocate, Rhodes Scholar to highlight value of afterschool programs

A select few will ever have the distinction of appearing on the cover of *TIME* magazine, but Wes Moore, keynote speaker at the upcoming Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance's 9th Annual Lights On Afterschool! Breakfast of Champions, is counted among those few.

The RIASPA event is Friday Oct. 21 at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet in Cranston and welcomes educators, professionals in the field of afterschool education, and the general public.

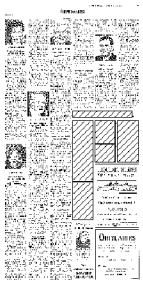
Wes Moore appears on the cover of *TIME* magazine's Aug. 29 issue as one of the nation's "New Greatest Generation." He is an author, youth advocate and Rhodes Scholar. Moore originaly came to prominence for his book, "The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates." The book is a memoir about his life and another man named Wes Moore. Coincidentally, the two are close in age and grew up in the same Baltimore neighborhood. The juxtaposition between their lives prompted the author to reach out to his namesake. He learned that at each stage of their adoescent lives, at similarly decsive moments, they would head down different paths due to adult involvement. One became educated at Johns Hopkins and Oxford Universities and served in the U.S. Army in Afghanistan; the other was imprisoned as a convicted murderer.

A book signing with Moore follows the RIASPA breakfast, after which he will lead a workshop to engage and encourage local youth.

The breakfast coincides with the national celebration of Lights On Afterschool!, which recognizes afterschool programs, drawing attention to the fact that high-quality afterschool and summer learning programs are crucial to children, youth, families and communities. Locally, RIASPA's annual Breakfast of Champions showcases the importance of afterschool and summer programs and increases awareness and support for those programs among policymakers, funders and decision makers.

At the event, RIASPA will present awards to exemplary programs, afterschool practitioners, and advocates. Also, there will be youth performances and a youth art gallery.

The event runs from 7:45 to 9:30 a.m. and is open to the public. The registration fee for the RIASPA Lights On Afterschool! Breakfast of Champions is $50. Tickets are on sale through Friday, Oct. 14. The event's registration form is available at RIASPA's website, www.afterschoolri.org, and must be mailed with a check or money order to, RIASPA, c/o Joseph Morra, 50 Valley St., Providence, RI, 02909. For more event information, contact 401-444-0615 or joseph.morra@afterschoolri.org.



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RI-29
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