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Reggie Love, Former Personal Aide to President Barack Obama, Education Advocate and Entrepreneur, to Keynote ‘Summer Changes Everything™’ National Conference, October 23-25 in Phoenix

National Summer Learning Association Convenes National Conversation on Summer and Afterschool Programs as Essential Investments in Helping America’s Students Thrive

(Baltimore, MD –September 11, 2017) – Research shows that summers without quality learning opportunities hold our nation’s youth back – year after year – in core subjects like math and reading, making summer one of the most inequitable times of the year for millions of underserved students. And now, just as school is back in session, this inequality may only grow and the accompanying achievement gap may only get wider because of the threat of federal budget cuts that could take away out-of-school learning resources critical to academic success. With this environment as a backdrop, the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) is bringing together nearly 800 out-of-school time providers, school district administrators, community leaders, funders, and thought leaders for its Summer Changes Everything™ conference on October 23-25th in Phoenix, Arizona.

As the foremost authority on summer learning quality practices, policy and research, NSLA is leading the national movement to elevate the essential role that summer and afterschool programs have in closing the achievement gap and stemming inequality by helping students thrive year-round. Bringing together stakeholders from across the country to share different perspectives, the NSLA is striving to formulate a cohesive Marshall Plan to propel out-of-school learning to the forefront and maximize the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA includes provisions that help ensure success for students and schools, advancing equity by upholding critical protections for America’s disadvantaged and high-need students. The law offers new opportunities that build on partnerships and proven strategies – such as summer learning that leverages the collective efforts of educators, communities, parents, and students across the country.

This year’s theme – “We’ve Got the Power!” – calls upon educators, community members, policymakers and philanthropic leaders to “step up, speak out and stand in” the gap on behalf of our nation’s children. The landmark findings and additional resources from the Wallace Foundation’s National Summer

Learning Project will offer critical insights and strategies to help communities shape quality summer and afterschool programs and effectively scale up what's working across America.

The national conference will feature a line-up of notable speakers and industry influencers, including, Reggie Love, former personal aide to President Barack Obama who is now Vice President of the Transatlantic Energy Group. Prior to joining Transatlantic, Mr. Love served in the Executive Office of the President as personal aide to President Obama from 2007-2011 and is the author of New York Times Best Seller, *Power Forward, My Presidential Education*, which is a collection of stories and principles learned during his journey working for President Obama and being a captain for the all-time most winning NCAA coach, Mike Krzyzewski. His full bio can be found [here](#).

Other featured speakers include:

- Gigi Antoni, Director of Learning and Enrichment - The Wallace Foundation
- Jennifer McCombs, Senior Policy Researcher and Director, Behavioral and Policy Sciences Department - RAND Corporation
- Alejandro Gac-Artigas, Founder and Chief Executive Officer - Springboard Collaborative
- Margaret McKenna, Former President of the Walmart Foundation and Member of the Massachusetts Board of Education
- David Park, Executive Vice President of Communications and Strategy - Learning Heroes
- Marlyn Torres, Senior Program Officer - New York Life Foundation

NSLA will also honor four exemplary programs recently announced as having earned the coveted **2017 New York Life Foundation Excellence in Summer Learning Award**, recognizing summer programs demonstrating excellence in accelerating academic achievement and promoting healthy development for low-income children and youth.

“It is crucial that children across all income levels have access to essential services and programs during the summer, so that they can reach their greatest potential and not fall behind,” said Matthew Boulay, NSLA CEO. “We must work together with educators, community leaders, political figures and corporate influencers to help shape smarter summers, brighter futures for our nation’s children.”

The conference offers more than 60 sessions, interactive workshops, and numerous networking opportunities. Summer Changes Everything™'s is supported in part by national conference media sponsor *Youth Today* and the following partners: The Wallace Foundation, Best Buy/Geek Squad Academy, Carson-Dellosa Publishing Group, EverFi, iHeartMedia, MyOn, Scholastic, STEMfinity, New York Life Foundation and Write Brain Books. For the full schedule, click [here](#).

To register for the conference visit [here](#). To learn more about becoming an exhibitor or sponsor visit [here](#).

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About National Summer Learning Association

The National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) is the only national nonprofit exclusively focused on closing the achievement gap by increasing access to high-quality summer learning opportunities. NSLA recognizes and disseminates what works in summer learning, develops and delivers capacity-building offerings and convenes and empowers key actors to embrace summer learning as a solution for equity and excellence in education. For more information, visit www.summerlearning.org.