September 15, 2025

Presenting the Out of School Time Champion Awards to deserving individuals is always a highlight at the VPOST annual conference. This year, though, was even more special, as we renamed the award in honor of **Roberta Newman**, a nationally recognized leader, trainer, author, and force of nature in the world of child and youth development!  
  
 Before many educators were thinking about before or after school, Roberta was thinking and planning how early childhood, school-age, and summer supports and enrichments for **all** kids would reap benefits for them and their families.  
  
 During her time directing the Fairfax County School-Age Child Care program, she helped expand and elevate more than 90 before- and afterschool programs, impacting thousands of children and families across the region. Prior to VPOST, Roberta was instrumental in several organizations that advanced early child care and school-age programming, leading to many successful advancements in the field. She was a founding member of the National School-Age Child Care Association (now the [National Afterschool Association](https://app.getresponse.com/click.html?x=a62b&co=Bv9h5h&lc=zidU1R&mc=It&s=BGy4vud&u=hmzpc&z=EhwqGmY&)) and established the American Child Care Foundation, which hosted two national conferences promoting quality school-age childcare prior to the establishment of NAA. Roberta also developed a widely used video training program for afterschool staff, *Keys to Quality in School-Age Child Care,* which aimed to elevate the professionalism of the afterschool field.  
  
 She has been a frequent keynote speaker at out-of-school time state and national conferences, including the Yale University *Schools of the 21st Century Conference,* an annual conference founded by Dr. Edward F. Zigler, “the father of Head Start.” Roberta has also authored six books, 36 online training modules for afterschool staff, and worked as a consultant to the Department of Defense to create the *Caring for Children in School-Age* training program and credential for military school-age childcare providers.

Roberta’s connection to VPOST runs long and deep. She has served on the VPOST Leadership Advisory Council since its early years and actively engaged in the development of quality standards for out-of-school time programs. She also served on conference planning committees for statewide conferences for staff and community leaders. In addition, Roberta served on the inaugural Virginia Early Childhood Advisory Committee (ECAC), operated by the [Virginia Department of Education](https://app.getresponse.com/click.html?x=a62b&co=Bv9h5h&lc=zidUbg&mc=It&s=BGy4vud&u=hmzpc&z=EyPhMXv&) to implement legislation passed during Governor Ralph Northam’s tenure.

Today, [Roberta continues to drive change from Virginia’s Eastern Shore](https://app.getresponse.com/click.html?x=a62b&co=Bv9h5h&lc=zidUNL&mc=It&s=BGy4vud&u=hmzpc&z=EQrPClq&) where she is a Board member of the Eastern Shore Community College Foundation, served as President for three years and received the Virginia Community College System Leadership in Philanthropy Award; Board member of the Cape Charles Rosenwald School Restoration Initiative (now operating as The Impact Center at Cape Charles Elementary - a Washington/Rosenwald School), Executive Director of Go & Grow Eastern Shore (GAGES); and Coordinator of the GAGES Annual KIDS COUNT Forum.

This year and beyond, individuals selected to receive The **Roberta Newman OST Champion Awards** will embody her legacy of work that inspires their peers, empowers their communities, and transforms the lives of young people. Roberta truly is the heart of the OST field.