

Help a Child in Your Life Prepare for a Successful Future

By: First Lady Sandra Deal

Family is such an important part of my life. As a mother of four and a grandmother of six, much of my life's focus has been spent working to create a bright future for them.

As a teacher, my goal expanded to help many other children. I wanted to teach every child in my classroom to the best of my ability, because I know nothing is more important to creating a successful life than a strong education.

Now, as First Lady, I am honored that I have the opportunity to devote myself to the betterment of even more children, all across the state of Georgia. It is a responsibility I take very seriously.

Born to parents who were also teachers, I grew up in a household that valued a sound and strong education. I learned first-hand how important reading is to every child's long-term success.

That is why I helped launch a new statewide literacy initiative called *Read Across Georgia*. Through this program, I hope to share the significance of reading with children at schools and libraries throughout our state. With the help of Georgia writers and illustrators, it is my goal to reach as many children as possible and help each improve their reading skills. I also hope to impart an appreciation for reading and create lifetime readers.

At one of my recent *Read Across Georgia* stops, I had the pleasure of joining our state libraries and Georgia's college savings plan to launch a new summer reading program called *One World, Many Stories*, along with exciting new *Destination College Savings Sweepstakes*.

I hope Georgia families will take this opportunity to enter their child in the summer reading program and enter for a chance to win \$5,529 toward his or her college savings. *Destination College Savings Sweepstakes* is sponsored by the Path2College 529 Plan.

The partnership between the Georgia Public Library Service and the State's Path2College 529 Plan highlights the value our state is placing on reading and on saving early for college. Both are so important to a student's success.

College costs and entrance requirements are getting tougher every year, but through these free programs and sweepstakes, many more families may receive help.

Read Across Georgia, *One World, Many Stories* and the *Destination College Savings Sweepstakes* are three new ways we are working together to provide more Georgia children with the opportunity to improve their reading skills and advance their education.

I hope you will take part. I encourage every parent and adult in a child's life to get involved, because reading and saving early for college will both pay out enormous benefits in the years ahead.

By working together, we can help more Georgia children achieve greater academic success, attend and graduate from college and put them on the path to a brighter future.

(Go to www.path2college529.com for sweepstakes entry deadline and official rules. No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited).

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