

Nathan Deal
GOVERNOR



Georgia Student Finance Commission
Georgia Student Finance Authority
Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation
GAfutures.org

Shawn Ryan
PRESIDENT

For Immediate Release:
June 20, 2017

Media Contact: Chris Green
770.724.9008

Governor Nathan Deal, First Lady Sandra Deal Host Annual Valedictorian Reception

ATLANTA - On June 16 and 17, 2017, over 500 Georgia valedictorians and their families visited the Georgia Governor's Mansion for the 24th annual Governor's Valedictorian Reception.

Cosponsored by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) and the Governor's Office, Governor Nathan Deal and First Lady Sandra Deal hosted the annual Valedictorian Reception to celebrate the valedictorians and their families, a tradition started in 1993 by Governor Zell Miller.

"Due to your hard work and dedication in pursuit of your goals, you have been recognized as the finest young minds across Georgia," said Deal. "As you move on to the next chapter of your lives, remember to walk humbly and to continue to work hard, as hard work produces great accomplishments. I also urge you to always remember where you come from, as you are the future of our great state and nation."

To accommodate the large number of students being recognized, the Valedictorian Reception is divided into three sessions over the course of two days. Valedictorians from metro-Atlanta attended the reception on Friday evening, valedictorians from north Georgia attended on Saturday morning and valedictorians from south Georgia attended on Saturday afternoon.

In addition to the valedictorians and their guests, board members from the University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents, the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) Board of Directors, the GSFC Board of Commissioners and the State of Georgia Board of Education also attended the annual reception.

Prior to remarks from the Governor, valedictorians and their guests heard advice from First Lady Sandra Deal, GSFC President Shawn Ryan, USG Chancellor Steve Wrigley, TCSG Commissioner Gretchen Corbin and State School Superintendent Richard Woods.

"The Valedictorian Reception is not only a way to acknowledge and celebrate Georgia's brightest young minds, but it is also a rare opportunity to gather them all under one roof. Hearing these young men and women discuss their plans for the future shows Georgia has a bright future ahead," said Shawn Ryan, President of the Georgia Student Finance Commission.

About the Georgia Student Finance Commission

GSFC is the state agency that administers the HOPE Scholarship and Grant Program as well as other state- and lottery-funded financial aid programs. GSFC also manages the career and college preparation website, GAfutures.org and provides educational services such as free financial aid consultation, and financial literacy to elementary, middle and high schools, and postsecondary institutions across the state. Additional information about GSFC programs and services is available at gsfc.georgia.gov, www.GAfutures.org or 1.800.505.GSFC (4732).