

COLLEGE SAVINGS MONTH

- WHEREAS: Georgia families recognize that a college education is one of the most important things we can do for our children to prepare them for success in life. However, the constantly rising costs of a college education can, without proper planning, jeopardize a family's ability to ensure their children have access to higher education; and
- WHEREAS: There is an earnings gap between those with a high school diploma and those with a college degree or beyond that exceeds \$1 million, making college an investment in our children's future; and
- WHEREAS: Loan programs are a major source of financial aid for college students, and college students are graduating with more debt than in previous decades. Almost two-thirds of college students graduate with debt, and many college graduates repay large amounts of debt long after they have completed their education; and
- WHEREAS: It is in the best interest of Georgia families to encourage saving for higher education expenses so that access to educational opportunities is enhanced for our children, grandchildren and others, without the crushing burden of education loan debt; and
- WHEREAS: In accordance with state and federal law, the State of Georgia operates the Georgia Higher Education Savings Plan, a Section 529 college savings plan that offers both state and federal tax advantages to encourage saving for the expense of higher education and to promote educational opportunity for all Georgians; now
- THEREFORE: I, SONNY PERDUE, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim September 2006, as COLLEGE SAVINGS MONTH in Georgia and call upon all Georgians to join me in recognizing the value of higher education and to begin saving early and consistently for our children's future.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this 30th day of August in the year of our Lord two thousand six.