



Nathan Deal
Governor

Amy Jacobs
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Reg Griffin
404-656-0239
reg.griffin@dec.al.ga.gov



**Summer Food Service Program Summit Prepares
Potential and Experienced Sponsors for Meal Service**

New Sponsors Needed Across the State to Provide Meal Service during the Summer

Atlanta, Ga., (December 3, 2015) – Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) will host the 2nd Annual Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Summit Wednesday, January 20, 2016 at the Loudermilk Conference Center in downtown Atlanta. The summit will provide information and resources to help potential new sponsors and experienced sponsors of the SFSP administer effective and efficient meal service during summer 2016.

The SFSP, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is administered in Georgia by DECAL. Approved community-based organizations may apply to serve free and nutritious meals to children in low-income areas during the summer months. Over 900,000 of Georgia’s school-aged children are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Through the SFSP, thousands of these children have access to free meals to fill the gap when children are not in school and may not have access to well-balanced meals throughout the day.

Falita Flowers, DECAL’s Director of Nutrition Services, details the importance of the SFSP and the benefit of the summit. “The Summer Food Service Program fills a critical need when children are out of school by providing free and well-balanced meals during the summer. We need more organizations to provide these meals to children when school is out of session. The 2nd Annual SFSP Summit is a great way to learn more about how your organization can get involved.”

Institutions that wish to participate in the SFSP as a sponsoring organization must be a public or private non-profit school, university, college, camp, unit of local government, National Youth Sports Program (NYSP) or private nonprofit organizations considered tax exempt by the Internal Revenue Service [501(c)3].

To learn more about the SFSP and the 2nd Annual SFSP Summit, contact Shani Drake, Marketing & Outreach Manager at shani.drake@dec.al.ga.gov or 404-656-3221. For more information about becoming a SFSP sponsor, visit the DECAL website at <http://dec.al.ga.gov/BftS/SFSPBecomingASponsor.aspx#Becoming>.

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.asc.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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About Bright from the Start

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia's children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages the voluntary quality enhancement programs.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia

child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to www.decal.ga.gov.