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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual SFSP Summit, contact Shani Drake, Marketing & Outreach Manager at [shani.drake@decals.ga.gov](mailto:shani.drake@decals.ga.gov) or 404-656-3221. For more information about becoming a SFSP sponsor, visit the DECAL website at <http://decals.ga.gov/BftS/SFSPBecomingASponsor.aspx#Becoming>.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

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- (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](mailto: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](http://www.decal.ga.gov).