

DRAFT

PRESS RELEASE

GOVERNOR MUSGROVE RECOGNIZED AS “GOVERNMENT LEADER OF THE YEAR” FOR YOUTH

Governor Ronnie Musgrove has been recognized by Jobs for America's Graduates, Inc., the largest national school-to-career organization for at-risk and disadvantaged young people, for his personal leadership and the success that has been achieved by Jobs for Mississippi Graduates under his leadership as Chairman.

Jobs for America's Graduates operates State Affiliates that currently serve over 60,000 at-risk youth in approximately 1,000 high schools and other settings in 26 states.

Ken Smith, the President and Chief Executive Officer of Jobs for America's Graduates, Inc., presented the “Jobs for America's Graduates Government Leader of the Year” Award at the annual strategic planning meeting of the state leadership of the JAG organization in Gulfport on October 22.

Mr. Smith noted that Governor Musgrove is an outstanding leader deeply committed to helping at-risk young people succeed in school, on the job, and in higher education. That commitment became very clear when, early in his term as Governor, he agreed to serve as Chairman of Jobs for Mississippi Graduates at a time when the state organization was facing great financial difficulties despite a remarkable track record of success. Under his leadership, the program has now grown to 30 schools serving over 1,100 at-risk young people annually. Most importantly, the program has been able to achieve a 90% graduation rate in some of Mississippi’s most challenging schools.

The national Board of Directors of Jobs for America's Graduates, Inc. includes seven sitting Governors and is chaired by Governor Tom Vilsack of Iowa. Governor Musgrove serves on the national Board, along with Arizona Governor Napolitano, Maine Governor Baldacci, Ohio Governor Taft, Virginia Governor Warner and Governor Huckabee of Arkansas. Also serving on the Board are senior corporate officers of GE, IBM, Citigroup, Verizon, Toys "Я" Us, Bank of America, Allstate, First Data Corporation, and Adecco.

Governor Tom Vilsack, the Chairman of Jobs for America's Graduates, hailed Musgrove as “A true leader in public education who understands that the key to a bright economic future for our children starts in the classroom. That is why Governor Musgrove has long been a champion for young people and has dedicated himself to making sure children in Mississippi and across the country are afforded a quality education.”

Jobs for Mississippi Graduates, a State Affiliate of Jobs for America's Graduates since 1990, is a separate non-profit corporation led by a Board comprised of a cross-section

of the state's public and private sector leaders. The staffs are deployed in the schools and carry out a comprehensive program of employability skill preparation, personal support for the goals of the young people, job development and placement, and participation in the motivational student organization, the "Mississippi Career Association."

For more information, please contact Dr. Joe Haynes, President and Chief Executive Officer of Jobs for Mississippi Graduates, at Jobs for Mississippi Graduates, 6055 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, MS 39211; phone: 601-978-1711. For more information on the national organization please visit www.jag.org or contact Ken Smith, phone 703-684-9479.

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