

For Immediate Release

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Governor Announces Creation of Statewide Mentoring Initiative

Jackson, Miss. – Governor Ronnie Musgrove today announced the creation of the Statewide Mentoring Initiative that will be directed through the Office of the Governor. He also announced his creation of the Governor’s Leadership Council on Mentoring through an executive order.

“Mentoring is a positive and important way to influence the lives of Mississippi’s children by fostering positive educational and life goals,” said Governor Musgrove.

We are currently formalizing an alliance with the National Mentoring Partnership, to become the program’s fourteenth State Partner. The National Mentoring Partnership serves as an advocate, guide and resource center for the state program.

The Governor’s Statewide Mentoring Initiative will recruit mentors, create public awareness of mentoring, serve as a resource and assistance for local mentoring partnerships, strengthen state investment in mentoring, provide training and collect data and analyze the impact of the initiative on students’ educational improvements.

The Governor has created, through executive order, a Governor’s Leadership Council on Mentoring. The Leadership Council will formulate a plan to encourage volunteerism, recruit mentors, support all state and local mentoring efforts and develop training programs to support and expand the statewide mentoring initiative. The Council will be a division of the Office of the Governor.

The Leadership Council will consist of eight representatives from the business community, two from the faith community, two from the Institutions of Higher Learning, two from the military or law enforcement organizations, three from the student population, two from educational administrators, two from civic groups, one from local government, one from state government and six from mentoring program leaders. The Governor’s Leadership Council will be appointed on, or before September 15th, 2000.

“Developing high quality mentoring, identifying new approaches to mentoring and raising the profile for mentoring across our state are vital to the students we are servicing and to the future of our state,” said Governor Musgrove. “Our success depends on the number of dedicated mentors that choose to make a difference in the lives of Mississippi’s children. We challenge men and women across the State of Mississippi to step forward and volunteer to serve the children of their communities as mentors.”

Research shows that students involved in a mentoring program are less likely to start using drugs, less violent, more interested in their school work, achieve better grades and develop positive relationships with their peers and parents.

The Governor’s Mentoring Initiative will focus on developing structured, one-on-one relationships that focus on the needs of the student. Mentors will also encourage students to develop to their fullest potential and develop their own visions for the future.

“The best way to strengthen Mississippi’s future is to invest in our students. We are creating a program that will help our young people grow and prosper as they spend time with their mentors having fun, building trust and learning good life skills,” said the Governor.

People interested in mentoring or finding out more about the Governor’s Statewide Mentoring Initiative should call Thornell Williams, Jr. in the Office of the Governor toll free at 1-877-405-0733.

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