



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 12, 2019

MEDIA CONTACT:
Lisa MacKinney
770-532-3311 ext. 134

First Room Named in Renovated Gainesville Library

(Gainesville) – The Hall County Library Board is delighted to announce the name of the new storytime room at the renovated Gainesville Library will be the **Sandra Dunagan Deal Storytime Room**. This will be the first newly named area in the renovated library.

During her time as Georgia’s First Lady, Mrs. Deal made promoting literacy a top priority. Her lifelong passion for literacy has been demonstrated in her strong support for Georgia’s libraries. The daughter of teachers, Mrs. Deal has dedicated her own life to educating our youth. She taught language arts in public schools for over 15 years before retiring and beginning her tenure as Georgia’s First Lady. A passionate advocate for education in all forms, Mrs. Deal and her family have been users and supporters of the public library throughout their lives in Hall County. This love of reading and education was carried statewide by Mrs. Deal during Governor Deal’s time in office, when Mrs. Deal made “Read Across Georgia” one of her top initiatives.

During Governor Deal’s term, Mrs. Deal achieved the exceptional goal of visiting each school district and county in the state, reading aloud to at least one group of children. She also visited many public library systems, including the Hall County Library, to read to storytime attendees. In Mrs. Deal’s words, “We, as parents, teachers and mentors, must take it upon ourselves to ensure that our students are good readers.” Mrs. Deal has also stated, “Reading is one of the most important keystones of our community. If we can get our children reading early and often, we can make sure they graduate and go on to be successful members of society.”

In 2017, Georgia College & State University unveiled the Sandra Dunagan Deal Center for Early Language and Literacy. A state-funded educational institute, the center aims to provide training to early elementary teachers to improve the early language and literacy skills of Georgia’s children by providing research-based professional development for organizations working with children from birth through age 8.

Library Board Chairman Mark Pettitt stated, “Mrs. Deal has dedicated much of her life to improving literacy and educating the children of our state. Dedicating the new storytime room in her honor is the least we could do to recognize her work in our community. During her time as First Lady, Mrs. Deal visited and read to more than 1,000 schools. I am thankful for the standard and example set by Mrs. Deal; we are all better because of her commitment to reading and public libraries.”

The Gainesville Branch renovation has been in the planning stages since local SPLOST funds were allocated in 2015. Plans for the facility were expanded when the library system received an additional \$2 million in state funds in 2018. The new facility will be approximately 38,000 square feet and the largest branch in the Hall County Library System. It will feature a much larger children’s area, which will include the Sandra Dunagan Deal Storytime Room.

The Friends of the Hall County Library have launched a capital campaign to support the renovation project. Information is available at the library’s website www.hallcountylibrary.org.

###