

Remarks at Woodrow Wilson Fellowship Announcement

VIPs:

- Patrick R. Riccards, *Chief Communications and Strategy Officer, Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation*
- **[N.B. Arthur Levine, President of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, has joined us each of the past three years to make the announcement, but is unable to be at this year's event.]**

Purpose:

- Announcing this year's Georgia Teaching Fellows, who will begin their program of study this summer, emphasizing the importance of introducing STEM subjects to Georgia youth.
- Although the Woodrow Wilson Foundation offered to pay for the first three years of the program, they have generously increased their offer to pay for this fourth year as well.

Sandra and I are honored to be here once again to welcome this year's incoming Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship class, and to celebrate four years of success for this great program that is impacting both the lives of those educators who experience it and the generations of students that they will teach.

I want to begin by thanking Patrick Riccards as well as Dr. Arthur Levine – who could not be with us today, but who is a valued partner and educational leader -- for going above and beyond in what they do through the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. We also thank you for your generosity in extending funding for a fourth year so that this successful program can continue to inspire students and teachers alike.

It seems altogether fitting that we should see such great success for the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship here in our state, because President Woodrow Wilson experienced many of his

life's greatest milestones here in Georgia. He practiced law in Atlanta, he met and married his wife in Savannah, and he fathered two of his three children in Gainesville. **[Of course, it's not a competition, but I happen to be the father of four from Gainesville.]**

In fact, his own formative years of education were spent not too far away from where we are today, in Augusta, where we will soon open a Cyber Innovation and Training Center -- a facility unlike any other in the country... a center that truly embodies that Georgia spirit of innovation that has made us a hub of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in recent years.

The seeds of President Wilson's education and ambition sprouted and bloomed here on Georgia soil, and I'm proud to say we have continued to honor that legacy through endeavors like the Cyber Innovation and Training Center, the Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship, and the investments

and reforms we have made in our K-12 education system over the better part of these last eight years.

President Wilson was himself both leader and an educator, one that believed in unity and equal opportunity for all citizens. So, it seems altogether appropriate that the goal of this fellowship is to provide high-need schools and students with devoted and talented teachers.

Every Georgia student deserves a quality education, because the success of our state is not defined by a few great minds, but all of Georgia's great minds, working together towards a brighter future. As President Wilson said himself, "America is not anything if it consists of each of us. It is something only if it consists of all of us" [**Speech on Military Preparedness, Pittsburgh, January 29, 1916**].

I'll close by thanking this year's Teaching Fellow recipients for answering one of the noblest calls to service one can receive

– that of educator. You will teach, guide, and inspire Georgia’s future engineers, doctors, scientists -- and maybe even a president or two -- that will enter the workforce in just a few short years and further accelerate our state’s already bright future.

You are helping to unlock their full potential and giving them the tools they need to become the architects of their own destiny. Thank you once again for your services to your future students, your community, and your state. As I look at you now, I can see that the future of Georgia is in good hands.